Support for generous transfers to the poor and the unemployed extends well beyond net beneficiaries of these transfers: a substantial share of financially secure net contributors support these programs out of altruistic concerns. This paper argues that the threat of fiscal adjustment (fiscal stress) pits beneficiaries against contributors and undermines mass support for generous transfers targeted to the poor and the unemployed. Fiscal stress also affects mass attitudes toward universal policies such as health care. Relative to the financially insecure, the financially secure become much more likely to support making access to universal social benefits conditional on prior work and contribution history. I test these predictions using experimental evidence from France. The preference dynamics theorized and documented in this paper can help explain some of the patterns of social policy retrenchment observed in advanced capitalist countries.

**Keywords:** Social policy preferences, Welfare state reform, Social Insurance, Policy Design, Retrenchment, Austerity, Fiscal Stress

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1 Introduction

For nearly three decades now, advanced capitalist countries have been “coping with permanent austerity” (Pierson 2002, 1998). Because of low fertility and population aging, the tax base has not increased as fast as health care and pensions costs. De-industrialization and free-trade have further worsened this trend by increasing structural unemployment, underemployment and depressing wages at the bottom of the skill distribution (Autor et al. 2014). In the meantime, international tax-competition has shifted the relative tax burden from capital to labor decreasing governments’ ability to raise additional income (Devereux, Lockwood and Redoano 2008; Overesch and Rincke 2011; Leibrecht and Hochgatterer 2012; Zemmour N.d.). Absent strong economic growth (Piketty 2014), tax increase and social policy reform, these demographic and economic changes generate important fiscal stress (Schäfer and Streeck 2013).

Political and economic elites sharply disagree on whether, how and when tax increases and spending cuts should be introduced to mitigate fiscal stress. However, since the early 1990s, political actors that favor “austerity measures” to address “unsustainable” levels of spending and “structural deficits” have increasingly prevailed (Hemerijck 2012). Public opinion data shows that voters are also concerned about the state of public finances. In France and Great Britain, close to 70 percent of individuals surveyed between 2012 and 2015 disagreed with the claim that “measures to reduce public deficit and debt are not a priority for now.”

What effect (if any) does fiscal stress, defined as the threat of fiscal adjustment, have on policy preferences? To the best of my knowledge, this question has received only limited attention. This oversight is partly rooted in the (often implicit) assumption that voters fail to understand – or choose to disregard – the government’s budget constraint. As famously argued by Pierson (2001), Esping-Andersen (1990) and Korpi and Palme (1998) among others, support for generous social policies inherited from the “Golden Age” of welfare state expansion is widespread. This means that cuts in social spending are politically costly (Pierson 2011). At the same time, voters strongly resist any significant tax increases (Pierson 2002: 381). Fiscal stress generated by economic and demographic changes is thus worsened by voters who “want to have their cake and eat it too.”

In contrast, I hypothesize that voters are aware of the state’s budget constraint. Self-interested voters react to fiscal stress by choosing to concentrate financial efforts on programs they are most likely to benefit from. Because social programs vary in how they distribute benefits across a population, the consequences of fiscal stress also vary across social programs.

With regards to benefits targeted to the poor and the unemployed, the threat of an increase in taxes will result in what Atkinson (1990) calls a “reversion” to self-interest among financially secure individuals who support transfers to the worse-off out of altruistic concerns. Building on previous work by Alesina, 1

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1 When asked whether “measures to reduce the public deficit and debt cannot be reduced,” 80 percent of respondents on average expressed their agreement with this statement.
Glaeser and Sacerdote (2001); Petersen et al. (2011) and Cavaillé (N.d.), I identify this group based on their beliefs about recipients’ deservingness, i.e. beliefs about recipients’ propensity to free-ride. Fiscal stress increases the cost of empathy for deserving recipients. The financially secure who find recipients deserving become less likely to support an increase in taxes to avoid a drop in benefit generosity following fiscal adjustment. In contrast, current and potential recipients of benefits targeted to the poor and the jobless support such increase. In other words, fiscal stress weakens existing social solidarity between net beneficiaries of and net contributors to policies designed to help those who struggle to provide for themselves.

In the case of universal benefits such as health care, the financially secure net contributors to these social programs support maintaining benefit generosity in the face of fiscal adjustment. However, to limit tax increases, they support making access to benefits conditional on past work and contribution history. In contrast, the financially insecure, because of their own patchy contribution history, oppose such conditional access to social benefits. Commitment to maintaining benefit generosity in times of fiscal stress is consequently stronger for universal than targeted policies. But fiscal stress can increase reliance on a reciprocity principle, at the expense of need-based social solidarity.

I test these predictions using a survey experiment ran on a sample of French respondents. I examine how information about the mismatch between tax receipts and social spending shapes the willingness to fund three types of social programs: means-tested safety-net transfers, contribution-based unemployment insurance and universal health care. Means-tested transfers are targeted to the poor and unavailable to the financially secure who are, by design, net contributors to the social programs. Unemployment insurance is also targeted in that access to benefits is conditional on being unemployed. In addition, jobloss is a risk that is unequally distributed in the population. Universal health care, in contrast, is a benefit received by all regardless of whether or not the beneficiary is currently employed and independent of one’s income level (Moene and Wallerstein 2003). In addition, the risk of health-related income loss is more equally distributed in the population, or is at least perceived as such (Jensen and Petersen 2014).

The experimental findings support the argument. When reminded of the welfare state’s financial situation, financially secure survey respondents decrease their support for benefits targeted to the unemployed and the poor and decrease their support for universal access to health care. Financially insecure survey respondents move in the other direction. I also examine whether the differences between control and treatment groups are due to self-interested attitudinal updating among the financially secure who find welfare recipients deserving. I find strong evidence for Atkinson’s “reversion” to self-interest.

These findings have important implications for our understanding of attitudinal change in mature welfare states. Most of the existing research puzzles over the absence of an increase in support for redistribution in countries where income inequality has increased (Meltzer and Richard 1981). To answer this question, researchers have focused on the insurance component of social spending and on the decoupling of risk and income (Alt and Iversen 2013; Rehm, Hacker and Schlesinger 2012). I offer a new approach where economic and demographic changes are affecting preferences not only through the
channel of individual labor market experiences, but also through credible threats of fiscal adjustment following changes in the dependency ratio. I document social policy reform dynamics in line with the claim that resilient mass support for existing social policies, especially for universal programs (Pierson 2011; Korpi and Palme 1998), can coexists with a decrease in social solidarity.
2 The Argument

Fiscal stress is a situation where spending outstrips revenue, making fiscal adjustment through benefit decreases a more credible threat. In addition, public debt generated by prior deficits increases taxes’ deadweight loss: a growing portion of any additional dollar generated through taxes is used to pay for past expenses instead of funding current ones. In other words, at a time of downward pressure on benefit generosity, the cost of maintaining existing levels of generosity increases.

Figures 1 through 3 present preliminary evidence that, in countries with high levels of fiscal stress, public opinion is more likely to believe that current levels of benefit generosity are under threat. In the past two decades, governments in France, Austria, Germany and Great Britain have repeatedly failed to balance the budget (Figure 1). As a result, public debt has experienced continuous growth (Figure 2). In contrast, in countries like Denmark and Finland where budgets have generated surpluses in good times and deficits in bad times, the public debt has remained more or less stable since the 1980s.

**Figure 1: Budget Deficits in Selected European Countries: 1995-2015**

![Figure 1: Budget Deficits in Selected European Countries: 1995-2015](https://data.oecd.org/gga/general-government-deficit.htm)

Source: OECD (2015)

Concern over the sustainability of the welfare state appears to co-vary with the severity of fiscal stress. At least half of individuals surveyed in Great Britain, France and Germany believe that current levels of generosity with regards to public pensions is unsustainable (Figure 3). This share is only slightly smaller for public health care (Figure 4). In contrast, respondents in Denmark and Norway express much lower levels of concern. In Spain and Portugal, levels of concern appear comparatively low when contrasted with...

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2 Unfortunately, I could not identify survey items that examine the second side of the fiscal stress coin namely perceptions of tax hike threats and beliefs about how successful an increases in tax rates will be at maintaining benefit generosity.

3 Norway, a oil rich country, is a notable exception: large budget surpluses have brought the public debt well below the 40 percent threshold, even as the Great Recession was unfolding.
with objective measures of fiscal stress (e.g. Spain is comparable to France, not shown). However, these countries also stand out as having the largest share of “do not know” answers. Assuming that these answers signal uncertainty over the generosity of future benefits, adding the “unsustainable” and the “do not know” response categories reveals a strong co-variance between fiscal stress and public opinion’s confidence in the future of the welfare state.\(^4\)

Fiscal stress will affect people differently depending on the reasons why a given individual supports generous social transfers in the first place. These reasons can be either self or other-regarding (or both). Previous research indicates that these reasons vary with policy design (Cavaillé N.d.). The next section examines this issue in more detail before turning to predictions about the relationship between fiscal stress and social policy preferences.

**Policy Design and the Structure of Public Opinion**

An important institutional feature of mature welfare states is the coexistence of two types of social policies. The first type comprises of social policies where benefits are targeted to those who are not currently employed. Because taxes are mainly levied on the employed, the result is limited overlap, at a given point in time, between those who are beneficiaries of a given transfer and those who are tax-paying net contributors. The second type of policies comprises of those that provide benefits to everyone,

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\(^4\) Public discourse shaped by political and economic elites is likely to play an important role in mediating the relationship between fiscal stress and perceptions of downward pressure on benefit generosity. I leave this issue to future iterations of this research project.
irrespective of one’s capacity to independently earn a living. Figure 5 sketches this point.

5 This institutional dualism is an historical legacy of the earlier stages of welfare state formation. The expansion of the welfare state often followed from the expansion of insurance programs aimed at protecting individuals from unforeseen, unpredictable and/or catastrophic income loss. Small scale disability and unemployment risk-pooling programs expanded to include the majority of the workforce (Baldwin 1990; Clasen 1997; Mares 2006). Replacement rate also increased dramatically, improving the income-smoothing properties of social insurance and making them attractive to workers beyond the liquidity constrained poor (Chetty 2005). Public pensions also started as insurance programs against old-age related disability. These programs then evolved into what might be now better described as “forced savings” with redistributive consequences: upon reaching retirement age, all workers receive a given pension, whether or not they are still capable of working. I will come back to the
The population is divided into two groups, those who work, which represent the share $\sigma_E$ of the population and those who do not work, which represent the share $1 - \sigma_E$. Among the unemployed, we can distinguish between those permanently out-of-work (such as retirees, the disabled or the long term unemployed) and those who are only temporarily out-of-work. This latter group has a probability of finding a new job equal to $\beta$. The employed, on the other hand, face a probability of becoming unemployed equal to $\alpha$. Social policy is represented using two parameters. The first is the flat tax rate $t$ leveraged on the earnings of the employed, $w$. The second one is the extent to which benefits are more or less targeted to those who cannot provide for themselves (Moene and Wallerstein 2001).

The expected lifetime utility of a given individual consists of a weighted average of the expected utility in the employed and unemployed states. The current state (employed or unemployed) is weighted more or less heavily depending on an individual’s discount rate, $r$. The future state (unemployed or employed) is weighted more or less heavily depending on the expected probability of shifting to this state, i.e. depending on $\beta$ and $\alpha$ (see Figure 5). In other words, self-interested employed (unemployed) individuals care about the benefits received by the unemployed (employed) because of the non zero probability that they may end up in that state in the future.

Employed (unemployed) voters might also care about those without (with) earnings out of empathy, namely the ability to identify with those without resources and care about their well-being as if it was one’s own (Moene and Wallerstein 2001: 363). Students of social policy preferences have extensively documented the role of such other-regarding motive. The bulk of the literature points to the existence of a form of conditional altruism, which makes support for social transfers conditional on the perceived deservingness of welfare recipients (Gilens 1999). Perceptions of deservingness are shaped by beliefs about the internal and external reasons that explain why an individual cannot provide for her or himself
Cavaillé (N.d.) has documented the extent to which reliance on this form of conditional altruism varies with policy design: when benefits are targeted to the worse off, reliance on considerations of deservingness increase among net contributors to redistributive social policies (identified through their income level). Perceptions of deservingness are uncorrelated with one’s own economic conditions. As a result, electoral coalitions in favor of generous transfers to the poor and the unemployed include not only recipients but also a substantial proportion of financially secure individuals who believe recipients to be deserving. While these individuals do not expect to benefit from redistributive social programs, they are willing to fund them because these programs benefit individuals who cannot be blamed for their fate and are not trying to free-ride on shared resources (Petersen et al. 2011; Rothstein 1998).

As famously pointed out by Paul Pierson and others, universal social policies in contrast create a large support base: mass support is here rooted in well-understood self-interest, buttressed by loss aversion (Tversky and Kahneman 1991). Support extends beyond low-income individuals to reach near unanimity in countries with large and generous programs (Cavaillé N.d.; Korpi and Palme 1998; Esping-Andersen 1990; Kenworthy and Pontusson 2005; Brady and Bostic 2014; Beramendi and Rehm 2011).

Fiscal Stress and its Effect on Social Policy Preferences

How might fiscal stress and the threat of a decline in benefit generosity affect social policy preferences? The intuition is simple: net beneficiaries will support fiscal adjustment that maintains benefit generosity through a tax increase; net contributors will support fiscal adjustment without a tax increase, preferring instead a decrease in benefit generosity. Because who is a contributors and beneficiaries varies with policy design, the effect of fiscal stress will also vary across different social policies.

If social transfers are targeted to the poor and the unemployed, then fiscal stress increases the cost of empathy for net contributors who find recipients deserving. Financially secure individuals who support transfers to the poor and the unemployed out of concerns for deservingness will experience what Atkinson calls a “reversion” to self-interest (Atkinson 1990): as the marginal cost of maintaining benefit generosity increases, these individuals will prefer to let generosity decrease to avoid additional taxes.

If social transfers are received by all, including financially secure individuals, then willingness to pay will be higher. However, the revenue needed to maintain generosity for a universal transfer is much larger than when transfers are targeted to a small group. In other words, while the cost to the self of a decline in benefit generosity is higher when programs are universal, the marginal cost of maintaining generosity is also higher. One solution is to decrease the pool of recipients eligible for the benefit, in effect shifting benefits away from individuals who are the most responsible for a high marginal cost of taxation (Moene

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6 In the case of the unemployed this might reflect empathy for tax-payers who have to give part of their income to the state when they are believed to have earned it through hard work more than sheer luck (Piketty 1995; Benabou and Tirole 2006).
Hypothesis 1: Fiscal stress will generate a preference cleavage between the financially secure/employed tax-paying contributors on the one hand, and the financially insecure/unemployed recipients, on the other. The former, unlike the latter, will be unwilling to maintain benefit generosity through an increase in taxes. 

This will be especially true if benefits are targeted to those without earnings.

Hypothesis 2: Fiscal stress will affect tax-paying contributors through a reversion to self-interest among those motivated by other-regarding motives.

Hypothesis 3: Fiscal stress will increase the employed voters’ support for tying benefits to prior contributions. In contrast, unemployed recipients will maintain support for unconditional access.

From the argument presented in this section, we can draw several tentative conclusions. Voters will react to fiscal stress by choosing to arbitrate across social programs: they will maintain their allegiance to the programs they are most likely to rely on and will resist increasing taxes to maintain benefit generosity for programs they do not expect to rely on. This self-oriented, well-being maximizing reasoning will translate into a larger preference gap between financially secure/employed contributors and financially insecure/unemployed recipients, especially for policies where benefits are targeted to the latter (Hypothesis 1). Voters can also choose to maintain the generosity of existing programs by directly shaping the dependency ratio (i.e. the marginal cost of taxation) and limiting access to social programs to individuals with strong tax and social contribution history (Hypothesis 3). Fiscal stress also decreases social solidarity by weakening the coalitions of self-interested benefit recipients and (conditionally) altruistic contributors (Hypothesis 2). Overall, fiscal stress affects the redistributive impact of the welfare state by decreasing social spending targeted to those with a weak labor market attachment, and by weakening the redistributive component built into universal social transfer programs.7

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7 For evidence of a decline in the redistributive impact of the welfare state, see (Rueda Forthcoming).
3 Empirical Strategy

I test hypotheses 1 through 3 using a survey experiment ran on a sample of French respondents. The aim is to test the micro-level assumptions that underlie the argument presented above: do people react to information on fiscal stress in ways that indicate that 1) they understand the government’s budget constraint, 2) they are self-interested. Can the reversion to self-interest argument predict who will be the most affected about information on fiscal stress (i.e., those who find recipients deserving)? I examine whether fiscal stress increases the policy preference gap between tax paying contributors and unemployed recipients. I expect the effect to vary with social policy design. I also examine whether individuals who find recipients deserving are the most affected by the treatment.

I use French survey respondents because the financial woes of the welfare state are a salient issue pitting reform-minded governments, both from the left and the right, to vocal opponents of reform. In 2008, the French were among the most concerned about the future of their health care and pension systems: half of respondents agreed with the claim that in 10 years from now, “France will not be able to afford the present level of public health care/old age pension” (see Figure 4 and 3). The Great Recession, because of its effect on the budget deficit, has further made salient the mismatch between spending and revenue. In 2010, only 30 percent of individuals surveyed agreed with the claim that reducing public debt should not be a priority for now. The percentage remained the same in 2015. In contrast 74 percent (75 in 2015) agreed with the claim that “measures to reduce the public deficit and debt cannot be delayed” (Eurobarometer 74.1 and 84.3). In 2015, 68 percent of respondents favored decreasing public deficits. Of this group, 80 percent believed that it was very or extremely important to do so and half made it one of their top three policy priorities in the country. This level of priority was comparable to levels attributed to two other policy goals: increasing the minimum wage and decreasing the number of foreigners in the country (Grossman 2016).

Data collection

I posted the survey on a French crowd sourcing platform called Foule Factory,8 A total of 908 respondents completed the survey over a period of 10 days (March 4th - March 14th 2016). The job description mentioned that the survey was for a scientific study on French public opinion. It also indicated that the survey would take between 5 and 8 min and that respondents would be paid 1 euro and 80 cents for completing the task. This amount is equivalent to an hourly wage of 14 euros, which is about 50 percent higher than the 10 euros minimum wage in France. Only 9 respondents took less than 3 minutes to answer the survey and 95 percent of respondents finished in less than 12 minutes. To validate the task, respondents had to enter a code provided on the last page of the survey. This code was randomly generated and unique to each respondent.

Of the 908 respondents, 45% were female and 55% were male. As one might expect from internet users, respondents are younger and more educated than the average population. Virtually all respondents are of working age (18-65 years old), with 18% below 25, 29% between 25 and 34, 38% between 35 and 50 and the remainder below 65 years old. In total, 60% have some tertiary education, 26% only have the baccalaureate, and 14% have less than the baccalaureate. Table A.1 in the Appendix gives the break up in terms of respondents’ labor market situation. Close to half of respondent have a full time job, 28% only have a weak labor market attachment and 10% are students.

Treatment

Respondents were randomly assigned to two treatment conditions. In the first group (control condition), respondents where exposed to neutral information on the French welfare state. Information was presented through both a visual and an audio. In the second group (fiscal stress condition), the same information was presented, with an additional slide and 30 seconds audio segment describing the financial situation of the welfare state. To move to the survey component of the task, respondent needed to enter a code which was provided at the end of the audio, increasing the likelihood that respondents heard the full audio. Before being assigned to the control or fiscal condition groups, respondents were asked to test their audio system by entering a number provided in a test audio. Randomization thus applied to the share of respondents who had a functioning audio system.

Individuals in the control condition were exposed to the visual presented in Figure A.1 in the Appendix. The audio emphasized the insurance properties of the welfare state, explaining first that social transfers are designed to help people who can no longer provide for themselves and second that transfers vary according to the reasons why recipients cannot earn a living. The audio concluded with a reminder that social transfers are paid by social contributions and taxes. The original audio text in French is transcribed in the Appendix. An English version is provided here:

*The Welfare State is aimed at providing financial support to individuals who find themselves unable to work. The table presented here gives an overview of the kind of social transfers paid out by the welfare state. These social transfers vary depending on the reason why someone is unable to work. These reasons are mentioned in the left column. To fund the welfare state, French citizens pay social contributions and taxes. Please take a few seconds to familiarize yourself with the different types of social transfers described in this table.*

The left column in the table mentioned four types of risks covered by the welfare state: unemployment, disability, old age and sickness. The right column listed transfers aimed at covering these risks, mixing both universal transfers, contribution-based transfers and means-tested transfers.

Individuals in the fiscal stress condition were exposed to an additional visual that was presented in a separate web page. It is reproduced in Figure A.2. The audio described the mismatch between spending generated by the social benefits described in the first part of the audio, and revenue from taxes and social
contributions. The audio went on to explain that this mismatch has generated debt, which was equal to 27 billion in 1996 and has increased to 227 billion in 2014. The visual was a simple bar chart plotting this increase. These amounts come from the annual accounts of the CADES, a separate accounting structure set up to tackle the share of the public debt generated by the welfare state. The original audio text is reproduced in the Appendix. An English version is provided here:

For more than two decades now, there has been fiscal imbalance: the revenue generated to pay for social transfers are not enough to fund all social spending. Money needs to be borrowed to make up for the difference. This generates debt. This graph plots the debt accumulated by the welfare state: it was equal to 23 billion euros in 1996. It is now equal to 227 billion euros.

This treatment was designed with the French public debate in mind. All political elites have emphasized the structural roots of the welfare state’s deficit and reform is presented as an accounting necessity. In addition, the financial situation of the French welfare state is explicitly distinguished from the overall sovereign debt. The radical left and some trade unions (e.g. CGT) have challenged this narrative, arguing that the deficit is mainly the result of a decline in the share of social contributions paid by employers. I will come back to this issue in the results section.

Predictions and outcomes of interest

Hypotheses 1 predicts that, under fiscal stress, tax-paying and financially secure employed individuals will decrease their willingness to maintain the generosity of social transfers, especially if transfers are targeted to the unemployed. Conversely, I expect the financially insecure unemployed recipients to increase their preferred tax rate in order to maintain the generosity of social transfers, especially if their are targeted to the unemployed. In other words, I expect the preference gap between the two groups to be larger in the fiscal stress condition than in the control condition. I expect this preference gap to also vary across policies, being larger when respondents are asked about funding policies that benefit the unemployed and the poor.

To test these predictions, I ask respondents how willing they are, if need be, to personally pay more taxes and social contributions to maintain the current level of benefits and services with regards to poverty, unemployment, health and old age. Each time, I mention key policies associated to each of these risks, namely the Revenu de Solidarité Active – RSA – for poverty, assurance chômage for unemployment, assurance maladie for health and retraites for old age. This wording was chosen in order to mirror words and expressions used in the descriptive audio presented at the beginning of the survey. The

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10 The CADES was created in the early 1990’s with this in mind.

11 Si cela s’avérerait nécessaire, seriez-vous prêt à payer plus d’impôts ou de cotisations sociales pour maintenir le niveau actuel des prestations sociales liées à...la pauvreté, le chômage, la maladie, la vieillesse?
full survey is reproduced in the Appendix. Asked how willing their are to pay more taxes and social contributions, respondent can chose between four response categories: 1) Totally willing (Oui, tout à fait), 2) Most likely willing (Oui, plutôt), 3) Most likely not willing (Non, plutôt pas), 4) Totally unwilling (Non, pas du tout).

This wording was used to directly measure willingness to pay more taxes to limit a decline in benefit generosity. Progressive taxation makes it unlikely that all will be affected by a tax increase. In addition, the argument assumes that taxes are only paid by the financially secure employed workers. However, I chose to I emphasize the cost to the self of maintaining benefit generosity to limit cheap talk.

Public pensions (retraites) constitute somewhat of a specific case. From the perspective of a given individual, pensions are like contribution-based unemployment insurance. Indeed, at any given time, there is no overlap between contributors and recipients. However, unlike unemployment insurance and like universal health care, pensions cover a risk that is widely spread in the population as most people expect to reach retirement age. Pensions are thus both targeted and universal. In practice, public pensions are not perceived as redistributive social policies but are more akin to forced savings: people are forced to forgo consumption today to be able to consume tomorrow. As a result, the question about the willingness to contribute more to maintain benefits is slightly ambiguous. First, the question might be understood as willingness to maintain the generosity of pensions received by people currently retired. Second, the question might be understood as the willingness to maintain the generosity of future pensions for people who have not yet reached retirement age. Results for pensions should thus be interpreted with caution and are included in the analysis for informative purposes only.

Hypothesis 3 predicts that employed contributors will react to fiscal stress by decreasing support for universal access by excluding non-contributors from accessing universal social transfers. Conversely, unemployed transfer recipients should support universal access and oppose such conditional targeting. In other words, the preference gap between the two groups will increase in the fiscal stress conditions with regard to support for tuniversal access.

To test this prediction, I ask respondents whether they think public health care and public pensions should be accessible only to those who need it the most, to everyone whatever their job status, or only to those who “pay into the system” through social contributions.

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12 Uniquement à ceux qui n’ont pas les moyens de s’en sortir seuls.
13 A tous, sans distinction de statut (chômeurs, salariés du secteur privé, fonctionnaires, agriculteurs, commerçants, etc.)
14 Uniquement à ceux qui cotisent.
Distinguishing between the tax-paying employed worker and the unemployed transfer recipient

I expect the treatment to differ whether one is a (tax-paying) employed workers or an unemployed transfer recipients. Throughout the paper, I have identified each loosely as the financially secure and the financially insecure. Overall job market status and financial security are poorly captured by items on current work status. An individual who is currently employed might, overall, have a weak labor market attachment, making her very reliant on transfers to the unemployed. In addition, this individual might have such a low earning capacity that she has no interest in tying benefits to past wages and contributions.

I use a measurement strategy aimed at differentiating the financially secure from the financially insecure. In a wage earning society, I expect the financially secure to be among those with a strong labor market attachment and with an earning capacity that it most likely to places them among the net contributors to policies targeted to the poor. Financial insecurity on the other hand is most often tied to job insecurity and a low earning capacity. I focus on individuals of working age only.

I use a combination of two survey items. One asks individuals about their perception of their current income/lifestyle relative to their perception of the average french income/lifestyle (niveau de vie). I also asked respondents about their perceived likelihood of becoming poor in the next 5 years. Table 1 presents a cross-tabulation of these two items. Individuals who believed they were or would become poor in the next 5 years were classified as financially insecure. Individuals who thought they would not become poor were classified as financially secure. For individuals who did not have formed beliefs about their future exposure to poverty, I relied on additional information about their subjective income/lifestyle. Individuals who believed they were below average were classified as financially insecure. Individuals who believed they were above average were classified as financially secure. Through this classification process, I loose 130 respondents who consider themselves of average income/lifestyle and do not know about their future risk of being poor.

Is this a good measurement strategy for distinguishing between tax-paying employed workers and unemployed transfer recipients? As you can see from Table 1, only 23 out of the 219 individuals who think their life-style is above average also think they are at risk of becoming poor. Only 42 out of 297 who think their life-style is below average think they do not face any risk of becoming poor. Table A.2 in the Appendix presents the labor situation of the financially secure compared to the financially insecure. The great majority of the unemployed workers are in the financially insecure category.

15 I also do not expect rentiers to be over-represented among users of a crowd-sourcing website.
16 or who answer DNK on both items
Table 1: Income and Risk Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Already Poor</th>
<th>DNK</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well above average</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well below average</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNK</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>907</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The left column lists answers to the income/lifestyle item. The top row lists answers to the item on the subjective probability of being poor in the next 5 years.

Respondents in non-italic **bold** are classified as financially insecure (the unemployed recipients in Figure 5) and respondents in *italic bold* are classified as financially secure (the employed tax payers in Figure 5).

*Source: Author’s own data - Foule Factory March 2016*

### 3.1 Assignment and attrition

Table A.4 in the Appendix presents the results from a logit regression predicting assignment to treatment conditions using demographic covariates collected in the survey. Individuals over 35 and below 50 are slightly less likely to get assigned to the treatment condition. Once assignment is made, attrition rates are similar across treatment conditions (18 % and 20 %). In total, 563 individuals are assigned to the control condition and 461 finish the survey, while 564 are assigned to the fiscal stress condition and 447 finish the survey. I could not find any systematic difference between those who abandon in the control condition and those who abandon in the fiscal stress condition (see Table XX [TO ADD]). Once respondents have listened to the audio and entered the required code to access the survey questions, the dropout rate is basically zero.

As mentioned earlier, 130 cannot be classified as financially secure or insecure (66 in the control condition, 64 in the fiscal stress condition). The bulk of the analysis is ran on the 778 individuals that could be classified as either financially secure (392) or financially insecure (386). Table A.3 gives the overall sample sizes according to treatment condition and financial security. Each cell holds about 195 respondents. The identification strategy relies on comparing the difference in means between the secure and the insecure across the two treatment conditions.
4 Results

Willingness to pay more taxes and social contributions to maintain generosity (Hypothesis 1)  For ease of interpretation, I have re-coded the four items into four binary variables, where individuals who are totally or mostly willing to contribute more are coded as 1 and the others as 0. Figure 6 plots the average share of 1s across treatment groups. We cannot reject the hypothesis that on average, patterns of answers are the same across treatment groups.

Figure 6: Percent Willing to Contribute More by Policy Area and Treatment

Respondents were asked how willing they are, if need be, to personally pay more taxes and social contributions to maintain the current level of benefits and services with regards to poverty, unemployment, health and old age. Willingness to pay more is coded as 1.

According to the argument and predictions presented above, the absence of any difference is most likely the result of heterogeneous treatment effect depending on whether one is a tax-paying employed worker (negative effect) or an unemployed transfer recipient (positive effect). Consequently, Figure 7 breaks the results down depending on whether respondents are financially secure or not. As expected, the financially secure decrease their willingness to contribute while the financially insecure increase it. This is especially the case for targeted benefits in contrast to health care. The financially secure in the fiscal stress conditions are also less willing to increase their own taxes and social contributions to maintain pensions. As mentioned previously, it is unclear whose pensions they have in mind, their own, or those of people who are currently pensioners. Breaking the analysis according to age did not reveal any systematic pattern.

Jointly these divergent effects increase the preference gap between the financially secure and the financially insecure. To better visualize this increase, I regress the willingness to contribute items over the
Reminder: the dark circle is the control condition, hollow circle is the fiscal stress condition.

financial situation dummy and interact it with the treatment dummy. Figure 8 plots these coefficients to measure the average preference gap by financial status and treatment condition. The preference gap for health care is not affected by the treatment. The preference gap for pensions goes from being negative – the financially insecure are less willing to contribute than the financially secure –, to being indistinguishable from zero. This is mainly due to attitudinal change within the financially secure group (see Figure 7). The differences are the largest for transfers that benefit the poor and the unemployed: the gap fully reverses, being negative in the control group and positive in the fiscal stress condition, as the financially insecure individuals become more willing to contribute than the financially insecure.

Reversion to Self-Interest among Conditional Altruists (Hypothesis 2) Based on previous research by Gilens (1999), Oorschot (2000) and Cavaillé (N.d.), I identify the conditional altruists using items that ask about respondents’ perception of free riding among the poor and the unemployed. I asked three questions. One item taps into beliefs about the modal unemployed worker’s efforts to find a job (low versus high). Another item asks about moral hazard with regards to means-tested benefits. The

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17 These questions were asked right after the treatment.

18 The item asked respondents whether they agree with the following claim, using a 1-5 Likert scale to provide an answer: “s’ils le voulaient vraiment, la plupart des chômeurs pourraient retrouver un emploi.”

19 Respondents had to chose one of the following two propositions: “Les minimas sociaux donnent le coup de pouce nécessaire pour s’en sortir” OR “Les minimas sociaux risquent d’inciter les gens à s’en contenter et à ne pas chercher du travail.”
Plots regression coefficients from a logit regression predicting willingness to personally pay more taxes and social contributions for 4 types of social programs. The independent variable is a dummy variable with 1 indicating that a respondent is classified as financially insecure (0 as financially secure).

The final item asks about support for taking unemployment benefits away from individuals who refuse a job offered by the job center.20 I use these three items to compute individual factor scores, with higher values indicating that respondents believe free riding to be a concern. Lower scores thus indicate the respondents are less likely to think that unemployed workers do not try hard enough to find a job, that benefits make people lazy and that unemployed workers should be punished when they do not accept a job. Table A.5 describes the exploratory factor analysis used to compute these scores.

Figures A.3, A.4 and A.5 in the Appendix reproduce key results in Cavaillé (N.d.) where I show that perceptions of deservingness are strong predictors of support for funding benefits targeted to the poor and the unemployed (see Figures A.3). I also show that this correlation is not due to socio-economic factors explaining both beliefs and social policy preferences (see Figure A.4). Finally, I argue that these beliefs are a better predictors of social policy preferences among high income individuals who are not contributors to the welfare state, than among net beneficiaries (see Figure A.5). All and all, the data collected through the survey confirms the central claim in Cavaillé (N.d.) namely that other-regarding motives shape social policy preferences, especially among the financially secure. Baseline support for transfers targeted to the poor and the unemployed among the financially secure is high and can be explained by the widespread belief that these benefits go to deserving recipients.

20 Respondents were asked to pick between one of the following two options: “Les chômeurs devraient avoir le droit de refuser un emploi qui ne leur convient pas” OR “Les chômeurs qui refusent un emploi disponible devraient perdre leurs allocations chômage.”
Financially secure individuals in the fiscal stress treatment condition are updating their policy preferences (whether to contribute more or not) in a self-interested fashion, disregarding in the process their ideological priors regarding the behavior of the poor and the unemployed. If reversion to self-interest is driving the results presented above, one key observable implication is a decline in the covariance between free riding beliefs and the willingness to pay for maintaining existing social transfers to the poor and the unemployed.

Figure 9 plots the coefficient on free riding beliefs in a regression predicting support contributing more for transfers to the poor or the unemployed. I limit the sample to the financially secure. This decrease in covariance is not observed among the financially secure (not shown). The effect appears to be stronger for the poverty item than for the unemployment item. Regression analysis indicates that this decline is due to a larger decrease in willingness to pay among those who find recipients deserving (not shown).

**Figure 9: Free Riding Beliefs Matter less for the Financially Secure in the Fiscal Stress Condition**

![Graph showing regression coefficients for poverty and unemployment](image)

Plots regression coefficients from a logit regression predicting willingness to contribute to transfers targeted to the poor and the unemployed. Free riding belief scores are interacted with the treatment dummy. Analysis is limited to the financially secure.

**Support for conditional access vs. universal access (Hypothesis 3)** Figure 10 presents similar estimates for the survey questions asking about support for making benefits conditional on prior contributions. The baseline answer is support for universal access. Interestingly, while willingness to contribute to health care is not affected by fiscal stress, support for universal access to health care is. While the gap between the financially secure and insecure is indistinguishable from zero in the control condition, it is

---

21 Support for making them means-tested barely changes across treatment conditions
negative in the fiscal stress condition: the financially insecure are more likely to support universal access relative to the financially secure. As is the case for the previous items, this increase in the gap is due to both the financially secure decreasing their support for universal access and the financially secure increasing it. While there is some evidence of a similar effect on support for universal access to pensions, there is a large overlap in confidence intervals.

**Figure 10: Effect of Financial Situation on Support for Limiting Access to Contributors Only**

Plots regression coefficients from a logit regression predicting support for conditional access (ref: support for universal access). The independent variable is a dummy variable with 1 indicating that a respondent is classified as financially insecure (0 as financially secure).

Experimental evidence in France shows that people react to information about the financial situation of the welfare state in a self-interested fashion. Financially secure respondents maximize their disposable incomes by decreasing their willingness to contribute to policies they do not benefit from. For policies that benefit all, including themselves, the financially secure maximize their own net transfers by excluding net beneficiaries who contribute less than they receive. Financially insecure individuals react in the opposite direction, increasing their willingness to contribute to benefits targeted to the poor and the unemployed and increasing their support for universal access to benefits such as pension and health care. As a result, respondents’ financial situation becomes a much better predictor of social policies preferences in the fiscal stress condition than in the control condition.

The size of this effect is striking, especially when compared to previous attempts at experimentally manipulating social policy preferences using real world information and cues. Kuziemko et al. (2013) examine how support for redistribution changes in reaction to information about income inequality and
find no evidence of a relationship between the two. Even when inequality is made “personal”\textsuperscript{22} the effect is weak. In contrast, I provide very general information about the French welfare state’s structural deficit and make no explicit effort at fleshing out the potential costs to the self, be it in terms of lost benefits or increased taxes.

Manipulation Checks  Are respondents reacting as expected to a threat of a benefit decrease? To examine this, I ended the survey with three items that asked respondents about the future of three social programs: unemployment insurance, public pensions and public health care. The items were worded so as to distinguish people who think the system will become more generous,\textsuperscript{23} from those who think it will stay as generous as it is now but without any improvement,\textsuperscript{24} and from those who think it is unsustainable.\textsuperscript{25} I find only subtle differences in patterns of answers to these items across treatment groups, whether or not I subset according to the respondents’ financial situation. The only major difference appears to be a decline in the (already small) share of people who think the system will become more generous. There are two possible interpretations. First, these beliefs are hard to manipulate and the treatment did not change them, it mainly primed people to think about this issue. The other is that the item is too coarse to capture between-group differences.

Finally, I examined whether my results might not be an artifact of ideological priming. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, one important feature of the French debate is the existence of an ideological frame put forward by the radical left and trade unions to counter the “austerity” narrative. It argues that the welfare state’s structural deficit is due to a decline in the amount of social contributions paid by employers. Low income, low skill individuals more represented among the financially insecure might be more likely to be exposed to this narrative. In contrast, the financially secure are more likely to be on the right of the political spectrum and believe that high levels of social contributions paid by employers might limit growth. Individuals exposed to the fiscal stress treatment could be reminded of this debate, which could then affect their willingness to see social contributions and taxes increased.

With this in mind, I asked toward the end of the survey whether respondents agreed with one of the following three claims: “It would be good if employers paid more social contributions,”\textsuperscript{26} “It would be good if employers paid less social contributions,”\textsuperscript{27} or “Employers should pay the same amount as they do now.”\textsuperscript{28} I found no evidence that these beliefs are correlated with observable characteristics.

\textsuperscript{22} In the case of Kuziemko et al. (2013) the increase in top income inequality is presented as “missed income growth” for the middle class.

\textsuperscript{23} “La France aura les moyens d’améliorer le niveau actuel de ces prestations”

\textsuperscript{24} “La France aura les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations mais pas de l’améliorer”

\textsuperscript{25} “La France n’aura plus les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations”

\textsuperscript{26} Il est souhaitable que les entreprises cotisent davantage pour la protection sociale.

\textsuperscript{27} Il est souhaitable que les entreprises cotisent moins pour la protection sociale.

\textsuperscript{28} Les entreprises ne doivent ni plus ni moins cotiser qu’actuellement.”
My results are robust to controlling these beliefs as controls (see Table A.6, which also shows results controlling for free riding beliefs).
5 Discussion

The findings in this paper can be interpreted in the context of the wider debate over the determinants of social solidarity. With the shift to a post-industrial economy, the share of the labor force with weak labor market attachment is predicted to grow (Autor et al. 2010; Acemoglu et al. 2013). Such trend should increase self-interested support for social policies that provide income replacement to the poor and the unemployed. Also well documented is the existence of a larger pool of altruistic support among the financially secure (Cavaillé N.d.). This paper hypothesizes that, in a context of fiscal stress, self-interested opposition among the financially secure might trump altruistic support, undermining reform that benefit the “loser” of economic change.

How have transfers to those with a weak labor market attachment changed in the Age of Austerity? Thanks to important data collection efforts by Scruggs (2006) and Ferrarini et al. (2013), we now have a longitudinal and comparative overview of changes in the generosity of social policies. As famously highlighted by Pierson, compared with plausible expectations of retrenchment (Korpi and Palme 2003), “the overwhelming majority of major social programs are more generous [today] than they were towards the end of the ‘Golden Age’ ” (Pierson 2011: 18). Figure A.10 in the Appendix documents this trend for public pensions.

However, and in line with the argument presented in this paper, there is an important exception to this general pattern, namely benefits targeted to those of working age who would otherwise be expected to be on the labor market. With the notable exceptions of Switzerland, Canada and the Netherlands (See Figure A.9 in the Appendix), unemployment insurance has become less generous over time (see Figures A.6 through A.9).

Interestingly, the retrenchment of benefits to the jobless looks very different across countries. In countries like Great Britain and New Zealand, the roll-back is unambiguous and often dramatic (Figure A.6). Continental welfare states constitute a second case scenario, one of retrenchment through drift: population coverage is below 70 percent and has not improved over time; replacement rates remain high but only to the benefit of labor market insiders (Palier and Thelen 2010; Emmenegger, Palier and Seeleib-Kaiser 2012; Thelen 2014) (see Figure A.7). Norway and Sweden are important exceptions: the decline in replacement rates has been compensated by a sharp improvement in population coverage (Figure A.8). In Denmark, replacement rates have decreased without any concomitant improvement in coverage, which remains below 70 percent.29

Recent attitudinal trends in France provide additional evidence that scarcity might be undermining social solidarity. When looking at attitudinal trends in France through the usual lenses of “inequality”,

29 These countries have been described as cases of “recalibration”, i.e. an effort to adjust and update welfare state programs to new fiscal and economic conditions (Pierson 2002). While the clustering of cases echoes Esping-Anderson’s typology, there are important exceptions such as Canada, where retrenchment has been limited in comparison to other liberal welfare states, or Denmark.
“redistribution” (Meltzer and Richard 1981; Milanovic 2000) and “fairness” (Alesina, Glaeser and Sacerdote 2001; Alesina and Angeletos 2005), France stands out as an exceptional case of quasi-unanimous condemnation of income inequality\textsuperscript{30} and high support for redistribution (CREDOC 2002-2014, ESS 2002-2014, DRESS 2002-2014).\textsuperscript{31} France also stands out as a country particularly well-inclined toward the poor: French survey respondents are very unlikely to blame the poor for their plight and are more likely to point to structural forces such as injustice or the state of the labor market. In a survey that ran in 2009, an overwhelming 93\% of respondents agree with the claim that “tough labor market conditions” explain why some people are poor."

However, when looking at French public opinion through the lens provided in this paper, things look a little different. Support for universal access to major social programs has declined since 2002, while support for making access conditional on prior contributions has increased. In the case of unemployment insurance, support when from 62 percent in 2002 to 38 percent in 2014. The drop was nearly as sharp for pensions, from 70 to 50 percent. In the case of health care, it went from 86 to 69 percent. More importantly, the sharpest drop occurred between 2010 and 2014 (See Figure 11), a period during which political elites have been fighting over austerity politics. The willingness to contribute to pensions or unemployment insurance to maintain the current level of benefits and services has been stable since 2002, with 40 percent indicating willingness to contribute to pensions and 26 percent to unemployment insurance (DREES 2002-2014). Preliminary data analysis indicates that this stability hides some amount of re-shuffling. I find tentative evidence that voters are sorting according to their job and income status: support for conditional access decreases among low respondents individuals and increases among top income respondents.

Unfortunately, France is a rare case where longitudinal survey items are designed to capture these facets of social policy preferences. Measurement strategies that use items such as “support for redistribution” as a proxy for social solidarity most likely over-estimate its resilience. Because of its negative effects on social solidarity, fiscal stress could be partly responsible for the decline in the redistributive impact of the welfare state (Rueda Forthcoming). Overall, The preference dynamics theorized and documented in this paper indicate that we need to take the “Austerity” in the “Age of Austerity” seriously.

\textsuperscript{30}This, despite no real increase in labor income inequality, though see Piketty (2014) for data on wealth inequality.

\textsuperscript{31}For instance, 8 out of 10 respondent agree with the claim that the government should redistribute income. One can compare this ratio with Denmark where only 4 out of 10 respondents agree with this claim.
Figure 11: Who Should Each of these Social Transfers Go to?

Answer to the question: “A votre avis (…) devrait-elle bénéficier uniquement à ceux qui cotisent [those who pay social contributions], uniquement à ceux qui ne peuvent pas ou n’ont pas les moyens de s’en sortir seuls [those who cannot do without it] ou à tous sans distinction de catégories sociales et de statut professionnel [to all whatever their socio-economic background] ?”.

References


Brady, David and Amie Bostic. 2014. “Paradoxes of social policy: Welfare transfers, relative poverty and redistribution preferences.”


Gächter, Simon. 2007. Conditional cooperation: Behavioral regularities from the lab and the field and


Jensen, carsten and Michael Bang Petersen. 2014. “Cognitive Bias and the Politics of Health Care.”


Appendix

Treatment visuals

Figure A.1: Visual for the Control Condition

La Protection Sociale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause de l'incapacité de travail</th>
<th>Exemples de prestations sociales reçues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chômage</td>
<td>Allocations chômage, Revenu de Solidarité Active (RSA)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invalidité</td>
<td>Pension d'Invalidité, Allocation aux Adultes Handicapés (Aah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vieillesse</td>
<td>Pension de retraite, Allocation de Solidarité aux Personnes Agées (ASPA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maladie</td>
<td>Indemnités de salaire en cas d'arrêt maladie, Remboursement des frais de santé par l'Assurance Maladie, Couverture Maladie Universelle (CMU)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Anciennement appelé Revenu Minimum d'Insertion (RMI)

Le bouton SUIVANT apparaîtra quelques secondes après la fin de la présentation audio.

IAST, Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse – 2015
Figure A.2: Visual for the Fiscal Stress Condition

A REMPLIR: indiquez ici le code mentionné à la fin de l’enregistrement audio (format: numéro à deux chiffres)
Audio text

Audio text heard by all respondents  La protection sociale a pour principal but d’aider financièrement les personnes, lorsqu’elles se retrouvent dans l’incapacité de travailler. Ce tableau donne un aperçu des prestations sociales versées par la protection sociale. Ces prestations sociales varient en fonction de la raison pour laquelle une personne est dans l’incapacité de travailler. Ces raisons sont indiquées dans la colonne de gauche. Pour financer la protection sociale, les français payent des cotisations sociales et des impôts. Nous vous laissons quelques secondes pour prendre connaissance des différentes prestations décrites dans ce tableau.

Additional audio text read for respondents in the fiscal stress condition  Depuis plus de 20 ans, le budget de la protection sociale est en déséquilibre. Les revenus générés par les cotisations et les impôts ne suffisent plus à financer les dépenses sociales. L’argent manquant doit être emprunté et ceci génère de la dette. Ce graphique vous donne un aperçu de la dette accumulée par la protection sociale. La dette était de 23 milliards d’euros en 1996. Elle est aujourd’hui de 227 milliards d’euros.

Survey respondents: descriptive statistics

Table A.1: Labor Market Status of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working full-time</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>44.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working part-time</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>8.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working but only on-and-off</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed and looking for work</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>12.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently unemployed</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>11.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>6.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>

Source: Author’s own data - Foule Factory March 2016

Assignment
### Table A.2: Labor Market Status of Survey Respondents by earning-capacity/security group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Financially Secure</th>
<th>Financially Insecure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working full-time</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working part-time</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working but only on-and-off</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed and looking for work</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently unemployed</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Author’s own data - Foule Factory March 2016*

### Table A.3: Sample Sizes by Treatment and Financial Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Financial Security</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secure</td>
<td>Insecure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Stress</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table A.4: Ability of Covariates to Predict Assignment to Fiscal Stress Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1) Financial security</th>
<th>(2) All covariates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b/se</td>
<td>b/se</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financially Insecure [Ref: Secure]</td>
<td>0.08 (0.14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34 ans [Ref: 18-24]</td>
<td>-0.40 (0.28)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-49</td>
<td>-0.60 (0.28)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>-0.32 (0.33)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 +</td>
<td>-0.14 (0.70)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female [Ref: Male]</td>
<td>0.15 (0.15)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than HS (BEPC) [Ref: no degree]</td>
<td>0.39 (0.69)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than HS (CAP)</td>
<td>0.52 (0.63)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HS degree (BAC General)</td>
<td>0.11 (0.61)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HS degree (BAC Techno)</td>
<td>-0.17 (0.64)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tertiary education (≤ 2 years)</td>
<td>0.27 (0.61)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary education (≥ 3 years)</td>
<td>0.12 (0.61)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work, part-time [Ref: Home maker]</td>
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<td>Work, full-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work, irregular</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship, intern</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanently unemployed</td>
<td>-0.07 (0.48)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>-1.00 (0.55)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average lifestyle [Ref: Much above]</td>
<td>-0.47 (0.57)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>-0.18 (0.57)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average</td>
<td>-0.20 (0.58)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much below average</td>
<td>-0.44 (0.63)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNK</td>
<td>-0.06 (0.55)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, will not become poor [Ref: Yes]</td>
<td>-0.17 (0.20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Already poor</td>
<td>-0.32 (0.24)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DNK</td>
<td>-0.30 (0.20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>_cons</td>
<td>-0.07 (0.10)</td>
<td>0.53 (0.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ll</td>
<td>-539</td>
<td>-615</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Significance levels: * * * * * <.05, ** * * * * * <.01, *** * * * * * <.001.

Note: Coefficients are from a logit regression, predicting assignment based on individual covariates. The first column examines whether being financially secure or insecure predicts assignment, the second column examines age, gender, labor market conditions, subjective economic lifestyle (above vs below average) and subjective probability of becoming poor in the next 5 years.
**Free riding beliefs**

While everyone benefits from the existence of social insurance against unemployment or ill health, each as separate individuals has an incentives to extract more resources than he or she contributes. The costs of monitoring this behavior increase as the size of the group increases (Rothstein 1998; Mau 2004). In other words, like in other common pool goods, it is hard to exclude free-riders from using social transfers. In such situation, research shows, close attention to individual effort relative to external constraints and to cues about intentions to free-ride, as well as the willingness to reward and punish accordingly, constitute a key, often informal, coordination device aimed at avoiding depletion of the common pool resource (Fischbacher, Gächter and Fehr 2001; Gächter 2007). In Cavaillé (N.d.), I argue that the social policies where benefits are targeted to the unemployed and where $\xi$ is high (e.g. means-tested transfers), beliefs about the jobless’ intentions to free-ride are strong predictors of support for transfers to the poor and the unemployed (see Figures A.3 and A.4).

### Table A.5: Factor Loadings from Exploratory Factor Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey items</th>
<th>Treatment Condition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fact. Load</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSA enduces moral hazard</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed are lazy</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If unemployed refuse job, no benefits</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalue</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The loadings are obtained from a varimax rotation of a principal components solution, the correlations analyzed are the polychoric correlations of the three ordinal survey responses. Full wordings can be found in the online appendix.
Table A.6: Predicting Willingness to Contribute to Transfers Benefiting the Unemployed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>b/se</td>
<td>b/se</td>
<td>b/se</td>
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<td>b/se</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiscal Stress T (FST) [Ref: Control]</td>
<td>-0.47*</td>
<td>-0.52*</td>
<td>-0.47*</td>
<td>-0.53*</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>-0.87**</td>
<td>-0.88*</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(0.22)</td>
<td>(0.23)</td>
<td>(0.24)</td>
<td>(0.30)</td>
<td>(0.29)</td>
<td>(0.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fin. Insecure [Ref: Secure]</td>
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<td>-0.65**</td>
<td>-0.71**</td>
<td>-0.48*</td>
<td>-0.73**</td>
<td>-0.79**</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(0.23)</td>
<td>(0.22)</td>
<td>(0.24)</td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FST * Fin. Insecure</td>
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<td>0.88**</td>
<td>0.82*</td>
<td>0.83*</td>
<td>0.89**</td>
<td>0.98**</td>
<td>1.01**</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(0.32)</td>
<td>(0.33)</td>
<td>(0.32)</td>
<td>(0.33)</td>
<td>(0.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers should contribute:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less [Ref: More]</td>
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<td>-1.04***</td>
<td>-1.81***</td>
<td>-1.67***</td>
<td></td>
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<td>(0.47)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The same</td>
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<td>-0.75**</td>
<td>-0.66**</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Riding Beliefs</td>
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<td>-1.35***</td>
<td>-1.82***</td>
<td>-1.76***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>(0.26)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FST * Less</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.01</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FST * The same</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.34</td>
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<td>(0.35)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>FST * Free Riding</td>
<td>0.77*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.78*</td>
<td></td>
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<td>(0.35)</td>
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<tr>
<td>.cons</td>
<td>-0.47**</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.89***</td>
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<td>0.55**</td>
<td>1.06***</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(0.21)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>ll</td>
<td>-493</td>
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<td>-451</td>
<td>-438</td>
<td>-471</td>
<td>-449</td>
<td>-432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significance levels: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

Note: Coefficients are from a logit regression, predicting willingness to contribute more (in taxes and social contributions) to maintain the current level of benefits and services for the unemployed.
**Figure A.3:** Predicting Willingness to Contribute Using Free Riding Beliefs

Plots regression coefficients from a logit regression predicting willingness to contribute to four family of social transfers using free riding beliefs. Beliefs are computed using the factor loadings in Table A.5. Higher values indicate more negative beliefs regarding the free riding behavior of the poor and the unemployed.

**Figure A.4:** Predictive Power of Free Riding Beliefs With and Without Controls

Plots regression coefficients from a logit regression predicting willingness to contribute to transfers targeted to the poor and the unemployed. Controls are: gender, age, subjective economic lifestyle, risk exposure, degree, labor market situation.
**Figure A.5:** Free Riding Beliefs Matter more for the Financially Secure than for the Insecure

Plots regression coefficients from a logit regression predicting willingness to contribute to transfers targeted to the poor and the unemployed. Free riding belief scores are interacted with the financial situation dummy.

**Figure A.6:** Unemployment Insurance Roll Back

Transfers are means-tested in AU and NZ, coverage is 1 in UK and IE.
Figure A.7: Resilience Type 1: Policy Drift and Dualism

Source: Ferrarini et al. 2014

Figure A.8: Trading Generosity for Coverage

Source: Ferrarini et al. 2014
Other countries: AT, BE, CA, DK, FI, FR, IE, IT, NL, NO, CH, UK, US.
The average replacement rate went from 0.4 in the early 1960s to 0.7 in 2010. Sweden and Germany are exceptions. In Sweden, gradual reforms during the 1980s and 1990s have enabled an extremely generous system to converge toward the average replacement rate in other Western European countries. In Germany, the replacement rate of the mandatory state pension hovered above 0.5 until the early 1990's. Since then, it has steadily declined due mainly to a gradual shift from a defined benefit to defined contribution system. Australia and New Zealand stand out for having low replacement rates relative to other countries.
A vous de jouer!

Nous allons maintenant vous poser quelques questions sur la protection sociale en France. Rappelez-vous: il n'y a ni bonnes, ni mauvaises réponses. Indiquez juste la réponse qui se rapproche le plus de votre opinion.

Dans quelle mesure êtes vous d'accord avec la proposition suivante?

S'ils le voulaient vraiment, la plupart des chômeurs pourraient retrouver un emploi.

○ Pas du tout d'accord
○ Plutôt pas d'accord
○ Ni d'accord, ni pas d'accord
○ Plutôt d'accord
○ Tout à fait d'accord

Voici deux propositions au sujet des minimas sociaux (par exemple, le RSA, anciennement RMI). Choisissez la proposition qui se rapproche le plus de votre opinion:

○ Les minimas sociaux donnent le coup de pouce nécessaire pour s'en sortir.
○ Les minimas sociaux risquent d'inciter les gens à s'en contenter et à ne pas chercher du travail.

Voici deux propositions à propos des personnes qui touchent des allocations chômage. Choisissez la proposition qui se rapproche le plus de votre opinion:

○ Les chômeurs devraient avoir le droit de refuser un emploi qui ne leur convient pas
○ Les chômeurs qui refusent un emploi disponible devraient perdre leurs allocations chômage

A votre avis, à qui les retraites devraient-elles bénéficier? Choisissez la réponse qui se rapproche le plus de votre opinion.

Les retraites devraient bénéficier...

○ Uniquement à ceux qui cotisent
○ A tous, sans distinction de statut (chômeurs, salariés du secteur privé, fonctionnaires, agriculteurs, commerçants, etc.)
○ Uniquement à ceux qui n’ont pas les moyens de s’en sortir seuls
A votre avis, à qui l'assurance maladie devrait-elle bénéficier? Choisissez la réponse qui se rapproche le plus de votre opinion.

L'assurance maladie devrait bénéficier...

- Uniquement à ceux qui n'ont pas les moyens de s'en sortir seuls
- Uniquement à ceux qui cotisent
- A tous, sans distinction de statut (chômeurs, salariés du secteur privé, fonctionnaires, agriculteurs, commerçants, etc.)

Si cela s'avérait nécessaire, seriez-vous prêt à payer plus d'impôts ou de cotisations sociales pour maintenir le niveau actuel des prestations sociales liées à LA MALADIE (ex: le remboursement des frais de santé, les indemnités maladie...)?

- Oui, tout à fait
- Oui, plutôt
- Non, plutôt pas
- Non, pas du tout

Si cela s'avérait nécessaire, seriez-vous prêt à payer plus d'impôts ou de cotisations sociales pour maintenir le niveau actuel des prestations sociales liées à LA PAUVRETÉ (ex: le RSA, la CMU...)?

- Oui, tout à fait
- Oui, plutôt
- Non, plutôt pas
- Non, pas du tout

Si cela s'avérait nécessaire, seriez-vous prêt à payer plus d'impôts ou de cotisations sociales pour maintenir le niveau actuel des prestations sociales liées au CHÔMAJE (ex: les allocations chômage, les aides à la réinsertion professionnelle...)?

- Non, pas du tout
- Non, plutôt pas
- Oui, plutôt
- Oui, tout à fait

Si cela s'avérait nécessaire, seriez-vous prêt à payer plus d'impôts ou de cotisations sociales pour maintenir le niveau actuel des prestations sociales liées à LA VIEILLESSE (ex: les retraites, les aides aux personnes dépendantes...)?

- Non, pas du tout
- Non, plutôt pas
- Oui
- Oui, tout à fait

Pouvez-vous nous indiquer votre âge?

- 18 – 24 ans
- 25 – 34 ans
- 35 – 49 ans
- 50 – 64 ans
Vous êtes...

- Une femme
- Un homme

A l’heure actuelle, comment évaluez-vous votre niveau de vie par rapport à celui de l’ensemble de la population française ?

- Bien meilleur
- Plutôt meilleur
- A peu près identique
- Plutôt moins bon
- Bien moins bon
- Je ne sais pas

Et vous personnellement, pensez-vous qu’il y a un risque que vous deveniez pauvre dans les cinq prochaines années ?

- Oui, plutôt
- Non, plutôt pas
- Je me considère déjà comme pauvre
- Je ne sais pas

Quel est le diplôme le plus élevé que vous ayez obtenu?

- Aucun diplôme
- Brevet élémentaire, Brevet des collèges, CEP, BEPC
- CAP, BEP, brevet de compagnon
- Bac général, brevet supérieur
- Bac technologique ou professionnel, brevet professionnel ou de technicien, BEA, BEC, BEI, BEH, capacité en droit
- Diplôme de 1er cycle universitaire, BTS, DUT, diplôme des professions sociales ou de la santé
- Diplôme de 2e ou 3e cycle universitaire, diplôme d’une grande école, doctorat, etc
- Je ne sais pas

Aujourd’hui, quelle est votre situation principale vis-à-vis du travail ?

- Femme ou homme au foyer
- Retraité(e) ou retiré(e) des affaires ou en préretraite
- Principalement en emplois, mais je travaille de façon intermittente
- En emplois, travail à temps partiel
- En emplois, travail à temps plein
- Chômeur, à la recherche d’un emploi (inscrit(e) ou non à Pôle Emploi)
- Etudiant(e), élève, en formation ou en stage non rémunéré
- Apprenti(e) sous contrat ou en stage rémunéré
- Dans une autre situation (personne handicapée, en incapacité ou en interdiction de travailler...)

https://www.soscisurvey.de/admin/preview.php?questionnaire=survey_V8
Actuellement, les entreprises cotisent pour la protection sociale. Avec laquelle de ces trois propositions êtes-vous le plus d’accord ?

À l’avenir...

- Il est souhaitable que les entreprises cotisent davantage pour la protection sociale
- Il est souhaitable que les entreprises cotisent moins pour la protection sociale
- Les entreprises ne doivent ni plus ni moins cotiser qu’actuellement

Nous allons maintenant nous intéresser aux personnes étrangères qui viennent s’installer en France.

A quel moment devraient-elles avoir accès aux prestations sociales?

Veuillez choisir la proposition qui se rapproche le plus de votre opinion.

Elles devraient avoir accès aux prestations sociales...

- Dès leur arrivée
- Après avoir vécu deux ans en France, qu’elles aient travaillé ou non
- Après avoir travaillé et payé des impôts pendant au moins deux ans
- Seulement après avoir obtenu la nationalité française
- Elles ne devraient jamais obtenir le même accès que les citoyens Français nés en France

Au sujet de ces mêmes personnes, pourquoi pensez-vous qu’elles décident de venir s’installer en France?

Choisissez les DEUX réponses qui se rapprochent le plus de votre opinion.

Les personnes qui viennent s’installer en France, le font parce que...

- Elles pensent trouver du travail en France
- Elles ont déjà de la famille en France
- Les prestations sociales en France sont généreuses et faciles d’accès
- Elles parlent déjà un peu Français
- La culture Française les attirent
- Elles n’ont pas vraiment eu le choix
- Autre raison non mentionnée

En imaginant la France dans 10 ans, pensez-vous que la France puisse maintenir le niveau actuel des prestations sociales liées à LA MALADIE (ex: les remboursement des frais de santé, les indemnités maladie...)?

Pour répondre, choisissez une des options ci-dessous.

Dans 10 ans...

- La France n’aura plus les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations
- La France aura les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations mais pas de l’améliorer
- La France aura les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations

En imaginant la France dans 10 ans, pensez-vous que la France puisse maintenir le niveau actuel des prestations sociales liées au CHÔMAGE (ex: les allocations chômage, les aides à la réinsertion professionnelle...)?
Pour répondre, choisissez une des options ci-dessous.

Dans 10 ans...

○ La France n’aura plus les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations
○ La France aura les moyens d’améliorer le niveau actuel de ces prestations mais pas de l’améliorer
○ La France aura les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations

En imaginant la France dans 10 ans, pensez-vous que la France puisse maintenir le niveau actuel des prestations sociales liées à LA VIEILLESSE (ex: les retraites, les aides aux personnes dépendantes...)?

Pour répondre, choisissez une des options ci-dessous.

Dans 10 ans...

○ La France n’aura plus les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations
○ La France aura les moyens de maintenir le niveau actuel de ces prestations mais pas de l’améliorer
○ La France aura les moyens d’améliorer le niveau actuel de ces prestations

Si les prestations sociales venaient à baisser, quelle est le risque que vous soyez directement touché(e) par une baisse des prestations sociales liées...

à la maladie (remboursement des frais de santé, indemnités maladie... )

au chômage (allocations chômage, réinsertion professionnelle... )

---

**PHP Code**

```php
$chars = 'ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz0123456789'; // characters that normally cannot be confused
$code = '';
for ($i=0; $i<5; $i++) {
    $code.= $chars[mt_rand(0, strlen($chars)-1)];
} // save code in database
put('CO02_01', $code);

html(''"<p>
<div style="text-align: left; margin-bottom:0.2em">Voici votre code de validation Foule Factory:</div>
</p>"</div>

<p>
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom:0.2em">Conservez-le, il vous sera nécessaire pour valider la tâche.</div></p>
```

---

**PHP Code**

```php
if (value('CH02_01') == 56) {
    goToPage('end');
}
```
ERREUR. Nous ne pouvons pas valider votre tâche suite au problème suivant:

- L'enregistrement audio n'a pas fonctionné
  ou bien
- Vous ne l'avez pas écoutez jusqu'au bout.

Vous pouvez maintenant fermer la fenêtre ou l'onglet de navigation.

---

**Merci de votre participation!**

Pour toute question, n'hésitez pas à contacter le responsable de recherche à l'adresse suivante: charlotte.cavaille@iast.fr

Vos réponses ont été enregistrées. Vous pouvez maintenant fermer la fenêtre ou l'onglet de navigation.

---

IAST, Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse – 2015