

Annual report on the state of France 2024: *emerging from the democratic crisis*

CLAIRE THOURY

Gist of the opinion

This year's Annual Report on the State of France (RAEF) highlights **the links between inequality and democracy**. Despite the fall in inflation, inequality and the accumulation of inequality among certain sections of the population are leading to a feeling of being left out of society and a lack of confidence in politicians. However, in an uncertain political and budgetary context, there are mechanisms for consultation and inclusion, as well as an energy on the part of citizens that are assets for France. The RAEF offers an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of France and the French people in 2024, based on a survey and a number of thematic focuses and socio-economic indicators.



Nearly
25 %

of French people do not feel that they are truly part of French society

THE REPORTER

Claire Thoury

claire.thoury@lecese.fr • (33) 1 44 43 64 04

Claire Thoury is a sociologist specialising in issues of commitment and is President of the Mouvement associatif. She sits on the esec's associations group and is a member of the economy and finance commission and the delegation for women's rights and equality.

Growing *inequalities* and accumulating

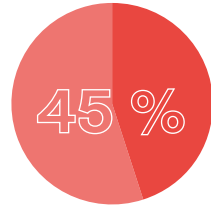
The RAEF warns that the French are still facing major financial difficulties: the recent slowdown in inflation is far from having neutralised its cumulative effects over the last two years.

45% of French people feel that their purchasing power only allows them to meet their essential needs, or even does not allow them to do so (three points more than last year).

We need to engage in a ‘battle of proximity’ and go beyond statistical averages that blur the nuances in order to understand more precisely the difficulties encountered by individuals.

Inequalities are observed at several levels of society and, despite a powerful redistribution system, certain categories and certain territories accumulate disadvantages. The ESEC-Ipsos survey also reveals that, in the minds of the French, inequalities have multiple causes: wage disparities, discrimination, inefficiency of the redistribution system, misuse of the rules by some, and territorial inequalities in access to services.

58% of French people have difficulty accessing housing; this figure rises to 84% for the DROMs.



of French people feel that their purchasing power only allows them to meet their essential needs, or even not at all
(up three points on last year)



58% of French people have difficulty accessing housing



this figure rises to 84% for DROMs

Very tangible consequences for *democracy*

The lack of prospects, the feeling of being subject to more inequalities than the average, and difficulties in accessing certain public services can fuel a feeling of injustice and exclusion. The result is less attachment to the democratic system.

23% of those questioned believe that democracy is not the best existing political system.

What's more, 76% believe that politicians are out of touch with the realities of people's lives: so how can we trust politicians to respond appropriately to their concerns?

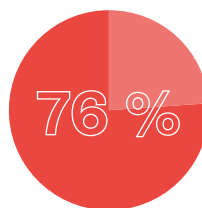


Nearly 1 in 5 people surveyed believe that democracy is not the best existing political system

Empowering and involving citizens

While there are already consultative mechanisms involving citizens, we now need to give ourselves the means to move towards co-construction on a greater number of issues. Strengthening the legitimacy of citizens in the decision-making process, at both local and national level, feeds the virtuous circle whereby citizens feel empowered to act.

The ESEC recalls the extraordinary propensity of French men and women to get involved on a daily basis: the vitality of associations in all regions bears witness to this. This committed society is a considerable force to be reckoned with in the fight against inequality.



of those questioned believe that politicians are out of touch with the realities of people's lives

The *method* of the Annual Report on the State of France

The RAEF offers a diagnosis of our country's economic, social and environmental situation to inform and influence public policy. The ESEC's report analyses the state of France and of French men and women, using a range of quantitative and statistical indicators.

The report is divided into three sections:

- **The exclusive Ipsos survey for the ESEC enables us to assess the level of well-being of French people, their level of optimism for themselves, for their children, for the future of the country and that of the planet and nature, as well as their sources of concern.**
- **The ESEC's focus notes take a closer look at a number of topical issues.** These notes offer an analysis of democratic issues relating to different areas of public policy (environment - green pact, biodiversity -, education - democracy in schools, education in emotional, relational and sexual life -, work and housing) as well as cross-cutting issues such as public debt or purchasing power.
- **Analyses of eleven quantitative and qualitative socio-economic indicators:** social diversity at school, healthy life expectancy, housing renovation, victims of gender-based and sexual violence, living time and transport, GDP, renewable energies, land artificialisation, attractiveness of industry and research effort, water management in overseas France.