



Seniors Participation in Public Affairs and Senior Policies in France

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A. SENIORS, FRANCE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

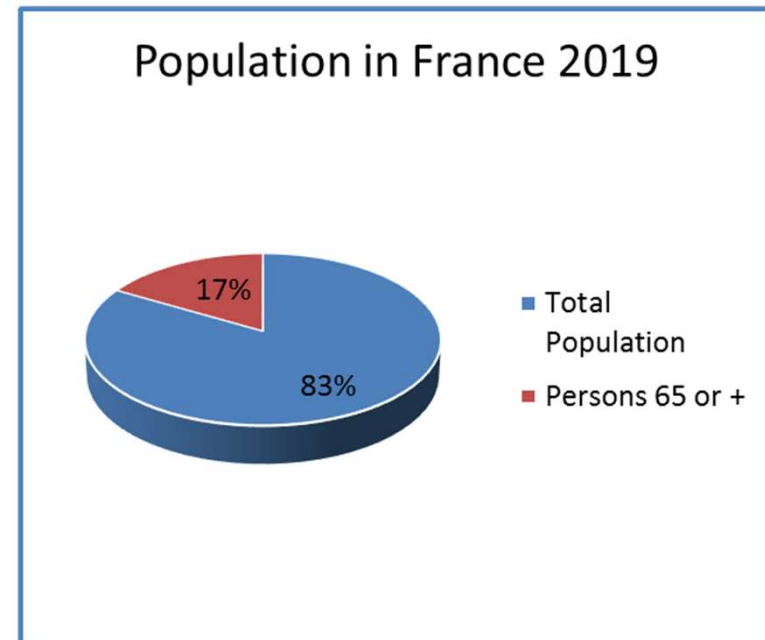
Prag - 29th of November 2019

1. Seniors in France - General information

As all over Europe, the proportion of retired people in the French population is **increasing**

Key numbers:

- In 2019, **13,4 millions persons are 65 or+** (out of the total 67,2 millions French inhabitants) *
- In 2019, a Frenchman who reaches 65 years of age has a **life expectancy of 19 years****
- In 2018, there were **14,3 million retirees** in France***
- In 2017, **3% of seniors were employed** (most of them cumulated their pension + work)



* Source : Insee, estimations de population

** Source : Insee, estimations de population et statistiques de l'état civil

*** Source : Cnav - SNSP

2. Why seniors should be involved in all public affairs?

- Seniors have a **life experience**, a possibility of **hindsight** and great **faculties of synthesis**
- They can make **the distinctions and evaluate importance between claims** *while young people are more likely to think more of themselves with a more limited orbit (the example of the yellow vests' revolution that started in 2018)*
- Unfortunately **active involvement requires altruism** that is difficult to ask for because seniors' resources are limited: working as informal caregivers, baby-sitter, have financial struggles or health concerns.
- Retired people have **an electoral weight**: the most loyal voters are the older French people.

3. Why Seniors should invest their own policies ?

- Retired people must exist like any other human being, that is, through their personal and collective actions
- We cannot simply entrust our future passively to an association
- However, the French are individualists and not always inclined to be part of an association to defend their rights

Good practices around the world :

- Political parties that aim to specifically represent retirees in *Croatia, Scotland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia and Scotland.*
- The Ministry of Seniors in Ontario
- The powerful AARP = spokesperson for American seniors, who has about 20 full-time lobbyists who defend his positions in the US Congress and Senate and have the power to form a coalition with other national associations and support or reject a particular law.

4. French Tendency: Top-down !

The representation and participation of older people in public bodies is low and decisions concerning pensioners are taken without them while many people want to speak on behalf of seniors or become advisors wishing to impose choices.

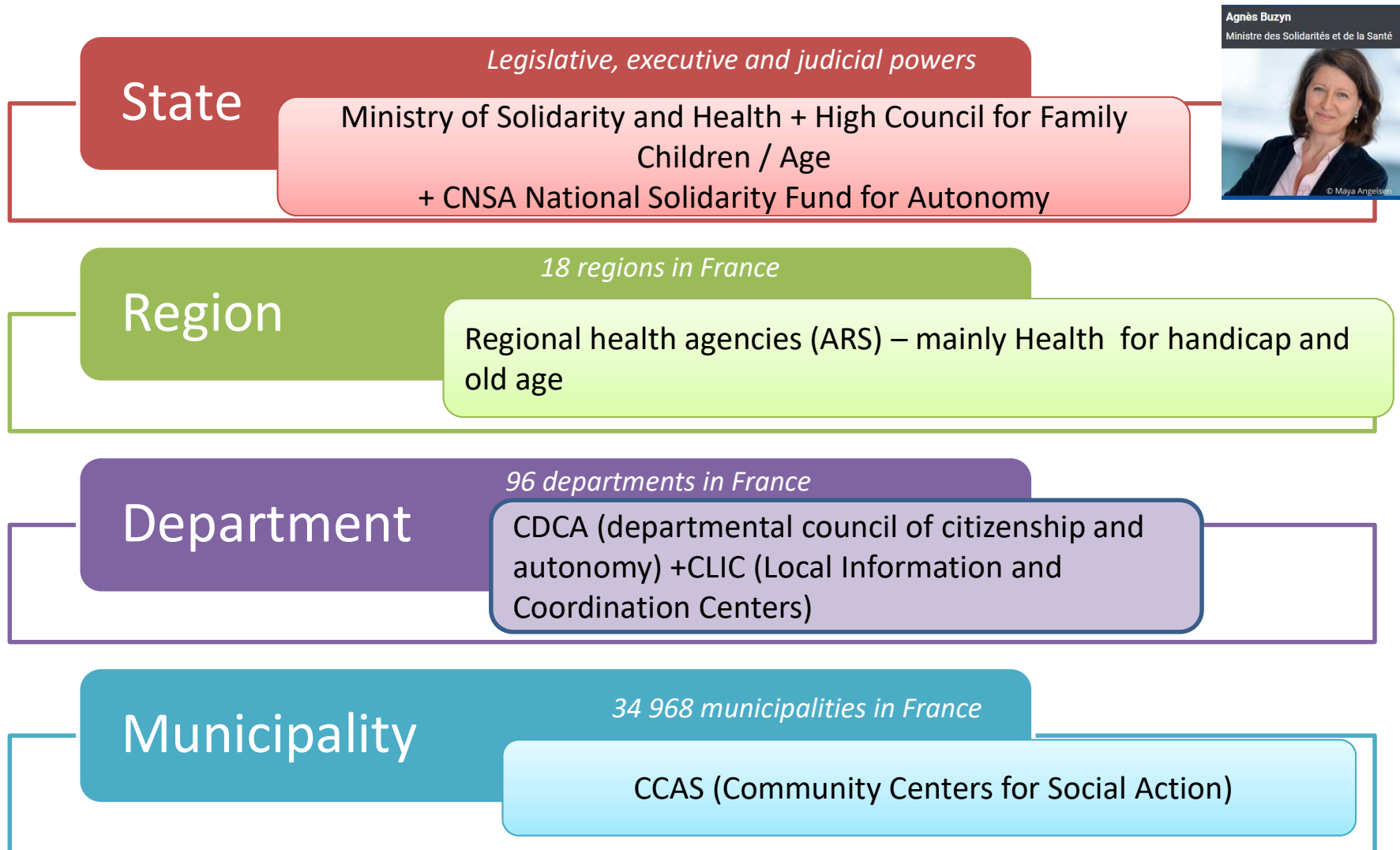
Such as:

- The Silver Economy is interested in the economic weight of pensioners (130 billion euros in 2020)
- Social workers or retirement house (EHPAD) staff impose choices on seniors



B. CURRENT STATE OF REPRESENTATION/ PARTICIPATION OF SENIOR CITIZENS

5. Different levels for dealing with Public Affairs



6. The High Council for Family, Children and Age



The **HCFEA** (attached to the Ministry) **leads the public debate** and provides public authorities with **prospective and transversal expertise** on issues related to the family and childhood, ageing, the adaptation of society to ageing and well-being, in an intergenerational approach.

- Issues opinions on prevention, medico-social support and access to care, human or technical assistance, transport, housing, collective housing, urban planning, help for carers, home support, culture, leisure, community life...
- As purely consultative body, made up of former union members who are used to meetings with formal debates that do not lead to concrete changes
- Publishes white papers

The French Confederation of Retired Persons (CFR) sits with the HCFEA and participates in debates on:

- the active defense of a solidarity-based and sustainable pension system for all generations;
- the promotion of equitable social protection, including the living conditions and autonomy of older people.

State level

7. Public consultation in 2018: “Ageing and Autonomy”



The Ministry launched a public debate and consultation in 2018 to prepare a new law about Ageing and Autonomy :

- **Online:** <https://grande-consultation-aines.make.org/> with 415 000 citizen respondents that voted ideas and made concrete propositions.
 - > 7 concrete subjects reflecting the concerns of 415 000 voting citizens
 - ✓ Strengthen home care for the elderly
 - ✓ Improve the quality and reception of elderly people in specialized institutions
 - ✓ Better accompany caregivers
 - ✓ Improve the working conditions of care and support staff for the elderly
 - ✓ Reduce the cost of managing dependency in institutions and at home
 - ✓ Strengthen access to health for the elderly
 - ✓ Develop innovative alternative or intergenerational living spaces
- **Workshops** about specific topics such as housing, funding of care, prevention, social inclusion... included professionals, civil society and citizens .
- Organization of **5 local forums in different regions** inviting the local actors in senior care to present their actions and ideas for the decision makers.

In the end of 2019, the Grand Age Reform is under work without concrete propositions from the actual government due to the lack of available public funds.

Page: 29th of November 2019

8. Ongoing Pension Reform

Milestone of President Macron's quinquennat is the Pension Reform with the goal to create a universal system for all pensioners.

The government is currently having a public consultation preparing the reform with :

- the “**social partners**” that refers to economic agents involved in social negotiations. They are made up of representatives of the main trade unions and employers' organizations (note that the trade unions represent less than 8% of employees, so a small part of employees and even less of seniors)
- **Local public debates** with multiple stakeholders by end 2019
- **Online consultation on the retirement subject** for citizens:
<https://participez.reforme-retraite.gouv.fr/>

The goal of is to publish the consultation outcomes in early 2020 and present the reform in the summer 2020

9. Coordination among multiple actors

- The departmental councils is in charge of **supporting the autonomy** of the ageing citizens. They control funding for autonomy, retirement homes and home-care services.

Other related **department level bodies** are:

- **CLIC**: *Local center for information and coordination in gerontology* for senior citizens about their rights, available services and prevention ...
- **CDCA** : *Departmental council for citizenship and autonomy* gives expertise in the management of older persons and handicapped citizens. It is composed of representatives of institutions, professionals, senior and handicapped citizens. They gather in meetings and work groups in each of the 72 French Departments.

These are examples of public bodies through which seniors can impact - but often the problem remains the lack of funding

10. Cities for Ageing



In Paris :

- Dominique Versini, Deputy Mayor of Paris, is responsible for solidarity, early childhood, child protection, the fight against exclusion and the
- The city has a "Parisian gerontological scheme 2017-2021" - written by external "business" consultants, without much consultation with "real" seniors, which lists statistics on the categories of seniors and gathers some consensual proposals

At city level

CCAS (Community Centers for Social Action) to implement social action for senior citizens, such as help for daily living at home, meal service and management of public housing.

Some figures : Paris has 465,000 inhabitants aged >60 - Budget for seniors 280 million Euros mostly for Aspa ('Solidarity Allowance for the Elderly = minimum old age) :

- 868,20 €/month for a single person
- 1,347.88 €/month for a couple.

Personalized Autonomy Allowance (APA)

- between €1,737.14 / month
- and €672.26 / month depending on the degree of autonomy

11. At the district and in the neighborhoods

- Network of Age-friendly cities :
<http://www.villesamiesdesaines-rf.fr/>
- Seniors can join the district council or senior citizens' council (only in a few Parisian districts) > similar to the veterans' assembly
- Wishes are expressed that often remain dead letters because the councils have no financial means
- “Normal” seniors are quickly discouraged from participating
→ they are not represented



*“Conseils des Seniors” in
different Parisian districts*

12. Civil Society

- There are numerous topic-specific associations for seniors *(such as a specific disease related structures, religion related structures, “Grey Pride” or former pensioners of a professional structure)*
- RARE are the associations, such as E-Seniors that bring together autonomous, proactive seniors around the theme of “Health and active Ageing or Long Life Learning”
- With the increasing life expectancy and ageing populations, seniors around European - and beyond- must be heard!

Seniors should regain self-confidence and give society the benefit of their life – and work experiences!

Local level /
ONGs

13. E-Seniors and older adults' expression of needs



Since 2005, E-Seniors works for digital inclusion and social wellbeing of senior citizens. Today, over 1500 adherents in Paris! – We represent seniors ...and not patients!

It proposes diverse activities of seniors' empowerment:

- Teaching digital skills (*training with digital tools, workshops*)
- Taking care of oneself: the physical and mental level (*MOOCs, e-learning*)
- Contribution in EU innovation projects by expressing their opinions and expectations (*interviews, focus groups and testing of innovations*)
- Organization of regular events and conferences (*specific topics related to active and healthy ageing, with divers partners*)

Different
levels

14. TODO list!

The Ministry of Solidarity and Health is the only body that represents seniors

Seniors are either patients (or future patients) = HEALTH

or have loneliness or financial problems =SOLIDARITY

However,

OLD AGE IS not only a health problem!

AGEING is not a DISEASE !

There is much to improve :

- The quality of life of seniors
- Fostering a societal shift which embraces a positive view of aging
- Promoting an inclusive and age-friendly community.
- Push initiatives which support seniors' safety and protection while maximizing their independence and dignity.
- Promoting seniors' healthy aging and expanding opportunities for seniors to engage, volunteer, and learn.
- Supporting opportunities for seniors' recognition and learning.



E-SENIORS

LIFE BEGINS AT 50



Thank you for your attention

For more information :

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