In its 1987 opinion entitled Extreme poverty and economic and social precarity (Rapporteur: Joseph Wresinski), the Economic and Social Council defined precarity as "the absence of one or more forms of security, not least in terms of employment, which allow individuals and families to assume their professional, family and social obligations and to exercise their fundamental rights." This definition is still relevant today: France boasts the world’s 6th largest economy and yet 8.8 million people are still living below the poverty line.

In our society where access to knowledge plays a key role, poverty is not just monetary, but is often the result of a string of difficulties: access to education, housing, health, transport, energy or culture. It takes a heavy toll on people who go through it - on their self-esteem and their health (life expectancy falls by 25 years).

Problems linked to exclusion concern all areas, urban and rural alike, in both mainland and Overseas France, but certain groups of people are particularly vulnerable: jobseekers, the elderly, disabled people or invalids, under 25s, single-parent families or asylum seekers for example.

Our social benefits system has been developed in this context in response to the shortcomings of the social welfare system, as situations of poverty came to light that were affecting people with no cover.

"Customised" schemes have piled up like building blocks and this has led to a particularly complex system by the sheer number and diversity of these schemes: Revenu de solidarité active (income support/RSA), Allocation de solidarité pour les personnes âgées (pension credit/ASPA), Allocation aux adultes handicapés (Allowance for disabled adults/AAH), Allocation supplémentaire d’invalidité (Additional Incapacity Allowance/ASI), Allocation de solidarité spécifique (Specific solidarity allowance/ASS), Allocation veuvage (Bereavement allowance/AV), Allocation pour les demandeurs d’asile (Allowance for asylum seekers/ADA) … Each social benefit is subject to specific rules regarding its amount, the means tested for calculating entitlements, whether or not family setup is taken into account (spouse, offspring) or associated related entitlements.

This complexity is to the detriment of beneficiaries and creates a problem of accessibility, as attested by the extent of eligible people not claiming their entitlements - in the region of 35% for the RSA. It is also a barrier to its acceptability. Opinion surveys show that support for solidarity is declining. The social investment character of social benefits is still not fully understood.

All of this means that, despite helping to reduce inequalities, our social benefits system has not managed to prevent a high poverty rate. It does not go far enough in enabling access to employment and, more generally, to fundamental rights.

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Les aspects de la précarité en France

LES CHIFFRES

6e puissance économique mondiale

8,8M de personnes vivent sous le seuil de pauvreté, soit 14,1% de la population

3,8M sont mal logé.e.s

25 ans C’est le déficit d’espérance de vie qu’ont les personnes ayant vécu de longues années dans la grande précarité

1,9M travaillent

3M d’enfants vivent sous le seuil de pauvreté dont 1,2M sont dans la grande pauvreté

LES PERSONNES CONCERNÉES

Demandeur.euse.s d’emploi

En juillet 2016, 44,3% des chômeur.euse.s étaient des chômeur.euse.s de longue durée (+ d’un an)

Personnes âgées

557 800 personnes âgées ont 800,80 €/mois pour vivre

Personnes en situation de handicap

500 000 sont en recherche d’emploi et restent au chômage, en moyenne, 200 jours de plus que les autres

Jeunes 15-25 ans

Le taux de chômage des jeunes de moins de 25 ans atteint 26% en 2012

Demandeur.euse.s d’asile

Ils. Elles perçoivent l’ADA, d’un montant de 6,8 € par jour pour une personne

14,1% de la population vit sous le seuil de pauvreté

Sources : Fondation Abbé Pierre, INSERM, INSEE, ONPES, DARES, Valérie Schneider, CESE.
Les causes de la précarité et l’évolution des minima sociaux

**LE CUMUL DES PRÉCARITÉS**

Ce que l’absence de ressources financières engendre comme précarité

- Absence ou manque de ressources
- Logement
- Santé
- Éducation
- Énergie
- Transport
- Culture

La précarité est l’absence de sécurités ; le cumul des précarités conduit à la grande pauvreté

**QUELQUES DATES CLÉS**

- **1789 1792**
  - Comité de Mendicité par la voix de Larochefocauld Liancourt
  - Il dénonce une violation de l’humanité et un équilibre social rompu
  - Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen
- **1945**
  - Ordonnance du 4 octobre 1945
  - Bases de la sécurité sociale
- **1946**
  - Création du minimum vieillesse
- **1956**
  - Création de l’AAH
  - Allocation aux adultes handicapés
- **1975**
  - Création du RMI
  - Revenu minimum d’insertion
- **1987**
  - Loi relative à la lutte contre les exclusions
- **1998**
  - Création du RSA
  - Revenu de solidarité active
- **2009**
  - Objectifs de développement durable des Nations Unies
- **2015**
  - La France s’engage à éradiquer la grande pauvreté d’ici à 2030
- **2017**
  - Avis du CESE
  - Projet de Revenu minimum social garanti
THE ESEC'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The ESEC recommends improving our social benefits system by introducing a guaranteed social minimum income, as a tool for tackling exclusion, with a threefold aim:

 Guarantee a stable income for everyone in a situation of social and economic insecurity:

- Introduce a Revenu minimum social garanti (Guaranteed social minimum income/RMSG) to replace existing benefits, with the exception of the Allocation pour demandeure.euse d’asile (Allowance for asylum seekers/ADA) and only partially the Allocation aux adultes handicapés (Allowance for disabled adults/AAH) and Allocation de solidarité aux personnes âgées (pension credit/ASPA);
- Attach the RMSG to the person;
- Set its amount at €600 from 2018 for each person in a vulnerable situation;
- Conduct an impact study of the RMSG scale in relation to the "point de sortie", i.e. the threshold above which people are no longer eligible, for the "prime d'activité", an incentive by way of an allowance to continue working or return to work;
- Envisage specific supplements for disabled and/or elderly people;
- Allow access to the RMSG for any 18 year-olds and over who are not in education, employment or training, do not get any financial assistance from their parents and who sign a contract through an integration scheme helping them to find work and then stay in work.

 Streamline the architecture underpinning our social benefits so as to improve access to rights:

- Conduct a study on the relevance and conditions of exclusion from the possibility of a "recours sur succession", i.e. the State being able to recover the RMSG from heirs upon a claimant's death;
- Clarify the conditions for coordination with the "obligation alimentaire" (maintenance support) that the Civil Code requires young adults to pay to their older relatives (parents, grandparents or parents-in-law for example);
- Ensure consistency of related entitlements associated with social benefits that the RMSG replaces;
- Make the digitisation of procedures part of a broader approach to digital inclusion while guaranteeing maintenance of physical contacts for claimants;
- Set up a trial of a RMSG payment automation mechanism in a local area;
- Revise the amount of the ADA at €10/day (amount for claimants accommodated in an asylum seeker reception centre).

 Foster the empowerment of RMSG beneficiaries by helping them to find work:

- Recognise the right of all RMSG claimants to social support where necessary and to assistance with finding work and then staying in work throughout their economic and social integration pathway and, where necessary, after returning to work;
- Provide better, one-to-one support for young RMSG claimants with a view to helping them to work out a personal and professional integration plan;
- Review the organisation and opportunities available of the Pôle emploi (national public employment service) as well as the local mission centres to turn them into the "guidance" correspondent for young RMSG claimants;
- Develop training for professionals that includes the presence of claimants - billed "co-training".

In addition, the ESEC recommends working to improve acceptance of everyone by everyone:

- Set up information campaigns that explain the figures illustrating social welfare, social fraud and tax fraud;
- Underscore the importance of tackling fraud so that our fellow citizens are aware of these efforts and the resources devoted thereto;
- Encourage broad involvement on the part of all partners (State, operators, local authorities) to guarantee the success of the RMSG reform and its acceptability by the whole of society.