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Posts

[CHILD POVERTY, FRANCE, GLOBAL POVERTY](#)

TOP 6 FACTS ABOUT CHILD POVERTY IN FRANCE



Children are among the first victims of poverty. Even in France, one of the world's most affluent countries, child poverty is still a serious issue today, if not an increasingly urgent emergency. Here are six facts about child poverty in France.

6 Things to Know about Child Poverty in France

1. According to a 2015 report by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), one out of five children under 18 years old in France live below the poverty line. This means that more than three million children in France [<https://www.unicef.fr/article/diagnostic-severe-des-droits-de-lenfant-en-france>], suffer from their parents' financial weakness and live on less than about €1000 per month, with many of them actually living on much less. This statistic is astonishing especially

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considering that the total population of poverty in France was 8.8 million in 2017.

2. In France, 20% of households have difficulties paying for their children's meals at the school canteen. To cope with this problem, French President Emmanuel Macron announced an €8 billion national anti-poverty plan [<https://www.france24.com/en/20180913-macron-seeks-win-back-leftwingers-with-anti-poverty-plan>], in September 2018. As a result of this plan, primary schools provided free breakfast to the poorest students as well as subsidized lunches for €1 each in the school canteen.

3. Child poverty in France is closely related to single-parent families who usually lack financial sources than the rest of the population. One-third of impoverished children [<https://www.thelocal.fr/20181108/report-the-shocking-truth-about-poverty-in-france-in-2018>], live in single-parent families, especially those made up of single women and children. As of 2018, single mothers are among the most affected by poverty in France, before immigrants and elderly people. The fraught financial situation and high educational expenses have sadly led some young women to pay for their children's studies through prostitution. The students' union SUD Etudiant estimated in 2006 that the number of single mothers struggling to pay [https://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite/2006/10/30/01001-20061030ARTFIG90152-la_prostitution_gagne_les_bancs_de_la_fac.php], for their children's' education was around 40,000 and continues to rise.

4. The impoverished family background may reproduce further inequalities in education and employment. According to the 2015 UNICEF report, 140,000 children were dropping out of school each year. UNICEF also criticized France's educational system [<https://www.france24.com/en/20150609-unicef-report-france-child-poverty-economic-crisis-education>], in which children from unprivileged families have less chance to enter universities, for failing to gear up social mobility and widening the gap between the rich and the poor instead. It estimated that it takes six generations for children born in impoverished families to attain an average income in France.

5. There are about 30,000 children in France who are homeless and 9,000 who live in slums, many of whom are foreigners without legal status. The charitable organization Secours Catholique, which helps more than 67,000 impecunious people in need in France, claims that more than 40% of the families they assisted are immigrants, and only less than half of them have legal status in

France. As a result, they do not have the right to work or benefit from social welfare.

6. Nevertheless, thanks to its social service and healthcare, France remains one of the countries with the lowest child mortality rates [https://www.unicef.org/french/sowc08/docs/sowc08_table_10-fr.pdf], despite its issue of child poverty. In fact, the 4% rate of child mortality in France is the same as that in Germany, Spain and Italy, lower than 6% in Canada and 8% in the United States.

These six facts about child poverty in France shed light on the growing poverty problem in a country that is as wealthy as France. However, by shedding light on child poverty in France the government and charity organizations will work to alleviate youth poverty in its early stages.

– *Jingyan Zhang*

Photo: Flickr [<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ralf-steinberger/34981168681/in/photolist-ViaCHX-gkVvFW-pGqCLn-qykqDt-Wd54U-5fSv5U-cE8eYG-MjYmiQ-NpUkH9-iiRP8z-D7GECR-NRsSvs-pzgZpa-nryqBm-htBQoP-qPnNkw-cNJaXw-btnwj5-rm43ow-qWEu1J-q7FJR1-e7KaeE-t19cH-f4Z69s-eUfxn8-jPmgVr-mYrZqQ-bZYDgq-5Njz7V-i9c7Vx-vztsc1-rxKSOj-mNLR9a-rz6JgR-85mj3H-5WmfTK-7GMuJQ-ghj3BM-rHsa7C-nHCK1K-nkoSD1-qb6kbu-spbkbK-aosdzc-5WqRN7-bcpg9-7BzwTb-qvbsnS-aJfVhH-7BveUZ>]

JANUARY 6, 2021

GLOBAL POVERTY

THE YELLOW VESTS & PRESIDENT MACRON'S FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY IN FRANCE



France, [<https://borgenproject.org/ending-hunger-in-france/>], the world's 7th largest economy, has gained national media attention as the "Yellow Vest" protest hits its 10th consecutive weekend. The protesters — originally citizens of the country's rural areas — came to Paris to protest higher taxes on fuel [<https://www.npr.org/2018/12/03/672862353/who-are-frances-yellow-vest-protesters-and-what-do-they-want>]. Now, three months into the protest, the movement has changed its message to target many economic problems the poor of the country struggle with.

Poverty in France

This unrest has pressured French President Emmanuel Macron to do more to help the nation's poor. He has now announced an 8 billion-euro (\$9.3 billion) anti-poverty plan [<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-reform-poverty-macron/frances-president-of-the-rich-launches-anti-poverty-plan-idUSKCN1LT1T2>], aimed at appeasing the protestors and increasing the fight against poverty in France. He hopes it will get people into work and help the young. Specifically, this plan includes increasing: schooling until the age of 18, nurseries to get mothers into work, emergency accommodation with a priority for women and children, and breakfast for students in the poorest areas.

Additionally, the package includes wage increases [<https://www.france24.com/en/20190119-france-yellow-vests-defy-macron-national-debate-bid-10th-saturday-protests-taxes-petrol>], and tax relief for low earners and retirees. Macron also launched a "national debate" to talk to the public about their economic situation. This period is to last two months, and end with a "new contract" [<https://www.france24.com/en/20190115-live-macron-launches-national-debate-speech-grand-bourgtheroulde-yellow-vests-france>] for the nation."

Steps to Improvement

Poverty in France affects nine million of the country's 67 million people with a third of these figures being children. Macron has stated the previous welfare system [<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-reform-poverty-macron/frances-president-of-the-rich-launches-anti-poverty-plan-idUSKCN1LT1T2>], "does not do enough to prevent people from falling into poverty, does not do enough to eradicate poverty." He has expressed frustration at previous plans, saying they "plow a wad of cash" into benefits, but produce very few results. Macron also plans to make these earlier systems more simple, as one in three people eligible for core benefits do not apply.

These low application rates are well known, but so are the very real struggles of applying. A story on Expatica, a website made to help immigrants in Europe settle into their new countries, has a very telling story on a citizen's attempt to apply for aid. The author describes the process of applying for three state programs providing assistance. Describing the welfare system as "tricky," they share that one of their claims had boomeranged back to them four times and that this experience is something everyone applying should expect.

Complex Issues, Concrete Solutions

According to the author, the complexity of the process is well known to the administration, which is exactly why they request documents multiple times. This repetitive behavior requires applicants to deal with huge stacks of paperwork [<https://www.expatica.com/fr/about/gov-law-admin/french-welfare-being-poor-is-a-full-time-job-in-france-982304/>], and multiple trips to state offices. Stories such as these may explain the low application numbers and also act as some of the issues Macron hopes to address in his new programs.

Although many of the protesters express concern over Macron's national debate [<https://www.france24.com/en/20190119-france-yellow-vests-defy-macron-national-debate-bid-10th-saturday-protests-taxes-petrol>], it is extremely clear many people in the country need help, and many of the programs need reforming. With the debates and planning still in the works, it can be hard to tell exactly what is going to be done. However, the people are talking, and it appears the government is listening. The fight against French poverty is clearly still on-going, but progress is steadily being made.

– *Zachary Sparks*

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MARCH 11, 2019

FRANCE. HUNGER

TOP 10 FACTS ABOUT POVERTY IN FRANCE



France [<https://borgenproject.org/ending-hunger-in-france/>] may be known as a fabulous tourist destination that attracts around 89 million [<https://www.thelocal.fr/20180118/france-retains-crown-as-most-visited-country-on-earth>] tourists per year, but many people who vacation there turn a blind eye to the 14.1 percent [<https://www.thelocal.fr/20160907/over-14-percent-of-the-french-live-below-poverty-line>] of the population (nearly 9 million people) that live below the poverty line. Here are the top 10 facts about poverty in France: [<https://borgenproject.org/poverty-in-france/>]

10 Facts About Poverty in France

1. The definition of poverty in France follows that of the European Union. The poverty line in Europe is “60 percent [<http://www.thepovertyline.net/france/>].of the populations median income” and is based on living conditions and employment levels. This means that more than 8 million people in France live on less than 954 euros [<https://www.thelocal.fr/20120330/2985>] a month.
2. There is a considerable gap between the rich and the poor in France. The bottom 20 percent [<http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/countries/france/>].of the population earn almost five times less than the top 20 percent. This inequality is more obvious in the French city of Paris. Even though the overall poverty rate in the city of Paris is 14 percent, which is close to the national average, when you look at the underprivileged neighborhoods, the rate jumps to nearly 40 percent [<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/01/france-growing-income-inequality-problem-201512311224855101.html>].
3. In 2004, the poverty rate in France was at its lowest at 12.6 percent [<https://www.statista.com/statistics/460446/poverty-rate-france/>]. However, that number has gone up. In 2015, 14.2 percent of the French population was living below the poverty line.
4. France’s most vulnerable groups are among the most impoverished. According to a report published by the charity Secours Catholique, single women, children and foreigners are at the greatest risk [https://www.secours-catholique.org/sites/scinternet/files/publications/ra_2016_ang_final_bas_de]. of being impoverished. In 2016, Secours Catholique passed a comprehensive nine-year National Plan [https://www.secours-catholique.org/sites/scinternet/files/publications/ra_2016_ang_final_bas_de] to address the issue of poverty in France with a focus on the higher risk population.
5. There are several misconceptions about poverty in France. Seven out of 10 people in France believe it is easy to receive welfare. In actuality, of those who apply for unemployment, around 68 percent [<http://en.rfi.fr/economy/20141017-more-eight-million-live-poverty-france-anti-poor-prejudice-still-rife>].of those eligible for benefits will not receive them. Furthermore, up to 100 documents can be required in the application process.
6. France is known to work to protect the rights of its citizens. It puts aside over one-third [<http://en.rfi.fr/economy/20141017-more-eight-million-live-poverty-france-anti-poor-prejudice-still-rife>].of

its GDP to providing welfare protection. This is more than any other country in Europe.

7. A new French law will require retailers to donate their unsold clothes to charity. Last February, a photo posted to Facebook showing a French clothing store destroying many unsold clothing items. This caused a great backlash from the public with many people commenting on how wasteful this was and that these clothes could benefit those in France who cannot afford to clothe themselves or their families. A French organization, Emmaus, which focuses on ending homelessness and poverty, worked with French officials to find a solution. French Prime Minister, Edouard Philippe, has introduced a law to take effect in 2019 [<https://mymodernmet.com/france-clothing-waste-law/>], that would ban retailers from throwing away unsold clothing and require the retailers to donate them to charity instead.
8. France is home to many poverty-fighting organizations. The Restos du Coeur is one of the largest French organizations that helps with poverty alleviation. Their volunteers distribute thousands of hot meals every day. In fact, in 2015, 128.5 million meals [<https://www.utopia500.net/single-post/2016/04/15/Les-Restos-du-Cœur---The-French-institution-fighting-food-waste-and-hunger>], were given out throughout France. Another organization, SOS Children's Villages, is an international organization that has been very active in France. Parents who cannot take care of their children can seek the help of SOS Children's Villages [<https://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/our-work>], to offer support systems within the community to help provide a stable environment for the children in an effort to keep families together. There are two SOS Social Centres in France, one in the north of France and one near Paris.
9. French supermarkets must give away their unsold, expired food. Food waste is a global problem. After a unanimous vote [<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/10/france-vote-force-supermarkets-give-away-unsold-food-waste>], by French Members of Parliament in 2015, supermarkets must now give away unsold food that has reached its sell-by date and are banned from destroying older food products. These unsold food products go to associations that collect and distribute the food to those in need. About 5,000 charities receive the unsold food throughout France. This law helps save up to 66 pounds of food [<https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2018/02/24/586579455/french-food-waste-law-changing-how-grocery-stores-approach-excess-food>], per person every year.
10. The 2018 World Cup brought hope to impoverished, immigrant, suburban French youth. Nineteen-year-old Kylian Mbappe

[\[https://www.npr.org/2018/06/24/622871832/frances-world-cup-team-brings-positive-attention-to-suburban-fans\]](https://www.npr.org/2018/06/24/622871832/frances-world-cup-team-brings-positive-attention-to-suburban-fans) is one of the newest stars on the French Soccer Team. Mbappe, and many other French teammates, are from mainly non-white suburbs that surround major cities in France. Mbappe is from Bondy, which is less than ten miles away from Paris, yet seems almost like a different world. The mayor of Bondy says that Mbappe's success is "marvelous because so often people talk about suburbs in negative terms." Other French soccer players are from suburban areas as well, like midfielder [Paul Pogba](https://www.transfermarkt.co.uk/paul-pogba/profil/spieler/122153) [\[https://www.transfermarkt.co.uk/paul-pogba/profil/spieler/122153\]](https://www.transfermarkt.co.uk/paul-pogba/profil/spieler/122153), from the Lagny-Sur-Marne in the eastern suburbs of Paris.

These 10 facts about poverty in France shed light on the growing poverty problem in a place that seems as perfect as a postcard. Even first-world countries, including France, The United States, and Japan, can have poverty issues that the media does not focus on. However, with the work of the governments, charity organizations and the community, there is hope to alleviate poverty.

– *Ariane Komyati*

Photo: Flickr [\[https://www.flickr.com/photos/kristoffer-trolle/17630242941/in/photolist-sRVAZT-pVKin4-242ZdaU-p8ZWWw-dMfCbv-26poMQX-9pPrAw-PDzgTa-QYaA9j-Y6SXzR-qEXr6r-cYUmkf-axriV4-pga6n7-nZkrtf-24zM4xW-qeCFSj-24PcVdm-2AnRsm-ggSpKA-o8wMKu-ptr8Np-oAnA9p-pDRPCE-pauMLX-pZtSRi-22A8AWK-25cG58h-cYf9oJ-R8uDZx-oEWFeg-pidooX-C3GT6M-25Knqk7-p1FKnW-oUct9y-q6H7Ls-cRy7Ah-oMt3C1-oG9LF6-cQ8Eg7-XPQEpR-YtEUPw-fooQQq-amd58C-prrAzF-Q1Tpyh-ghE7qR-XemsAZ-oL83xw\]](https://www.flickr.com/photos/kristoffer-trolle/17630242941/in/photolist-sRVAZT-pVKin4-242ZdaU-p8ZWWw-dMfCbv-26poMQX-9pPrAw-PDzgTa-QYaA9j-Y6SXzR-qEXr6r-cYUmkf-axriV4-pga6n7-nZkrtf-24zM4xW-qeCFSj-24PcVdm-2AnRsm-ggSpKA-o8wMKu-ptr8Np-oAnA9p-pDRPCE-pauMLX-pZtSRi-22A8AWK-25cG58h-cYf9oJ-R8uDZx-oEWFeg-pidooX-C3GT6M-25Knqk7-p1FKnW-oUct9y-q6H7Ls-cRy7Ah-oMt3C1-oG9LF6-cQ8Eg7-XPQEpR-YtEUPw-fooQQq-amd58C-prrAzF-Q1Tpyh-ghE7qR-XemsAZ-oL83xw)

SEPTEMBER 2, 2018

FRANCE, GLOBAL POVERTY

POVERTY IN FRANCE DIVIDES RICH AND POOR

Poverty in France [<https://borgenproject.org/poverty-in-france/>] is rising once again, creating a larger financial gap between citizens. The poverty rate in France [<https://borgenproject.org/poverty-france-overlooked/>] is around 14 percent, totaling 8.7 million people, according to a COMPAS study in 2012. Border towns [<https://www.thelocal.fr/20140128/frances-rich-and-poor-where-do-they-live>] are seeing percentages closer to 49 percent, while wealthier cities have rates as low as 7 percent.

In 2012, some metropolitan areas saw higher rates of poverty. The inequality gaps [<http://www.thepovertyline.net/france/>] were most obvious in Paris, Hauts-de-Seine and Haute-Savoie. Single parents, large families and young family households had the highest rates of poverty in France.

This escalation of poverty in France [<https://borgenproject.org/ending-hunger-in-france/>] is concerning in regards to the percentage of children that are living under the poverty line. 8.8 percent of children [https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc10_eng.pdf] are living in a household that makes less than 50 percent of the national median income. This is an increase to three million children in France living under the poverty line.

Education, health and social and professional integration are areas of concern regarding children in France. Migrant children are deprived of most of these basic rights, living in slums and experiencing more severe discrimination and no ability to gain French aid. Children in these impoverished households in France lack a way out of poverty, leaving it up to the state to provide aid.

In 1989 [<https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/human-rights/extreme-poverty-and-human-rights/>], France adopted the Human Rights Council's (HRC) resolution which drew a link between extreme poverty and human rights. Through this council, principles were adopted to reduce and eradicate extreme poverty by looking at how to respect, protect and realize the human rights of people living in extreme poverty.

While the HRC exists, many of the [French aid programs](https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7034.pdf) [https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7034.pdf], do not specifically target poverty and the need to reduce domestic poverty. France participates in foreign aid policies and programs, such as the Development Assistance Committee of OECD, but domestic aid by the state is left mainly to the Human Rights Council and a few other organizations.

The organizations that are combating poverty in France are mainly grassroots foundations. One foundation is the Action Contre La Faim, or [Action Against Hunger](http://www.charity-charities.org/France-charities/Paris-1536230.html) [http://www.charity-charities.org/France-charities/Paris-1536230.html], founded in 1979 by French intellectuals to eradicate hunger worldwide after seeing the issues caused by the emergency in Afghanistan. Another French charity, [Antenna Technologies](http://www.charity-charities.org/France-charities/LeVesinet-1536248.html) [http://www.charity-charities.org/France-charities/LeVesinet-1536248.html], works locally and internationally to simplify technologies to make them more accessible to the most underprivileged populations, while also fighting malnutrition and [supplying access to drinking water](https://borgenproject.org/water-quality-france/) [https://borgenproject.org/water-quality-france/].

People within France are taking action through organizations to fight poverty. Through these efforts, malnourishment, water scarcity, sanitation and education are being addressed and progress is being made. Their continued work can help improve the lives of those most in need in France.

– Bronti DeRoche

Photo: [Flickr](https://www.flickr.com/photos/ralfsteinberger/34981168681/) [https://www.flickr.com/photos/ralfsteinberger/34981168681/]

NOVEMBER 30, 2017

CHILDREN, FOOD & HUNGER, FRANCE, GLOBAL POVERTY

1 IN 5 CHILDREN IN FRANCE LIVING IN POVERTY

A new report by UNICEF France has revealed that over three million children in France live in poverty. [<https://borgenproject.org/poverty-france-overlooked/>]. In a span of four years, the number of children living under the poverty line increased by 440,000. Also touched on, was the high level of discrimination and human rights violation of poor migrant children. The report also addressed France's failure to implement a strategy for children, and suggested 36 policy adjustments.

We often think of France as a sturdy, developed world power, but the widening gap between the rich and the poor, lack of policies aimed at children and widespread discrimination against migrants, show that developing countries aren't the only places for progress to be made. In fact, many European countries face higher rates of child poverty and an estimated 1 in 3 children lives in poverty in both the United Kingdom and Spain.

These findings seem astonishing, especially for a country with the financial status and power as France, but it goes to show how important policies are. Without the proper policies in place, countries will not make progress. This new report and the investigation as a whole will provide a prime example for governments all over the world. Policy is what gives a country the power to grow. For example, we have seen poverty reduction programs go into developing countries with the good intentions of providing or creating capital only to see it stop there because of a lack of regulation or policies in place to continue growth, and to protect that growth.

The lack of policy aimed at French youth is alarming from any standpoint. The high rate of poverty among children suggests a lack of investment in youth, which will hurt France in the long term. With 3 million impoverished children, the outlook on the future working generation is not good. The rates of homelessness and school dropouts should be a serious wake up call for the French government. As more and more children fall below the poverty line, fewer children are enrolled in school, which translates directly to less economic and political participation in the future. The decreased participation will make for a less productive nation and France, as a whole will face a number of resulting problems needing urgent attention.

France has a reputation for discrimination against migrants and foreigners and this report as a part of a broader investigation and the changes the French government makes as a result should hopefully loosen some of those longstanding divisions. In order to succeed and grow as a nation, France desperately needs to become more progressive. There needs to be less marginalization and more positive policy aimed at children and at migrants to encourage them to succeed, which will in turn help France as a whole to grow.

– Emma Dowd

Sources: [Eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/People_at_risk_of_poverty_or_social_exclusion), [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/People_at_risk_of_poverty_or_social_exclusion]
[France 24](http://www.france24.com/en/20150609-unicef-report-france-child-poverty-economic-crisis-education), [<http://www.france24.com/en/20150609-unicef-report-france-child-poverty-economic-crisis-education>], [Newsweek](http://europe.newsweek.com/one-five-children-france-live-poverty-new-report-328478), [<http://europe.newsweek.com/one-five-children-france-live-poverty-new-report-328478>], [World Bulletin](http://www.worldbulletin.net/news/160431/unicef-3-mn-french-children-live-in-poverty), [<http://www.worldbulletin.net/news/160431/unicef-3-mn-french-children-live-in-poverty>].
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JUNE 17, 2015
