

Long Abstract

A relevant debate is actually under way about the necessity of a Basic Income – the most audacious proposal is about an unconditional one - and the form it may be distributed. Such a discussion is not recent, but today numerous countries are implementing political tools in order to give assistance to poor families or individuals, in response of the evident problems of poverty, inequalities and other harmful consequences of the dominant model. In order to understand better the ins and outs of such policies and which society model could stand behind them, we propose to analyze two specific cases: the social programs of Brazil and France. In Brazil, the *Bolsa Família* Program completed ten years in 2013 and is considered one of the most successful program of the government, with 13.8 million families beneficiated (around 50 million people, i.e. 25% of the national population). In France, the Revenue of Active Solidarity (RSA for *Revenu de Solidarité Active*, in French) – successor of the Insertion Minimum Revenue (RMI) which lasted 20 years – is the means of assistance of the most vulnerable fractions of the population and reach 2.25 million of families in September 2013. Another social welfare program, widely spread and historically fixed in the French customs, is the family allowances, implemented in the early 1930's.

The first section of the paper describes each program in order to contextualize and to portray the local characteristics of each region and, according to its main features, to identify respective goals, number of beneficiaries, conditions for attribution, effects on the poverty reduction, critics and debate provoked in the society. Section two focuses on the concepts and values which sustain social welfare initiatives and are defended by such proposals. This debate is bringing back important principles such as liberty, equality, fraternity, or independence and capability, but moral prescription too, for instance. Even if these values seemed to be totally embedded in our modern values, they are not respected and need to be newly discussed and resettled as essential ones. The discussion about the Basic Income and, in a more comprehensive way, the Degrowth debate are linked to, and dependent on such values, aiming the emancipation of each citizen. Although these social welfare programs are criticized by actors who allege the risk of welfarism, this is specifically its emancipatory potential that must be enhanced and enabled. Finally, a more radical proposal is presented - the Unconditional Autonomy Allocation (DIA, from *Dotation Inconditionnelle d'Autonomie*, in French), as recommended by Vincent Liegey and his team – and few initial insights about its potential future are highlighted.