Illiteracy, a real plague / scourge / bane

The word snaps / sounds like an insult, however/yet it is rather a national failure : according to ø INSEE statistics / figures / data, although / even though school is compulsory / mandatory for all children, illiteracy concerns 7% of adults aged 18 to 65 (years old) in France // 7% of adults aged ... are illiterate in France. Besides this figure has not significantly evolved for twenty years / over the last twenty years.

The word itself is actually quite recent – it was created in 1981 to refer to “ persons who even after attending school / getting an education / receiving instruction, do not have the skills in reading, writing and arithmetic needed to / required to care for themselves / to be autonomous in simple daily-life situations / to deal with simple daily-life situations by themselves “ as defined by the National Agency for the Fight against Illiteracy.

Impossible to / No way to know ø what time the bus arrives, how to heat up a ready meal, how much the bank is asking for, or what this or that part of the employment contract is about / deals with. Because contrary to what we may believe/think, ø half of these people are employed / do have a job and most of the time / in most cases neither their boss nor their colleagues suspect anything about / know anything about their secret. Indeed, as they feel responsible for their own situation, these persons are ashamed and for that reason / because of that, they certainly do not want to be unmasked / do not want their secret to be discovered nor do they want to ask for help from associations.