

FRAMEWORK AND PLANNING BILL ON ADAPTING SOCIETY TO AGEING

The bill on adapting society to ageing was referred to the ESEC by the Prime Minister on 18 February 2014.

The French population is set to age significantly as a result of the retirement of the baby-boom generation and the increase in life expectancy, with the over 60s expected to account for 31% of the French population by 2035, as opposed to 21% in 2007. Whilst life expectancy is high (84.8 years for women and 78.4 for men), disability-free life expectancy is stagnating (at 63.5 and 61.9 years respectively), with evidence of inequalities between socio-professional categories.

Nevertheless, only a minority are believed to be dependent (less than 20% of over 85s). Other elderly people hope to grow old in their own homes or at least in a home where they are surrounded by the family members they need.

Whilst a large number of senior citizens seniors are catered for by various associations, they also play a significant support role within the family environment and are stakeholders in the innovative experiments being carried out at regional level. Nevertheless, discussion surrounding the issue of ageing continues to assimilate old age with dependency.

Enabling them to remain in their own homes for as long as possible and thus maintain their social relations is one of the major issues evoked in the bill.

Our society must respond to this change by adapting housing and living environments to prevent the domestic risks that might result in elderly people being admitted to residential care before their time. It must also encourage mobility and support the weak by means of home support services.

Nearly 30% of senior citizens and elderly people live in central cities, 40% on the outskirts of urban hubs and 25% in rural areas.



Monique Boutrand

is a Special Adviser to the CFDT-Cadres ('French Democratic Confederation of Labour - Executives division') and a central administration officer. She sits on the ESEC section for Sustainable Management of Territories and the Section for Economic Activities, in which she represents the CFDT Trade Union Group

Contact:
monique.boutrand@lecese.fr
+33 (0)6 88 08 98 04

Only 6% of housing offers disabled access and the ANAH (National Agency for the Improvement of Housing) estimates the number of dwellings still to be adapted at 2 million.



Daniel Prada

is a Confederational Advisor and Social Security executive. He sits on the ESEC section for Social Affairs and Health, in which he represents the CGT Trade Union Group.

Contact:
daniel.prada@hotmail.fr
+33 (0)1 44 43 62 62

CHANGING OUR PERSPECTIVE ON AGEING

- Encouraging this change by means of national communication campaigns, increasing the visibility of the vast majority of elderly citizens who are active and in good health, as well as intergenerational solidarity and good practices.
- Creating a link between the ministry responsible for the elderly and a broader ministry responsible for equality and solidarity with the aim of incorporating the issue of ageing into all public policies, the bill focusing on the medico-social dimension in particular.
- Working with universities to create a 'gerontopole' in every region with the aim of establishing a more accurate picture of the local distribution of populations by age at regional level and adapting responses to needs and training programmes accordingly.
- Encouraging older people reaching the end of their careers to think about their plans for the future, including housing and mobility, with the help of retirement bodies.
- Recreating platforms for different generations to come together and partake in common activities and enabling all citizens to exercise their civil rights, regardless of their age.
- Adapting roles as necessary by revaluing them and promoting a balance between men and women.
- Réaliser les adaptations des métiers nécessaires en les revalorisant et en promouvant un rééquilibrage entre hommes et femmes.

DEALING WITH THE ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH AGEING AT REGIONAL LEVEL AND FACILITATING MOBILITY

- Encouraging regional authorities to take the issue of ageing into account in their policies and in the production of urban planning documents by adopting the *Villes Amies des Aînés* ('Age-Friendly Towns') approach advocated by the bill.
- Identifying age-friendly areas with services, public transport options and green areas close-by in order to further the adaptation of housing in such areas in partnership with social landlords and private developers.
- Providing information regarding the location of adapted housing at inter-communal level in order to make it more easily identifiable by the elderly.
- Increasing the safety of pedestrian travel by means of minor adjustments including encouraging traders to get on board, with the help of the national Action Plan for Active Mobility, and developing intermodality between public transport, on-demand transport and accompanied transport.
- Ensuring the involvement of elderly people, facilitated by their representation on the accessibility committees provided for by the bill.

CONSIDERING, CHOOSING AND ADAPTING THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

- Encouraging pension funds to make the opportunity for their national citizens to undergo housing/mobility diagnoses more widespread and incorporating the issue of energy poverty in said diagnoses.
- Stepping up the efforts to adapt existing housing that the bill is designed to support (80,000 private residences between 2014 and 2017), this being a modest objective given the number of adaptations to be carried out, even though the improvement in tax credit that accompanies it is a step in the right direction.
- Encouraging banks to facilitate access to credit, or even microcredit, for the elderly in order to facilitate the adaptation of housing.
- Incorporating the ageing factor into the new housing market by ensuring that the departments initiate the approach, promoting consultation and encouraging developers to take universal design into account.
- Taking compensation for the construction of adapted and accessible housing into consideration in any urban planning regulations that might be negotiated and building more F2 and F3 (2 and 3-bedroom) housing in areas conducive to ageing, as well as a limited number of modular dwellings.
- Promoting the *Habitat Senior Services* (HSS) label in order to encourage its circulation within the social sector, identifying those buildings suitable for housing elderly people, incorporating shared residential premises in the construction of social housing and encouraging social landlords to train their staff in dealing with ageing-related issues.

PROMOTING ALTERNATIVES TO INDIVIDUAL HOUSING

- Encouraging the creation/restoration of so-called 'intermediate' housing combining elements of individual housing and collective and medical response, the *résidence autonomie* ('sheltered housing') designation and the relaxing of the rules of admittance outlined to this end in the bill.
- Introducing the *forfait autonomie* ('independence plan') provided for in the bill with the aim of financing promotional actions and external activities in the area.
- Drawing up an inventory of existing sheltered accommodation and current development and restoration needs at departmental level.
- Creating a *résidences services* ('assisted living facility') certification with the aim of strengthening the legal framework surrounding such establishments as provided for in the bill.
- Outlining an inter-generational frame of reference that allows for a contravention of the rules outlined in the decree regarding occupancy expenses for the purposes of sharing the costs associated with operating shared premises and coordination on an experimental basis.
- Providing for the presence of a person responsible for coordination, mediation and 'benevolent supervision' in collective housing.