I will first discuss briefly the criteria for the districting of legislative boundaries (I) and then see the perspectives that may interest you (II).

**I.** Several criteria dominate the delimitation of constituencies. All have exceptions except one. In the end, the whole is quite complex. To synthesize:

The most important criterion is “the population”. A threshold is set at 125,000 inhabitants per constituency (for the 2010 redistricting process).

But deviations are possible up to 20% between districts of the same department in relation to the average population of the districts of the department. In reality, this leads to strong deviations.

Geographical criteria are also important. There are two main rules.

First, each legislative district belongs to a department. No constituency can have a territory in two departments. The boundaries limits of a constituency are the boundaries of the department. There are no exceptions to this principle.

Second, there is also the principle of territorial continuity of constituencies. The cantons (local administrative unit – a boundary counts about 5 or 6 cantons in average) cannot be divided. With the exception of the overly populated cantons. In this case the cantons can be divided between two constituencies.

Finally, it should be added that we have no criterion on "economic matters", "roads", transport, etc.

**II.** During the last redistricting process in 2010, one of the difficulties was linked to the creation of new constituencies (10 for French from abroad), while the number of constituencies was limited to a maximum of 577 in the Constitution, in 2008.

Consequently, the number of districts in the “France métropolitaine” has been reduced, while the population has increased considerably since the last redistricting (in 1986). The Constitutional Council has decided on several principles to make the electoral map:

- The principle of the mono-departmental boundaries of the constituencies has been maintained. The territory of the constituencies must remain on a single department.

- But the minimum number of districts per department (2) has been removed. There are now departments with only one constituency (the Creuse and the Lozère). These constituencies are sparsely populated. They have a strong deviation from the population threshold. In the future, the question will be the choice between two options. We can accept that the deviation continues, or we can accept that “territorial rule” could be revised. The two criteria can no longer be reached at the same time (in an acceptable way).

- For the other departments which have lost constituencies (in the apportionment): the area of the constituencies has been increased in order to try to reach constituencies as close as possible to the threshold of 125 000 habitants.

All these questions may arise very soon in France because all the candidates of the presidential election want to reduce the number of MPs. (and sometimes including a mixed electoral system with somes MPS elected to the list-system). This means a complete redistricting process should be done. In this case, it is probable that the geographical principles respected so far can no longer be so. One solution would be to change the territorial boundaries, from the department to the region. Doing this, should permit to maintain a “territorial unit” (including boundaries), except that it will be enlarged (and new).