

MEM-VOL Migrant and Ethnic Minority Volunteering

Summary: Final Report France

A Transnational Exchange Programme in Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, The Netherlands and United Kingdom in the framework of the Community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion (2002 - 2006)

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I. Presentation of our Institute and our interest in the MEM-VOL project

IRIV

The Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering (IRIV) was created in 1997 on the basis of a study on the “Social, economic and political aspects of Volunteering in Society in France and Europe”¹ with the aim to improve knowledge on the non profit sector.

The IRIV **realises studies** whose main subjects are Training for volunteers and paid staff working with volunteers and Youth volunteering. Our last works are:

- **Impact of Information Society Technologies on volunteering** (2002): regional studies on the use and access to Internet by associations and its impact on volunteering²;
- **Work with volunteers**: a training program for social workers, social education workers and familiar professions (2000-2001) gathering 3 countries (Austria, France, Germany)³;
- **European team on Youth volunteering issues** (2000): European workshop gathering 6 countries (France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom)⁴.

The Institute **develops a web site** (www.iriv.net) to present its activities but also to inform on the legal framework and give contacts on organisations dealing with volunteering.

IRIV **proposes training programmes** for paid staff and volunteers working within the non profit sector (non governmental organisations, public authorities, private firms).

The Institute has **published so far 3 books**: Volunteering: an opportunity for youngsters in Europe: a European team on youth volunteering issues⁵; Volunteering and employment: Competition or Complement? analysis of the links between paid work and voluntary work⁶; Which status for the Volunteer?⁷ analysis of the rules and recognition of the volunteers and the volunteering in France and abroad.

IRIV in the MEM-VOL project

Our main interest in the MEM-VOL project is to improve knowledge in a field, volunteering of migrants in which very few has been made so far in France. Voluntary work is a way to enhance social, cultural and professional integration for migrants. We are very glad to be partner of INBAS-Sozialforschung's project and wish to develop our partnership in the future on this specific subject which is a new and innovative way to consider migrants and migration in the integration process.

¹ La Documentation française, Paris, 1997.

² with the support of the Direction for Youth and Sports in Midi-Pyrénées and Champagne Ardennes, the Delegation for Associative Life in Ile et Vilaine (Brittany) and the General Council in Isère (Rhône Alpes).

³ Project sustained by the European Commission under the aegis of the Leonardo program.

⁴ sustained by the European Commission under the aegis of the programme Youth for Europe (DG XXII).

⁵ IRIV, Paris, 96 p, 2001.

⁶ IRIV, Paris, 96 p, 1999.

⁷ IRIV, Paris, 96 p, 1998.

II. Socio-economic data on migrants and ethnic minorities in France

In France we have a very rich literature on migration due to our past. We have been a land of migrations for many centuries. Our geography is the main explanation for this.

Each year, official reports are published to give the last data on migration and to develop a specific issue on migration:

- The Activity Report of the Direction for Population and Migrations, from the Ministry for Social affairs: it provides statistics and last trends or issues concerning migrants;
- The Annual Report of the High Council for Integration: it gives statistics and a specific development on a specific issue; this year professional integration of people coming from French departments and territories abroad;
- The Activity Report of the French Office for the Protection of the Refugees and Stateless persons (asylum seekers): it provides statistics on the 3 types of asylums in France.

Moreover, the public Editor, the Documentation Française and the Prime Minister Public Letter, both propose a specific rubric on their respective web sites dedicated to Migration.

Two main priorities in public policies concerning migrants are: struggle against clandestine migration; welcome and integration of regular migrants. Moreover, to face the lack of human resources in specific economic sectors (such as building and public works), migration should be a way to solve the problem.

Some data concerning migrants (1999 census)⁸:

- 3,263,000 foreigners in France metropolitan (3,597,000 in 1990);
- 4,309,000 migrants in 1999 i.e. 7.4% of the French population
- in 1962, 50% of the migrants were either Italian or Spanish; since 1975 Portuguese have been the more numerous (571,000)but nowadays Algerian re the first ones (576,000);
- naturalization has become the rule for most people coming from Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) but Asian minorities are much more familiar with this behaviour (61% of Migrants from Cambodia and 74% from Vietnam have become French);
- new waves of migration come from sub-Saharan Africa: 400,000 migrants en 1999 i.e. 43% more than 1990.
- In 2000, there were 102,000 regular refugees over 18 years and 30,000 under;
- Asylum seekers come from Asia (China and Sri Lanka) for 36%; Africa for 34%; Europe (Yugoslavia, Turkey, Moldavia and Russia) for 27%.;
- Foreign workers are 1,577,638; they represent 6% of the total active population; the unemployment rate for foreigners (20.8%) is twice as big as for national workers (9.4%)

In 2000, a specific Plan for Asylum seekers was adopted by the French government to face the increase in housing demands, social and legal protection for isolated minors. The same year National Assizes for Citizenship were organised in Paris where youngsters from ethnic minorities could express

⁸ Direction for Population and Migrations, Activity Report, Paris, November 2002.

the discriminations they have to face in everyday life: at school, at work and during their leisure time. A free Call has been created where they can testify and be helped. Employment, vocational training and professional life is the first reason for calling (38% of total calls), social life and neighbourhood is the second reason (12% of the calls), housing, leisure and relations with the police is the third (10%).

There has been an increase in permanent migration since 1997⁹. This is partly linked to family increase. Permanent foreign workers come mainly from Morocco, Algeria (Africa represents 43% of the total foreign workers), Lebanon, USA and Japan.

Temporary migration concerns mainly asylum seekers (with the wars in Africa, Iraq and the Balkans). The number of temporary workers has increased and this of students (sometimes disguised workers) has doubled since 1998. The number of naturalizations has been decreasing since 2001.

Notions concerning migrants and migration in a French perspective

Assimilation: expected result in the integration process; the main goal in the French model which means that there should be no more difference with a native French.

Co-development: migrants are supposed to be vectors for co-developing in less developed countries; the main goal is to improve solidarity with native countries or to incite potential migrants to stay in their own country

Cooperation: State to State policy, in a macro-economic perspective

Foreigner: person who is not French but lives in France in a temporary way with an official Card to Stay. When they don't have this card, they become the so-called «sans-papiers»

Migrant: person born abroad and arrived in France to live for a long time; the notion is wider than foreigner as it also includes people who have become French after a naturalization.

Integration: long term process and policy to integrate migrants in which they are asked to share the common values promoted by France (liberty, secularism, solidarity) on the basis of equal rights and mutual duties.

Refugee: person defined under the 1st article of the Geneva Convention of the 28th of July 1951 i.e. person fearing of being persecuted because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinions and who claims for being officially protected.

Actors of migration in France

National Council for Integration of Migrants: since 1984, public consultative body gathering relevant people of foreign origins

⁹ High Council for Integration, Annual Report, Paris, November 2002.

Direction for Population and Migrations: since 1966, attached to the Ministry for Social affairs

Funds for Action and Support for integration and struggle against discriminations: since 2001, public body depending on the Direction for Population and Migrations; its main goal is to support migrants families in their everyday life (housing, vocational training, health, education, culture, leisure...)

High Council for Integration: public consultative body under the aegis of the prime Minister since 1989

French Office for the Protection of the Refugees and Stateless persons (asylum seekers) (OFPRA): public body under the aegis of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Office for International Migrations (OMI): since 1945, public body under the aegis of the Minister for Social Affairs with the aim to study the labour market offers and demands in an international perspective.

III. Volunteering in France: an overview

Many studies have been realised since the beginning of the 90s in France, financed by the Fondation de France¹⁰. The volunteers were less than 9 millions in 1990, they are more than 12 millions today (25% of the population over 18 years). This represents more than 1 million jobs (in full time equivalent) in 1997¹¹ (study made directly among the population); around 700000 in 1999 (study made among the associations)¹².

The destination of the voluntary work is as followed¹³:

- sports: 28.1% of the total volume of working hours;
- leisure: education for all and social tourism: 16%;;
- culture: 13.5%;
- social action: 13.1%;
- opinion, expression and defence of interests: 10.8%;
- education, vocational training, professional inclusion: 6.4%;
- charity and humanitarian action: 5.4%;
- health: 4.2%;
- defence of economic interests, local development: 1.8%;
- other: 0.7%.

Most of the voluntary work benefits to non profit organisations without any paid staff; only 20% of the French associations have employees (who work together with 2 million volunteers).

For reasons of «Republican taboo», we can't ask, in any national survey, the nationality of the people interviewed, so there is a lack of information concerning migrants volunteers. It's a pity for the High Council for Integration¹⁴, as statistics are useful tools to build a public policy.

The liberty to create association (guaranteed for all since the 1901 act) on the French territory was limited for foreigners between 1939 (beginning of the 2nd World War) and 1981. Foreigners had to ask for official agreement before any creation. So far, we don't have any general information on migrants volunteering in France.

¹⁰ Archambault (Edith) avec Bon (Christine), Le Vaillant (Marc) et Boumendil (Judith), «Les dons et le bénévolat en France», Laboratoire d'Economie sociale - Université de Paris I- Institut de sondage Lavialle, pour la Fondation de France, Paris, 1991-1994-1997.

¹¹ LES-ISL, Fondation de France, Paris, 1997.

¹² Matisse-LES, CNRS, Paris, 1999.

¹³ Matisse, LES, CNRS, Paris, 1999.

¹⁴ Haut conseil à l'intégration, Les parcours d'intégration, la Documentation française, Paris, 2002.

IV. Research and literature on migrant and ethnic minority volunteering

Only data concerning associations declaring in their official object to work with or for migrants populations are available. We miss a lot of information as migrants may be involved in many other associations (such as sports and leisure which are the more numerous in France). Nevertheless, we could isolate some studies or literature referring to migrants and associations:

- **Migration associations:** a practical guide for integration, published each year by the Agency for development of intercultural relations¹⁵, refers to migrants and associations and underlines that public authorities (both on local and national levels) have encouraged participation of migrants in the name of citizenship and democracy; they also state the lack of information in this area but refers to works published in this field (7 out of 18 articles concern only migration associations);
- **Migrants associations and co-development:** NGOs play a major role in the development process¹⁶; many were created these last years with links in Africa (North and Sub-Saharan), subsidised by public funds, to support economic, social and political development and enhance democracy and facilitate co-operation through associative initiatives;
- **International Solidarity Organisations for migrants (OSIM):** in its last report, published in January 2003, the National Council for Associative Life¹⁷ dedicated an article to migrants associations and their role in integration and international solidarity. It gives an overview of the involvement of migrants in associations since 1960. Their first goal was to promote integration, defence of rights, citizenship. The legal framework proposed by the 1901 Act for association isn't known by most of the migrants as they don't have such a tradition in their own countries. The article refers to a study made in 2000 for the Co-operation and Development Commission (Cocodev) which identified 10 categories of OSIM on the basis of their goal: community, culture, support, women, youngsters, professional oriented, local, regional and national federations.

Many of the organisations involved in migrants issues ask for a further scrutiny among migrants associations on a scientific basis, to identify and classify this specific category of associations and their kind of volunteering.

Main domains of involvement of migrants

Without any statistical data, this is just a qualitative approach to underline specific areas in which migrants associations seem more relevant or involved:

- French learning: school support for both adults and children, as the language is the first means to be integrated;
- Culture: access to the French culture and knowledge of its own culture which is the basis of any integration;

¹⁵ Agence pour le développement des relations interculturelles (ADRI), Guide pratique de l'intégration, La Documentation française, Paris, 2002.

¹⁶ Sami Nair, Un nouveau regard sur l'immigration, 1997.

¹⁷ CNVA, Bilan de la vie associative 2000-2002, Paris, 2003.

- Arbitration: in order to prevent conflicts in its own community and with other communities, also with institutions;
- Vocational training and employment: integrated migrants accept to mentor youngsters; they may be retired people or professionals in their own firm;
- Housing: access to specific lodging; associations act as guarantee for migrants towards the owners;
- Health: prevention and information on specific diseases; also health care by voluntary doctors or nurses;
- Legal issue: information on rights, free councils proposed by lawyers sometimes form the 2nd generation of migrants.

Three main issues in which migrants associations are or should be very involved:

- **schooling migrants' children:** the problem raised by children who have just arrived in France without any knowledge of the language and who suffered from strong difficulties at school¹⁸; the work made outside school in associations is a key issue to integrate those children (through leisure, sports, music...); migrants volunteers may play a major role as go-between with migrants families and institution;
- **taking care of elder migrants:** the problem raised by low qualified workers who couldn't afford to come back into their own countries when retired¹⁹; they need support;
- **welcoming asylum seekers**²⁰: this is more an emergency purpose; France had to face with the arrival of migrants escaped from their countries because of wars (since 1991 with the Balkans wars); they have a temporary right to stay and can work.

¹⁸ Ministère de la Jeunesse, de l'Éducation nationale et de la recherche, Les modalités de scolarisation des élèves non-francophones nouvellement arrivés, Paris, mai 2002.

¹⁹ Inspection générale des affaires sociales (IGAS), Rapport sur les immigrés vieillissants, rapport n°2002 126, novembre 2002.

²⁰ Bourgeois (Frédérique), Helly (Denise), «Une recherche comparative: politiques d'accueil, insertion sociale et circulation migratoire», Cahiers de recherche de la MIRE, n°12, Direction de la recherche, des études, de l'évaluation et des statistiques (DREES), août 2001.

V. Examples of best practices

Four actions seem to be mentioned as examples of good practice in France:

- **FORIM:** settled in 2000 by the former Minister for Co-operation, the work group for the OSIM proposed the creation of a platform for International migrations Solidarity organisations called FORIM; their action plan (2002-2003) focused on the financial development of such a structure; a resources centre and a data bank for International Migrants associations; symposiums and training programme for such organisations; the members of this platform (50 and more migrants associations) are volunteers, there is only one paid staff;
- **The so-called “Femmes relais” (women as go-between):** since the beginning of the 80s, aside social workers, these women, migrants, have played a major role among the inhabitants and between inhabitants and administration in suburbs (and inner cities); in the origin they were volunteers but their action has been financed by public funds to give authority and support their action; there are still 1000 volunteers working with paid staff.
- **Mentoring of unemployed youngsters:** specific associations have been created with the aim to support migrants youngsters (1st, 2nd generation) in their research of job; the unemployment rate is much higher among migrants than in the native population; this is the first area of discrimination; many are low qualified youngsters but graduated youngsters also suffer from discrimination; voluntary professionals act as patron or tutor;
- **Mediator for books:** the idea is to facilitate access to reading for population who couldn't afford to buy books or who are not used to written culture; the main goal is to work together with public library to give this population the idea to read (“door to door” action, local initiatives, books available for all...)

VI. Local, regional and national political programmes to facilitate migrant and ethnic minority volunteering?

It does not exist any programme meant to promote migrant and ethnic minority volunteering but in April 2003, the French government gave a revival to the Committee for Integration (forgotten since 1990) whose main purpose is to build an Action Programme which gathers more than 30 Ministries on migration public policies. The main point is to give emphasis to the Integration Strategy in matter of migration.

The main goal is to propose a real integration strategy to migrant and ethnic minorities by facilitating social and professional promotion. Non profit organisations and migrant volunteers should have a major role to play in this perspective.

The governmental programme proposed in April 2003 is focused on 3 main parts:

- Building ways of integration for new migrants;
- Encouraging social and professional promotion;
- Struggling for equal rights.

1. first point of the action programme: building ways of integration for new migrants

Main measures concerning associations and migrants volunteering should be:

- Health action towards new migrants;
- Social and professional integration for youngsters over 16 years;
- Access to law;
- Support for the so-called «adultes-relais» (migrants as go-betweens for migrant families and public authorities)
- Health prevention and education;
- French learning(including through radios).

2. second point of the action programme: encouraging social and professional promotion

Main measures concerning associations and migrants volunteering should be:

- Vocational training and employment in the countryside;
- Prevention in matter of education;
- Scholar support;
- Sports practice;
- Access to arts and culture
- French learning as a professional skill;
- Lobbying towards economic networks;
- Patronising youngsters for employment;
- Valuing our common history;
- Citizenship towards youngsters;
- Recognition of foreign music in our national heritage.

3. third point of the action programme: struggling for equal rights

Main measures concerning associations and migrants volunteering should be:

- Training for public and private partners for employment;
- Struggle against local discriminations;
- Supporting women employment
- Promoting sports practice for men and women
- Supporting programme against sexual mutilations.

VII. Conclusions and perspectives

The first phase of the MEM-VOL project has been very useful.

Thanks to it, we could make a statement of the studies made in France on migrants, migrations and volunteering. Data are very rich on migrants and migrations issues but quite poor on migrants volunteering. We suffer, in France, from a “republican taboo” which consists in avoiding from asking for the nationality of people interviewed in the national census.

Phase II of the MEM-VOL project could be the way to improve scrutiny in the field of migrants volunteering. Investigation should be made not just through migrants associations but through general associations. In France the partnership with the Conseil Général de Seine Saint Denis (General Council of the Seine-Saint-Denis Department) could be a way to make a first statement, on a regional level.

Phase I of the project has been a means to gather experts in volunteering from 6 countries, exchange data, ideas and methods and compare how each country builds its own policy in matters of migration and volunteering. Netherlands and United Kingdom seem to have done more in the field of migrants volunteering (and in volunteering in general) whereas Austria, France and Germany haven't yet made a lot in this specific field even though public authorities and non profit sector are quite aware of its usefulness.

Phase II will be the occasion to work with two other countries: Spain and Hungary. The Mediterranean and Eastern Europe points of view should enrich our perspectives.

Phase I of the MEM-VOL project was also useful to build national networks gathering public and non profit partners involved in migrants issues and volunteering. In France the Ministry for Social Affairs (Direction for Population and Migrations) and the General Council in Seine Saint Denis are both relevant public partners. In the non profit sector, the FORIM, the GRDR (group for Research on Rural Development), the CICOS (association gathering associations in the Ile de France region) and the EDL (a local team working with local associations in Paris) are relevant partners.

Phase II should be the way to develop this partnership, to open it to new partners in France and to build a real transnational network in which national public and non profit partners should meet and create constructive links.

The main goal of the MEM-VOL project is to show how volunteering could be a means of social, cultural and professional integration for migrants and so make an important contribution to combat social exclusion and poverty.

Thanks to the volunteering issue, migrants are no more seen as beneficiaries of the integration policies but also as main actors in the process of integration.

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