



## **ACTIVITY REPORT**

**2023**

### **European Representation of French Social Security Institutions**



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



2023 began with the publication of the report of the High-Level Group on the future of social protection and the Welfare state, which we had been eagerly awaiting. The findings are clear: in the face of demographic, ecological, digital and labour market changes, we need to rethink citizens' social rights and our funding if we want to ensure the long-term future of our protective model. It is now up to us, the social security institutions, to take up these issues and translate them into operational terms.

This is what Reif set out to do at the conference it organised on 29 November on the subject of “Social security vs. new risks: anticipating, protecting and adapting”. If I had to pick out just a few points from the rich discussions we had with our counterparts and European political decision-makers, I would mention the obvious similarity of the challenges we face beyond the differences in our systems, the existence of numerous experiments and good practices that we should share more widely to ensure an even more effective access to rights and services, and finally the extraordinary desire to continue our work together, on a European scale.

It is precisely because Reif is convinced that we can go further by working together that it became a full member of the European Social Security Platform ESIP in 2023. By doing so, it is consolidating the investment it has been making for many years, since it has already been coordinating and, where necessary, representing its affiliated members. The election of Reif's permanent representative to the presidency of ESIP also reflects the role that Reif wishes to play towards even more in-depth exchanges with its counterparts.

Over the past year, Reif has also endeavoured to take into greater account, in its internal activities, its members' desire to increase the number of benchmarking and exchange activities on operational subjects. As a result, members have been informed and supported in their participation in calls for proposals, which have strengthened mutual knowledge between Italian and French organisations. They also had the opportunity, as part of the digital working group set up this year in Reif, to be informed and to exchange views on the progress of the ESSPASS project for digitisation and authentication documents, and, in particular, that of the DC4EU consortium for the implementation of the eIDAS electronic identification, authentication and trust services in the field of social security (A1 portable document, European health insurance card). The introduction of special pages in the Reif monthly newsletter has also enabled its members to put forward their issues and feedback from the field on mobility in Europe.

It is on this note of an association that is always on the move and that takes into account, on a daily basis, both the challenges facing its members and their expectations in terms of co-operation on a European scale, that my last term of office comes to an end, as my successor as President of Reif will be elected in March 2024. I would like to take this opportunity to say what an honour and pleasure it has been for me to carry out these duties, and to thank the elected representatives and teams who are working so hard to defend our model and our values at the European level.

**Isabelle Sancerni**

**President of the European Representation of French Social Security Institutions (Reif)**

## INTRODUCTION TO REIF

### ROLE AND OPERATION OF REIF

The European Representation of French Social Security Institutions (Reif) was set up in May 2003. It was established in response to the growing issue of European social policy, which was not strictly limited to the prerogatives set out in the Treaties. While Member States are free to organise their social security systems, European legislation, related to the implementation of the internal market, has a direct impact on the legislation applicable to social security. As a result, Reif remains particularly attentive to European regulatory developments concerning access to social protection, the coordination of social security systems, the posting of workers, health and medicines, as well as digital issues, pensions, employment issues and occupational health and safety (OHS). It is because they are aware of the

decisive importance of the debates and negotiations held in Brussels and the effects on their own operations, that the French organisations have decided to set up this representation, which complements France's Permanent Representation in Brussels.

Reif brings together all the branches of the general scheme as well as some professional schemes and specialised structures: health insurance (Cnam), pension (Cnav), family (Cnaf), recovery (Urssaf Caisse Nationale), the National Professional Union for Employment in Industry and Trade (Unédic), National Solidarity Fund for Autonomy (CNSA), the Central Agricultural Social Mutual Fund (CCMSA), the Retirement Pension Fund for Professional Air Crew Members in Civil Aviation (CRPNPAC) as well as the National School of Social Security (EN3S), the Union of National Social Security Funds (Ucanss) and the Centre for European and International Liaisons for Social Security (Cleiss).



### GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATION

Reif is chaired by [Isabelle Sancerni](#), President of the Board of Directors of the National Family Allowance Fund (Cnaf), accompanied by Vice Presidents [Eric Blachon](#), President of the Board of Directors of the National Old-Age insurance Fund (Cnav) and [Pascal Cormery](#), President of the Central Agricultural Social Mutual Fund (CCMSA). [Fabrice Gombert](#), Chairman of the Board of the National Health Insurance Fund (Cnam), is Treasurer of Reif. Its secretary is [Olivier Corbobesse](#) (Cnaf).

The French social security institutions are collectively and directly responsible for steering Reif, as well as determining its missions and directing its activities, which are set by the Board of Directors.

The international and European relations departments (or missions) within the member bodies provide the link between the national and European levels. Reif enables these bodies and their networks to put forward their analyses and opinions to European decision-makers (the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council via French Permanent Representation to the European Union), backed up by the expertise that only these bodies have, before the publication of legislative texts.



Reif's operations centre is located in Brussels, in the heart of the European district.

It shares its offices with the European Social Protection Platform (ESIP), the Austrian Social Security System Representation (DVS) and the German Liberal Professions Pension Scheme (ABV).

Its team of three consists of a Permanent representative, [Anne-Claire Le Bodic](#), and two policy officers, [Benjamin Malliart](#) and [Adèle Le Bihan](#).

## MISSIONS

Reif has three main missions:

- To publicise, promote and defend the values and principles of the French social protection system to European stakeholders: solidarity, quality and equal access for all to social security benefits, as well as the organisation of its system and its financial interests.
- Keeping an active watch on developments in European legal construction that could have an impact on the social policies implemented by the social security system or the way they are managed.
- Alerting and mobilising members on the issues in question, as necessary.

## REIF CONFERENCE

### SOCIAL SECURITY VS. NEW RISKS: ANTICIPATING, PROTECTING AND ADAPTING 29 NOVEMBER 2023, BRUSSELS

Find out all about the conference in the [programme](#) and the [participants' booklet](#).

On 23 November, Reif organised a conference at the Permanent Representation of France to the European Union on the topic: “Social security vs. new challenges: anticipating, protecting and adapting”, with the aim of extending the debates launched by the report of the High-Level Group on the future of social protection. Attended by around a hundred guests from European social protection bodies, European and national civil servants and stakeholders in social issues, the participants discussed how to take into account the new risks weighing on those insured on the one hand, and how to ensure the sustainability of the social model in a rapidly changing world on the other.



Reif President Isabelle Sancerni returned to the challenges identified by the High-Level Group, illustrating, in particular, their relevance to the Family branch of the social security system. It has recently introduced specific support measures, such as the creation of a "public maintenance allowances service" and providing special support for women who are victims of domestic violence.





**De nouveaux besoins, de nouvelles réponses**  
*Quels sont les nouveaux risques auxquels les citoyens sont confrontés et comment les institutions de sécurité sociale peuvent-elles y répondre?*



Dana-Carmen Bachmann  
 Chef d'unité Protection sociale  
 DG EMPL



Pascal Cormery  
 Président  
 CCMSA



Moderatrice:  
 Amandine Crespy  
 Professeure de sciences  
 politiques



Miska Simanainen  
 Chercheur en politiques sociales  
 Kela



Renaud Villard  
 Directeur général  
 Cnav

During the first round table, Dana-Carmen Bachmann, speaking on behalf of the Commission, highlighted the progress made during the mandate (minimum income, care strategy, recommendation on access to social protection); full implementation of the social acquis is nevertheless a necessity for the future, particularly to better take into account the periods of transition in people's lives. Pascal Cormery, President of the CCMSA, and Renaud Villard, Director of the Cnav, who spoke on behalf of the French social security system, presented some of the measures put in place by their organisations to ensure better access to rights (*benefits' appointments*) and to strengthen prevention (health and safety at work in the agricultural sector, prevention of loss of independence for the elderly). They also stressed the need for long-term planning and simplification of procedures. In this respect, Miska Simanainen presented the decision by the Finnish social security system (Kela) to try universal income. While the effects on access to or return to employment have been minimal, it has improved the well-being of those concerned.

The speakers of the second round table discussed the adjustments needed to the social security systems themselves. Raluca Painter, for DG REFORM, returned to the means offered by the Technical Support Instrument to support Member States' efforts to modernise their social protection systems. In particular, she highlighted the expectations of Member States in terms of the organisation of care systems and the use of artificial intelligence. Virginie Magnant, Director of the CNSA, explained the French decision to create a fifth branch of social security to better take into account the challenge of ageing. This fifth branch is also notable for fully considering the digital and environmental challenges. Other risks and other innovative practices: Christophe Valentie, Managing Director of Unédic, presented Unédic's agility in rapidly deploying responses to the impact of the Covid crisis on employment, notably through the introduction of short-time work and the use of social bonds.



In conclusion, Francesco Corti, adviser to Belgian Deputy Prime Minister Frank Vandenbroucke, expressed the determination of the future Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU to take up these challenges, placing access to social rights at the heart of its priorities.



## KEY ACTIONS 2023

### Meeting with Commissioner Nicolas Schmit's Head of Cabinet



On 29 November 2023, Reif and its members visited the Commission's head-office to meet Antoine Kasel, Head of Cabinet of the Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights. During this exchange, the members had the opportunity to present their main priorities (mobility and social investment) as well as some of their requests and difficulties. They also discussed the Commission's priorities for the next term (social security coordination regulations and digitalisation).

Reif members highlighted mobility and the difficulties encountered in applying social security coordination regulations, particularly with regard to unemployment and posted workers. They also stressed the need for the European Union to fully consider social protection as an investment rather than a mere expense, and to ensure the effective implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan.

Finally, Reif members spoke about the challenges they face in the area of digitisation of social security, particularly with regard to the implementation of the EESSI system which, according to the Commission, would make it possible to find less costly solutions in terms of mobility.

### Creation of the digital working group

In spring 2023, Reif set up a permanent working group dedicated to digital issues, consisting of experts in charge of these issues and coordinated by Adèle Le Bihan.

During the last term, the digital transition has become a major priority for the European institutions, and the Commission has launched a large number of initiatives affecting French social security organisations, such as the regulation on data governance, the proposed regulation on artificial intelligence and the ESSPASS pilot project.

Reif's digital working group aims to identify the needs of social security organisations and the concrete impact of European policies on them. For example, the working group elaborated a position paper (see below) in response to the Commission's communication of 6 September 2023 on the digitalisation in social security coordination. The members of the working group subsequently had the opportunity to exchange views with the Commission on this subject.

### Reif's position on the assessment of the European Labour Authority (ELA)

The European Commission has consulted stakeholders on the evaluation and mandate of the European Labour Authority (ELA), set up in 2019. This consultation was an opportunity for Reif members to reaffirm, in a public stance, the importance they attach to the establishment of a permanent structure that takes its full place in the European social ecosystem and extends the scope of possible co-operation between social security administrative authorities.

The consultation also provided an opportunity to put across a number of key messages at a time when the ELA's term will be evaluated by the Commission in 2024. In particular, Reif suggests that the authority's tasks and areas of activity should be clarified, especially as regards the coordination of social security between Member States. The Authority's tasks and activities in the fight against cross-border fraud should also be strengthened. Finally, Reif would also like to see the logistical and technical support provided to Cnam and Cnaf in 2023 to be continued.

### **Position on digitalisation in social security coordination**

On 6 September 2023, the Commission published a Communication on the digitalisation in social security coordination, a document which responded to certain requests for clarification expressed by the Member States of the EU and social security institutions. With the support of its digital working group, Reif formulated a position paper published on 16 October.



Reif's position highlights a certain number of challenges and constraints faced by French social security institutions in implementing European digital policy initiatives, which have multiplied in recent years.

Reif's position makes a number of demands as regards, for example, the need to strengthen access to rights for the most vulnerable persons, to involve social security institutions in the development of digitisation policies and projects, to ensure that the effects of new European initiatives on the activities of social security bodies are better taken into account, and to ensure close co-operation between these bodies and the European Labour Authority in order to improve the mobility of European workers. Finally, one of the key messages of the position paper is the need to ensure the proper implementation of EESSI and the Single Digital Gateway before launching other initiatives in the field of digitisation in social security.

### **Work on the Pharmaceutical Strategy**

After more than a year of consultative and preparatory work, the Commission published its pharmaceutical strategy in April 2023, proposing a complete overhaul of the conditions governing the marketing of medicinal products. This is a major challenge for Reif, as these measures are likely to have a major impact on access times and the price of medicines. It has therefore joined forces with its relevant members (Cnam and CCMSA) within Espip and Medev to help prepare a contribution on behalf of European paying bodies. They are mainly defending better quality data for evaluation and pricing, mechanisms to ensure better targeting of unmet medical needs, and a balanced regulatory protection system.

On 6 November, the Permanent representative defended this position at a round table organised by Novartis on the topic "Revision of the legislation and its impact on medical practices and technologies".

## Mobility in Europe - setting up special monthly pages

A thematic page on issues relating to mobility in Europe has been included in the monthly Reif newsletter since June 2023, until the European elections in June 2024, i.e. 12 publications in total.

Against the backdrop of a flurry of European news, and with the forthcoming elections set to define new priorities in this regard, this format enables the various Reif member institutions to present news, tools and best practices in the field of mobility. Previous topics have included the tools developed by Urssaf Caisse Nationale to determine the applicable legislation, a look at the support given to foreign seasonal workers by the MSA Charentes, the role and missions of the European Labour Authority, patients' mobility in Europe and the role of the National Centre for Care Abroad (CNSE), and the latest Cleiss statistical report on international mobility.

## Field visit and discovery of the tools of the international mobility department of Urssaf Nord-Pas-de-Calais



A delegation of specialists in the digitisation of social security from the European Commission (DG EMPL), accompanied by the Reif team and its partner ESIP, went to Tourcoing at the invitation of the Urssaf Caisse Nationale to find out about the tools put in place by the International Mobility Department of Urssaf Nord-Pas-de-Calais.

Since 2022, Urssaf Caisse nationale has been responsible for determining the applicable legislation for all workers under the general social security scheme. Urssaf has developed tools (Ilass, Class) for companies, workers and its European counterparts to optimise this task and improve co-operation. These tools have been presented to the Commission, Reif and ESIP.

## EN3S training courses

On 17 October, the Reif team welcomed a "National Strategy and Network Dynamics" group from EN3S to Brussels to present its work and to discuss the main current issues and how they relate to their local concerns as managers.

At the beginning of December, the Permanent representative led a two-day training course for EN3S students on the European perspectives of social security. In addition to an introduction to the functioning of the European Union, social and health policies and current issues, this session provided an opportunity for exchanges with practitioners who came to present the impact of European policies on social security organisations (Urssaf, Cnam's National Centre for Care Abroad, Cnaf). Cleiss also presented its activities, in particular the direct support it can offer to organisations. The students also benefited from a comparative presentation of different systems within the European Union. Finally, a round table on the digitisation of social security offered an opportunity for an exchange of views between the European Commission, INPS (Italy), Urssaf and users (Old'Up).

## Supporting members in responding to calls for European projects



After informing them about the funding available, Reif helped some of its members to respond to calls for proposals from the Commission or European agencies. Delegations from Cnaf and Cnam were able to take part, with the support of the European Labour Authority, in an exchange with their Italian counterparts from INPS to improve mutual understanding of how they operate, learn from their peers and discuss issues of common interest.

In addition, in autumn 2023, CCMSA, Cnaf and Cnam, together with INPS, submitted a request for support via DG REFORM's Technical Support Instrument. They wish to benefit from expertise on the relevance and feasibility of deploying tools based on artificial intelligence to improve access to rights for insured persons, as part of the political priority given to this objective at the national level.

### Immersion at MSA Alsace

The Mutualité sociale agricole d'Alsace (Agricultural social mutual organisation of Alsace) and its Deputy Director Alain Malgras welcomed Benjamin Malliart, policy officer in social affairs and mobility at Reif, for a three-day "immersion course". For Reif, the aim is to gain a better understanding of the issues faced by a social security organisation on the field and, ultimately, to improve the service provided to Reif members

by refining the work of monitoring, informing and promoting their expertise.

This immersion enabled the Policy Officer to meet around fifteen MSA Alsace employees in two different sites (Strasbourg and Colmar) and in various departments of the institutions. Together they discussed health issues (occupational health, medical inspection, supplementary part), health and social action, physical reception, collection of contributions, inspections and co-ordination over the territory, with a particular focus on several subjects relating to cross-border mobility.

## GLOSSARY

**ABV:** *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Berufsständischer Versorgungseinrichtungen* (German Liberal Professions Pension Fund)

**ELA:** European Labour Authority

**CCMSA:** *Caisse centrale de mutualité sociale agricole* (Central Agricultural Social Mutual Fund)

**Cleiss:** *Centre des liaisons européennes et internationales de sécurité sociale* (Centre for European and International Liaison on Social Security)

**Cnaf:** *Caisse nationale des allocations familiales* (National Family Allowance Fund)

**Cnam:** *Caisse nationale de l'assurance maladie* (National Health Insurance Fund)

**Cnav:** *Caisse nationale d'assurance vieillesse* (National Old-Age Insurance Fund)

**CNSA:** *Caisse nationale de solidarité pour l'autonomie* (National Solidarity Fund for Autonomy)

**CRPNPAC:** *Caisse de retraite du personnel navigant professionnel de l'aéronautique civile* (Retirement Pension Fund for Professional Air Crew Members in Civil Aviation)

**DC4EU:** Digital credentials for Europe

**DG EMPL:** European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

**DG REFORM:** European Commission's Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support

**DVSV:** *Dachverband der Österreichischen Sozialversicherung* (Austrian Social Security Federation)

**EESSI:** Electronic exchange of social security information

**eIDAS:** Electronic Identification, Authentication and Trust Services

**EN3S:** *École nationale supérieure de sécurité sociale* (National School for Social Security)

**ESIP:** European Social Insurance Platform

**ESSPASS:** European Social security pass

**INPS:** *Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale* (Italian National Social Security Institute)

**Kela:** *Kansaneläkelaitos* (Finnish Social Security)

**Medev:** Medicines Evaluation Committee

**Reif:** *Représentation européenne des institutions françaises de sécurité sociale* (European Representation of French Social Security Institutions)

**OHS:** Occupational health and safety

**Ucanss:** *Union des caisses nationales de sécurité sociale* (Union of National Social Security Funds)

**Unédic:** *Union nationale interprofessionnelle pour l'emploi dans l'industrie et le commerce* (National Professional Union for Employment in Industry and Trade)

**Urssaf :** *Union de recouvrement des cotisations de sécurité sociale et d'allocations familiales* (Union for the Collection of Social Security and Family Allowance Contributions)





### European Representation of French Social Security Institutions

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The European representation of French social security institutions (Reif) was set up in May 2003 to represent the basic French social security funds in their dealings with the European Union. Today, it brings together all the branches of the general scheme, professional schemes and specialised structures: health insurance, accidents at work and occupational diseases (Cnam), pension (Cnav), family (Cnaf), autonomy (CNSA), collection (Urssaf Caisse nationale, formerly Acoass), the National Professional Union for Employment in Industry and Trade (Unédic), the Central Agricultural Social Mutual Fund (CCMSA), National School of Social Security (EN3S), Union of National Social Security Funds (Ucanss), Centre for European and International Liaison on Social Security (Cleiss) and Retirement Pension Fund for Professional Air Crew Members in Civil Aviation (CRPNPAC). Reif has a permanent representative office in Brussels. You can follow the latest news from Reif on its website [www.reif-eu.org](http://www.reif-eu.org) and on LinkedIn: #REIFSecu

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