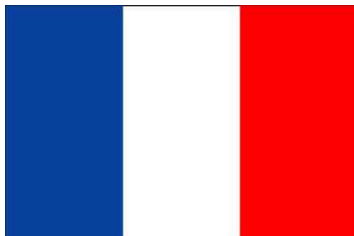




# INFORMATION TEMPLATE ON SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN FRANCE



Last updated:  
December 2013

By:  
**Alexis RIDDE**

**Farid MEBARKI**  
Ministry of sports, youth, non formal education  
and voluntary organizations

**Francine LABADIE**  
INJEP - Youth Observatory

**Solange FOURCOUX**  
(EKCYP Correspondant - MSJEPVA-DJEPVA)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. The socio-economic situation of young people .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Policy measures for young people at risk of social exclusion .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Research on social inclusion .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. Examples of practice .....</b>	<b>10</b>

# 1. The socio-economic situation of young people

## 1.1 Please inform which groups of the young people are perceived as being socially excluded. What are the main factors for being socially excluded as a young person in your country?

Young people as individuals are developing and integrating into society in a context of uncertainty. Their experience and pathways are the result of the interplay between their social resources and their ability to adapt to social norms and individually accept the consequences of their choices. A lack of access and non-possession of certain attributes, whether physical or interpersonal, or the difficulty of developing as young people may lead to a situation of vulnerability. Analyses of the effects of an extended youth do focus on states, situations and processes of vulnerability which at the current time appear to be worsening; however they are also regarded as intrinsic to this particular time of life, in the sense that young people lack experience.

Social exclusion as a concept is difficult to define because it results from a wide range of factors. Exclusion is often placed in the same category as poverty; yet it is a much wider phenomenon than material deprivation alone as it refers to a process of social disintegration in the sense of a progressive breakdown of relations between the individual and society. Describing people as 'socially excluded' rather than 'poor' suggests that they not only find themselves outside the labour market and therefore deprived of a source of income, but that they are also socially isolated. They may have completely lost contact with their families, networks of contacts and the local community. The concept of exclusion also encompasses the inability to fully exercise a citizen's inherent social, economic and political rights.

Youth social inclusion is all about young people being involved in economic, social and political life - having a job, somewhere to live and social protection. It is also about fostering full recognition of young people as citizens and all the associated rights, notably social rights.

## 1.2 Please provide the percentage representing the share of young people (18-24) who are at *risk of poverty* (and/or severely materially deprived and/or living in a household with very low work intensity).

The financial crisis has taken a heavy toll on young people. It is now harder to access employment: 23% of young people aged 16-24 are unemployed and in some regions, specifically those where young people with the least opportunities are concentrated, this figure rises to 40% in urban problem areas and 30% in certain rural areas.

Apart from regional differences, the gap between qualified and unqualified young people is becoming polarised, which has a knock-on effect on access to employment. The unemployment rate (2011 figures) for 15-29 year olds is 9% for graduates, 22% for holders of the French baccalaureate (A-level equivalent), CAP (vocational training certificate) and BEP (technical school certificate), and 46% for young people with no qualifications.

Work to examine the impact of the financial crisis on young people has identified a category of young people particularly exposed to long-term exclusion: 15% of young people are neither studying, undergoing training or in employment.

Reduced household incomes and the difficulty young people experience in finding jobs mean that they are more exposed to the vagaries of life: 19.6% of under-18s and 22.5% of 18-25s live under

the poverty threshold (calculated at 60% of the median standard of living). Once again, qualifications are one of the key dividing factors: the poverty rate (defined as monthly income under €964 in 2010) is 30% for unqualified young people as opposed to 10% for graduates. It is estimated that one million young people aged 18-25 are highly vulnerable.

### **1.3 Has an impact of the current financial crisis on young people been observed in your country?**

The French employment market's twin track system has traditionally disadvantaged young people who are outsiders and/or newcomers - unstable job types, the difficulty of finding work for those with few qualifications and greater exposure to the risk of having to accept positions for which they are over-qualified for those with qualifications – all typify the experience of young people entering the job market in France. Young people tend to secure stable employment at the age of 28 but for some categories (those who are least qualified and, in this case, women more than men) instability may continue into their thirties. On average, young people in France have to work for five years after qualifying before they obtain a permanent employment contract.

As a result of the financial crisis, recent trends have shown a greater substitution effect to the detriment of less well-qualified young people. Young people with more qualifications are increasingly doing jobs that were previously performed by young people with few or no qualifications. In this context, independence, i.e. young people's ability to independently cover the costs of housing and daily life, remains limited. This situation makes unqualified young people even more vulnerable and increases their dependence on their parents.

## **2. Policy measures for young people at risk of social exclusion**

### **2.1 Social subsistence/ protection and health cover for young people living in poverty**

The multi-annual social inclusion and anti-poverty plan was officially adopted on 21 January 2013 at a meeting of the French Interministerial Committee to Combat Exclusion.

The plan is a roadmap for governmental action on cohesion (solidarity) policies and is the result of a consultation with all the cohesion policy stakeholders - state departments, local authorities, non-profit associations, social partners, researchers and experts, and people living in poverty.

It is structured into three areas:

- Reducing inequality and preventing exclusion,
- Aiding and supporting people towards inclusion,
- Coordinating social action and developing stakeholders in this area.

<http://www.cnle.gouv.fr/Publication-du-plan-pluriannuel.html>

The main stakeholders involved in increasing youth social inclusion are:

- The State through four ministries that are heavily involved in this area:
  - o The Ministry of Employment develops solutions to foster youth employment.
  - o The Ministry of Social Cohesion combats youth exclusion via a range of measures including housing schemes.

- The Ministry of National Education seeks to address the issue of young people dropping out of school and leaving the education system without any qualifications (personal monitoring, SPO...).
  - The Ministry of Youth is tasked with coordinating government action on youth inclusion (Interministerial Committee on Youth), improving the knowledge on young people (Youth Observatory) and developing youth involvement in the design and implementation of public policies concerning them.
- Business and trade unions: the recent signing of the national multi-industry agreement means that the country is moving towards greater protection for employees and, specifically, young people in unstable employment (temporary and fixed-term contracts).
  - Local authorities with a wider remit for social action (French *departments* and districts) and employment and training (regions) are working to address young people's difficulties at local level more effectively. The decentralisation bill currently being debated is moving towards building greater synergy between stakeholders.
  - Local agencies "Missions locales" are associations specialising in youth issues (employment, training, healthcare, housing) and work at local level (one Mission Locale located in every local labour market). They are at the heart of the relationship with young people and the roll-out of the aforementioned inclusion policies at local level.

## 2.2 Measures to meeting the medical Care needs of Young people at risk of social exclusion

Young people's health is constantly improving despite the financial crisis (improving living and education standards, better healthcare). However, some difficulties that are specific to young people should be noted:

- France is one of the countries with the highest suicide rate among 15-24 year olds, with around 600 deaths a year and thousands of attempted suicides;
- Anorexia affects 30-40,000 young people, especially women;
- Finally, alcoholism: 20% of male and 12% of female 15 year olds say that they have been drunk over the past 30 days (2010).

Young people in challenging social situations present considerably higher levels of addictive behaviour, sedentary lifestyles and excess weight.

The Ministry of Health has launched the "Youth Health" plan which contains a raft of measures seeking to better protect their health, specifically that of 16-25 year olds in three main areas:

- Combating addictive behaviours;
- Balanced eating habits;
- Combating anorexia.

While equal access to healthcare is a major challenge, the factors determining health-related social inequality remain outside the healthcare system (work, housing, education, income and living conditions are some of the main examples) and warrant cross-sector intervention on health and health behaviours (Leclerc et al, 2008).

Initiatives to cut poverty (by increasing social housing provision, raising education and income levels for the most vulnerable households, improving access to public services and reducing unemployment) often prove more effective than those aiming to reduce disadvantaged groups' exposure to harmful health behaviours or living conditions (Mackenbach, 1995).

## 2.3 Measures to re-engage the young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)

The **Youth Priority Plan** (authored by the Interministerial Committee on Youth) makes provision for a “Youth Guarantee”. One of the sources of inspiration for the guarantee was a trial launched in 2010 exploring the possibility of rolling out a *revenu contractuelisé d'autonomie* (contract-based independent living benefit). The primary goal of the Youth Guarantee is **to help highly vulnerable young people to become independent and co-develop a personal pathway** to socio-professional inclusion by means of an enhanced support scheme run by a named advisor at the local mission (Mission locale); this will be the young person's sole point of contact and will coordinate all the stakeholders who may be involved in the process. It comprises **guaranteed first work experience** involving a combination of support as part of a dynamic process together with a number of periods of work or training, with **guaranteed resources** to support this process. It is based on a **contract** and relies on the young person's desire to become independent.

The same plan is developing a global approach to youth and has adopted several employment-related measures: development of assisted contracts for the least qualified young people and/or those from the most disadvantaged areas ('jobs of the future'), tax breaks for companies employing young people (intergenerational contracts), extra support measures (Civis) to safeguard the career paths of the least qualified young people from the moment they leave school until they secure their first job.

## 2.4 Measures to ensure access to decent housing for young people at risk of social exclusion

A universal rent guarantee is one of the provisions made by the Priority Youth Plan currently being adopted by the French Parliament, which will give access to private rental accommodation for those who cannot guarantee their financial solvency or put down a deposit. Rent regulation will also be increased.

## 2.5 Measures addressing the social integration of young people with disabilities

Disability has proven to be a factor in poverty both for those with a disability and for their families who are particularly exposed to the risk of poverty due to the difficulties they experience in accessing employment. It is however also attributable to a lack of qualifications as the risk of exposure to poverty is more pronounced for those with little training.

In this respect, the Ministry of Culture and Communication is working to bring the higher education establishments under its supervision up to standard in compliance with the law. Additionally, the culture-disabilities programme facilitates access to culture and also enables people with disabilities to become actively involved in art and culture, as this is sometimes a cause of exclusion.

[http://www.social-sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/contribution\\_MCC\\_conf\\_Pauvrete\\_11\\_12\\_12\\_def.pdf](http://www.social-sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/contribution_MCC_conf_Pauvrete_11_12_12_def.pdf)

Very recently, at the meeting of the Interministerial Committee on Disabilities on 25 September 2013, plans were made for several measures to facilitate access and improve the education of young people with disabilities.

## **2.6 The contribution of youth work (and youth centres) to social inclusion of young people**

Civic service agency:

As part of voluntary community service in non-profit associations, young people can be involved over a six to nine-month period in initiatives within their civic service, to combat exclusion, protect the environment, strengthen inter-generational links, raise awareness about disabilities and health etc.

<http://www.service-civique.gouv.fr/>

In the non-profit sector, provision for young people is based on general associations that take charge of youth issues in a non-selective manner (youth information, non formal education and residences for young workers) and more specialised associations with more specific target groups (local missions, centres and listening services for young people/*points d'accueil et d'écoute jeunes*, youth centres). The services provided by non-profit associations are part of a genuine network looking after vulnerable young people in the regions; this network facilitates links between the various contacts that may well be involved in monitoring young people.

## **3. Research on social inclusion**

### **3.1 Is there any national report / national survey investigating the social exclusion of young people in your country, including issues of discrimination?**

In 2012, the National Institute for Youth and Non-Formal education set up a Youth Observatory, which is helping to build knowledge about young people and improve related public policy. The observatory's scope of action includes discrimination.

[http://www.injep.fr/-Fiches-reperes-http://www.injep.fr/IMG/pdf/FR\\_Vulnerabilites.pdf](http://www.injep.fr/-Fiches-reperes-http://www.injep.fr/IMG/pdf/FR_Vulnerabilites.pdf)

The Observatory's 2012 report particularly focused on youth inequality against the backdrop of the crisis.

### **3.2 Is there any longitudinal research focused on the cumulative nature of disadvantage (taking place across generations of the same family).**

The work of the National Poverty and Social Exclusion Observatory has for a long time (<http://www.onpes.gouv.fr>) focused on the phenomenon of poor children and their life trajectories.

### **3.3 Apart from national reports and surveys, are you aware of other research that is valuable for understanding the situation of young people (esp. those with fewer opportunities) in the current crisis?**

The French National Agency for Research has funded the JUVENIL: Vulnerable Young People, Perceptions and Provision in local social and health policy (2009-2011) project, under the direction of Patricia Loncle in particular. The main results were published in the AGORA debates/Youth review issue 62, INJEP, Presses de Sciences PO, 2012.

## **4. Examples of policy responses and practices**

### **4.1 What are the relevant initiatives/projects at regional/ national level promoting the social inclusion of young people?**

The Cap Berriat association from Grenoble has brought together some 15 organisations from six regions in order to set up a youth inclusion programme utilizing the assisted jobs offered by the government.

These organisations hire young people on 'jobs of the future' contracts (they must be under 25, have no qualifications and be looking for a job) and support them so that during their time in employment they can discover career fields, receive training, make a career plan and create an umbrella structure for their own employment (setting up an association or company). This approach aims to avoid negative outcomes for young people following an assisted job and also positions the organisations involved as the facilitators of a brand of labour market inclusion that is wanted and accepted by young people.

### **4.2 Have young people and civil society organizations been given political and financial support to be involved in the policy making process on social inclusion?**

See 4.3

### **4.3 Have youth organizations and other civil society organizations been involved in the development of the policies related to social inclusion of young people**

The Youth Priority Plan places interaction with young people at the heart of the methodology for implementing youth policies. Particular emphasis is given to the following principles aimed at making dialogue with young people effective:

- No consultation without the chance to question the authorities or give the young people the possibility to contact them on their own initiative;
- While the opinion of young people is sought for consultation purposes only, decision-makers must present the arguments and reasons underpinning their response;
- Resources (to set up meetings, allow expert contributions, direct consultation or make use of surveys, hearings, study visits) will be released to aid the consultation and civil dialogue, just as they are made available for social dialogue;

Therefore, for each measure, the specifications make provision for young people being brought together and/or organised in order to check whether the proposals meet their needs. It has already been decided to implement these guidelines as part of preparations for the "Youth Guarantee" measure. The preparatory working group is partly made up of young people from the French Youth Forum and young people monitored by the local mission (mission locale), together with representatives of youth and non formal education associations via the CNAJEP, (Committee of national and international relations of youth and non formal education associations <http://www.cnajep.asso.fr/>).

There is also a plan to mobilise a National Youth Conference over the course of the year, made up of representatives of the State, local authorities, youth and non formal education associations (via the CNAJEP), youth organisations (via the French Youth Forum), young representatives (under-



30s) of employer and employee associations and trade unions, and young people from the missions locales or youth councils.

More specifically, the Youth Priority Plan plans to enhance youth representation in the public arena notably via the following measures:

- Encourage youth participation in non-profit, political and trade union movements via an inter-institutional awareness raising campaign.
- Encourage the development of youth organisations led by young people with the creation of a dedicated unit within the Ministry of Youth.