



France 2004

Reception and Integration of New Migrants

Additional Information
from the Host Country





Vade mecum of admission and integration: Useful words, concepts and expressions

Ministerial certificate of language skills (MCLS): acknowledges the acquisition of the first level of mastering oral French in the context of a contract of admission and integration, it is delivered either on the admission platform, when the level of French is deemed sufficient by the IMO social auditor, or by the organisation responsible for producing the language recommendation and evaluation balance-sheet (LREB) at the end of a language training programme. Obtaining the MCLS exempts foreigners who subsequently seek French nationality from undergoing a test of their language skills during the naturalisation process.

National Agency for Admission of Foreigners and Migration (NAAF): national public body, which the State has put in charge of managing the public admission service, it should soon be established (draft programming act for social cohesion, submitted to Parliament in November-December 2004) by the fusing existing means and missions of the International Migration Office (IMO) and of the Social Service for Assistance to Migrants (SSAM); in particular, it will put the contract of admission and integration into practice and organise the admission platforms. There will be approximately 1,000 agents throughout France.

National Agency for Employment (NAFE): public body administered by the Ministry of Work, Employment and Social Cohesion. Its mission is to improve the operation of the work market and be active intermediary in matching supply and demand of employment. Certain measures were taken to reinforce the links between NAFE and the admission platforms to assist new migrants looking for work: appointment of NAFE agents for social auditors, statistical follow-up of parties to admission and integration contracts, job applicants, and so on.

Migrant Family Social Services Association (MFSSA): an association created in 1951 as the North African Family Social Service, the MFSSA (its name since 1979) leads a public service mission entrusted by the State, aimed at promoting the plan to settle migrant families (admission of reunited families, inclusion into the local community, etc.). To this effect, like the SSAM, it becomes involved, in particular, on the admission platforms to carry out a social diagnosis of the needs of new arrivals and, if necessary, propose carrying out a social follow-up. It receives a subsidy for this from the IMO and the FASIFAD.



Social services assistant: a regulated profession, the social services assistant “provides assistance to persons in difficulty to promote their inclusion and improve their living conditions”. On the admission platforms, the specialised social services assistants, belonging to the MFSSA or the SSAM, become involved to carry out, at the social auditor’s suggestion and with the agreement of the person concerned, a social diagnosis of the migrant then, possibly, a social follow-up of the person.

Social auditor: an IMO agent who becomes involved on the admission platforms, his or her mission is to organise and run community admission sessions, as well as promote and follow up the admission and integration contract. He or she conducts individual interviews using a questionnaire that evaluates the situation of the first arrival to inform him or her of his or her rights, especially social (social security, family allowance, etc.), and to instruct him or her on the various administrative steps to be completed to achieve this. If the migrant’s situation appears to him or her to require deeper examination, he or she refers this person to the social services assistant for a social diagnosis or to other institutional or volunteer partners if necessary (national education, service for women’s rights and for equality, social activity community centres, local specialised organisations, etc.).

Pre-professional Orientation Balance-sheet (PPOBS): carried out during the language training programme (mostly toward the end) by a specific consultant, it consists in evaluating the contract party’s professional plans, with individualised support and advice for successful fulfilment: helping formulate the plan, putting him or her in contact with employment services with a view to completing a skills balance-sheet, a training programme or a job search. The PPOBS measure is arranged and funded by the FASIFAD. The consultants are selected on the basis of a procurement contract.

Language Recommendation and Evaluation Balance-sheet (LREB): carried out on the admission platform by a body independent of the one that provides the language training, its aim is to evaluate the training needs of new migrants. Furthermore, for those who are party to the admission and integration contract, it recommends a number of training hours corresponding to the needs (between 100 and 500 hours) and then evaluates the progress achieved by the persons concerned halfway through the course and again at the end of the training programmes. The LREB is arranged and funded by the FASIFAD; the consultants are selected on the basis of a procurement contract.



Interministerial Committee for Integration: responsible for defining, leading and co-ordinating the Government policy in matters of integrating foreign residents or residents of foreign origin, once a year it gathers, under the chair of the Prime Minister, the ministers who are involved with this issue; restarted in 2003 after several years of inactivity, on 10 April 2003 it finalised a significant action programme, with a wealth of 55 measures including the creation of an admission and integration contract, establishing a true admission public service and a specialised agency (the NAAF) to manage it. The secretariat for the work of the interministerial committee for integration is maintained by the division of population and migration (DPM).

Admission and integration contract: recommended by the High Council for Integration in a report submitted to the government in November 2001, announced in October 2002 by the President of the Republic, the admission and integration contract was created by the interministerial committee for integration on 10 April 2003. First tested in 12 departments in 2003, extended to a further 14 departments in 2004, it will be put into general use in the entire territory between now and the beginning of 2006. Proposed to each new arrival upon his or her entry onto the admission platform, it consists of a document that strongly and solemnly formalises reciprocal commitments taken by France and the new arrival to facilitate the latter's integration. To the benefits usually provided on the admission platform (see entry for the term), France adds a civic training programme (obligatory), quick organisation of the language training programme that might have been recommended, as well as the issuing (under certain conditions) of a ministerial certificate of language skills. In exchange, the new arrival agrees to respect the laws and regulations of the Republic, as well as the fundamental values of our society, and to follow civic and, if recommended, language training programme. Concluded for one year, renewable once, the admission and integration contract is signed on behalf of France by the highest State authority in the department, the chief administrator. It was signed on that day (30 September 2004) by 31,761 people, or 88.8% of the new migrants to whom it was proposed. The programming act for social cohesion, presented to Parliament in November 2004, should reinforce it by giving it a legislative foundation and specifying the consequences of signing it and of respecting the commitments it carries. Those who have signed the contract and have respected the obligations will be considered to have satisfied the Republic's condition for integration necessary to obtain a ten-year residence permit or, later, to be naturalised.



Social diagnosis: performed on the admission platform by a social services assistant, at the suggestion of the IMO's social auditor when he or she observes that the migrant needs specific information or has difficulty accessing rights. It consists in identifying more precisely problems encountered (linked to the family context, presence of children, looking for housing or work, etc.) and in defining the accompanying methods necessary to resolve them. It can mean putting him or her in touch with "good" public service representatives, or referring him or her to common-law social services, and can result in a social follow-up proposal.

Departmental Division of Health and Social Affairs (DDHSA): decentralised State service in the department, responsible in particular for implementing integration, inclusion, solidarity and social development policies. To this effect, the DDHSA guides, under the authority of the departmental chief administrator, the creation and fulfilment, with the various partners concerned, of the departmental admission plan (DAP) for new migrants.

Regional Division of Health and Social Affairs (RDHSA): decentralised State service in the region, responsible in particular for observing and analysing the needs and co-ordination of the public policies; to this effect, the RDHSA guides, under the authority of the regional chief administrator, the creation and fulfilment, with the various partners concerned, of the regional programme of inclusion of the immigrant populations (RPIIP).

Division of Population and Migration (DPM): one of the divisions of the ministry of social affairs, it participates in defining the policies on admission and integration of new migrants, ensures guidance and co-ordination of these policies, and to this end acts as administrator of the two specialised public institutions, the funds for activities and support of integration and the fight against discrimination (FASIFAD) and the International Migration Office (IMO) (which will soon be replaced by the NAAF). It has three sub-divisions: admission and integration (ADI) demography, population movements and international affairs (DPI), and naturalisation.

Funds for Activities and Support of Integration and the Fight Against Discrimination (FASIFAD): public administrative body under the aegis of the ministry of employment, work and social cohesion and of the ministry of budget, originally created (1958) for the benefit of "Algerian Muslim workers in the capital", its present mission is to promote, throughout the territory, integration of all immi-



grant populations and people of immigrant origin, and to contribute to the fight against the discrimination of which they could be victims (28 February 2002 decree). To this end, it subsidises organisations, essentially voluntary, acting in the field in housing, training, health, education, and culture, most often in partnership with other public actors (State, local authorities). In particular, it is responsible for organising and funding benefits connected to the admission and integration contract, in particular the language measures (language training programmes, language recommendation and evaluation balance-sheets, pre-professional orientation balance-sheets) and civic training programmes. Divided into 21 “regional directorates”, it has nearly 300 agents. Its resources come almost exclusively from State subsidies and its budget is 170 million euro (2004).

Civic training programmes: introduced within the context of the admission and integration contract, it lasts one day (eight hours) and consists of a presentation of fundamental rights (freedom, security, property), institutions in the Republic, and fundamental principles and values of French society (democracy, freedom of religion, gender equality, etc.). It is free and obligatory for parties to the contract. Completion results in a ministerial civic training certificate.

Language training programme: key element of the admission and integration contract, an offer of training adapted to the language needs of the public. It is completely free for migrants who have signed an admission and integration contract and is offered throughout the territory. The beneficiaries are referred to this training programme by the organisation responsible for producing the language recommendation and evaluation balance-sheet (LREB). The recommended training programme comprises between 100 and 500 hours depending on the objectives of the training programme. It is obligatory for parties to the contract for whom the training programme was recommended. The training proposal is worked out taking account of flexibility, particularly as regards geographic proximity to the migrant’s home, adapting the training to the observed need (literacy, French as a foreign language, French as a second language, etc.), flexibility in the course intensity (extensive, semi-intensive, intensive training) or in the choice of hours (evening and Saturday courses are offered). A certificate of language skills (MCLS) and a pre-professional orientation balance-sheet (PPOBS) are issued as a result. The training tasks are arranged and funded by the FASIFAD and the consultants are selected on the basis of a procurement contract. New migrants who have not signed an admission and integration contract may benefit from free language training programmes but under certain conditions (being a non-francophone and aged over 26 years). They do not have a right to either a MCLS or a BOPPS.



High council for integration (HCI): created in 1989, this is a body for reflection and proposals to the Prime Minister. Its mission is to advise and make useful proposals on all issues related to the integration of foreign residents or residents of foreign origin, at the request of either the Prime Minister or of the interministerial committee for integration or on its own initiative. Comprising 16 independent persons of various backgrounds, professions and generations, the HCI publishes an annual report. It is especially concerned with producing training material used in the civic training programme for the admission and integration contract.

Integration: according the HCI, “integration is not a halfway point between assimilation and inclusion, but a specific process, by which active participation in the national society is raised by various and diverse elements...Without denying the differences, knowing to account for them without extolling them, it is the similarities and the convergences that an integration policy emphasises, in the equality of rights and obligations, in order to make the various ethnic and cultural components in our society interdependent and give each, regardless of his or her origin, the opportunity to live in this society whose rules he or she has accepted and in which he or she becomes a constituent element.” (1991). “Integration is addressed to everyone; it comprises an individual commitment to look beyond the distinctiveness resulting from the origin and the appurtenances to contribute to building a common public space (...) Integration is not a notion limited to foreign persons or persons of foreign origin alone, it concerns every person living in France and constitutes a basic element in the social pact and life together.” (2003)

“Living in France” day: benefit offered to those who have signed the admission and integration contract, it is an optional information day. The morning is devoted to a general presentation on daily life in France, and the afternoon to a presentation of the operating methods and conditions of access to four groups of essential services: employment/training, health/social protection, school, and housing (NB: participants should choose just one of these four modules as they are presented at the same time).

IMO (International Migration Office): created by the Statute of 1945 under the name of the National Immigration Office (NIO) for recruiting and introducing foreign workers in France, this public administrative body, under the aegis of the Ministry of employment, work and social cohesion. Among the main elements, its current mission includes:



- admission of foreigners and their families to promote their integration into the French population (see admission platform, admission and integration contract, physical examination);
- Return to the country of origin, with particular attention paid to local development and training;
- Expatriation, with the IMO and the NAFE forming a public employment network abroad since 1999.

Having eight regional delegations in France, and nine branches abroad, it has 636 agents (of which 43 are abroad under local status). Its budget is 56 million euro (2004). Its resources come from taxes and charges. The IMO will soon be merged with the SSAM to form the National Agency for Admission of Foreigners and Migration (NAAFAM).

Statute of 1945: text with legislative value that governs the conditions of entry and residence in France for foreigners. Statute no. 45-2658 of 2 November 1945, which also created the IMO, has been amended and supplemented several times, the last time in 2003 (Act no. 2003-1119 of 26 November 2003 on controlling immigration, foreigners' residence in France, and naturalisation).

DAP (Departmental Admission Plan of immigrant populations): carried out by the DDHSA under the supervision of the departmental chief administrator, it includes global diagnosis of needs (economic, social, educational, cultural, etc.) of first-arrival foreigners residing in the department, and an action programme that should take account of the needs in the context of common-law policies and can include specific plans adapted to these populations. The DAP is created and followed up by all public services concerned, those of the State but also those of local authorities (town halls, general council), as well as specialised associations. It lasts three years. The DAPs were created by a 12 March 1993 interministerial circular, and were restarted by a 24 November 2003 circular that recalls in particular their link with the RPIIP, with which they should form the "admission" section.

Admission platform: implemented by the IMO since 1998, the admission platforms form the entry point in the mechanism of admission and integration of new migrants into France. This is where an extensive range of benefits are offered them:

- a community welcome during which a film on France is screened;
- an individual interview with a social auditor;
- a simplified balance-sheet of language skills and, if the knowledge of French appears insufficient or non-existent, a free language training programme is recommended;



- possibly, if the situation of the new migrant so requires, an interview with a social services assistant who performs a social diagnosis and may recommend a social follow-up;
- a physical examination.

In addition, signing the admission and integration contract and organising specific associated benefits is offered. Currently numbering 17, covering more than half the population of first-arrivals in France, they will become the obligatory channel for all new migrants when, at the beginning of 2006, implementation of the public service of admission and extension of the admission and integration contract to all departments has been completed. Specific means of organisation are provided for migrants residing in departments where the flow is too low to justify relatively large permanent offices: in some cases, IMO agents (shortly the NAAF) will travel to the meeting with the migrant to an adapted admission location; in other cases, the migrant will travel to an admission platform established in another department. In all cases, the benefits connected to the admission or the contract of admission and integration (training, social follow-up, etc.) are fulfilled in the migrant's department of residence, as close to his or her home as possible.

RPIIP (Regional programme for inclusion of immigrant populations): carried out by the RDHSA under the supervision of the regional chief administrator, it brings together the priority activities that are led locally and regionally in view of better integration of foreign populations or populations of foreign origin on both the economic and the social levels. It can consider issues regarding admission, educational activities, housing families and isolated people, social-urban development, social inclusion activities, and the fight against all forms of discrimination. Lasting several years, created by decree no. 90-143 on 14 February 1990 and updated annually, the RPIIP were fulfilled – like the DRPs, with which a link is established – in co-operation with the public and private partners concerned, especially the local authorities (regional council). Restarted by the 24 November 2003 circular, they constitute the territorial framework of application of the 10 April 2003 action programme decreed by the interministerial committee for integration. The draft programming act for social cohesion, presented in Parliament in November-December 2004, provides for their reinforcement.

First-arrivals: legal foreigner admitted in the territory for long-term residence (corresponds to “new migrant”).

Family reunification: administrative procedure allowing all foreigners who have resided legally in France for at least one year and are able to demonstrate that



they have housing and sufficient resources, to benefit from his or her right to reunification with his or her (common-law) spouse and the couple's children younger than 18 years. Family reunification makes up 21% of new migrants entering France.

Public service for admission: it offers all new migrants, throughout the territory, a coherent series of admission benefits that should promote their integration. It therefore extends to the entire territory an admission measure that until now only existed in a few departments (admission on the platforms) and enhances the benefits offered until now (because of the new admission and integration contract). Agreed upon at the interministerial committee for integration of 10 April 2003, its creation will be formalised by the adoption of the programming act for social cohesion, planned for December 2004. The State will commission a specialised agency, NAAFAM, to manage it.

Social Service for Assistance to Migrants (SSAM): created in 1924 as the French branch of the International Social Service, a non-governmental organisation set up in 120 countries, SSAM has been a well-known public utility association since 1932. The aim of it is to "come to the assistance of emigrants and immigrants in difficult situations that could be encountered, either while travelling or while settling in, to work towards reuniting families, protecting individual migrant women and children, to serve as a connection between the migrant and the spiritual and material aid work that they may need, respecting each person's religious convictions". In terms of an agreement concluded with the State, which grants a subsidy for this, SSAM is responsible for a public service mission to "organise and ensure, in the context of the admission and integration policy defined by the government, a social service specialised in guiding persons of foreign origin living in France". SSAM becomes involved especially on the IMO's admission platforms. Employing 400 salaried persons, it has 45 departmental offices and is divided into seven regional services. It should soon be merging with the IMO to form the National Agency for Admission of Foreigners and Migrations (NAAFAM).

Social follow-up: carried out by a social services assistant after a social diagnosis based on the admission platform, it ensures connecting migrants to the related public and private services (e.g.: family allowance funds, national education, NAFE) and ensures action adapted to the migrant's situation is fulfilled.



Residence permit: administrative document that all foreigners must have if they wish to reside in France for longer than three months after entering the territory. The principal residence permits currently in force, defined by the Statute of 2 November 1945 as amended, are:

- temporary residence permits, with a duration of one year renewable, having various references related to the reason for residence in France: “employee”, “trader”, “visitor”, “scientist”, “artistic and cultural profession”, “private and family life”;
- resident permits with a duration of ten years, in principle renewable as of right and allowing the exercise of any paid or unpaid profession;
- pensioners’ permits, also with a duration of ten years, allowing entry into France at any time to reside for a period not exceeding one year.

Since the Act of 26 November 2003, European Union nationals are no longer obliged to have a residence permit. Nevertheless, nationals of the new Members of the European Union, except Cyprus and Malta, remain subject to the requirement of having a residence permit whenever they are carrying out an economic activity.

Physical examination: arranged by the IMO, it is an examination for prevention and referral, if necessary, to appropriate medical facilities. A certificate is issued that must be produced for a residence permit for France to be issued. It takes place in France either on the admission platforms, or in IMO-approved centres, or abroad in specific countries where the IMO has a local office (Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Poland).

“Living in France”: see “Living in France” day.

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How are new migrants welcomed at an IOM platform? A case study

Mrs Gulsum S., aged 23, of Turkish nationality and from the town of MERSIN, entered France legally to join her husband, a Frenchman of Turkish origin, in the framework of article 12b-4 of the amended Decree of 2 November 1945 (foreign family member of a French citizen). She does not speak French, but received a full secondary school education in her country.

Like all legal foreign first-time arrivals, Mrs S. was invited to attend a welcome session by the International Office for Migration. As she lives in the Lower Rhine region, she went to the IOM facilities in Strasbourg and took part in a group welcome session, during which a film welcoming her and introducing her to France was projected and translated into her native language, Turkish.

She was then called for a private interview with a social auditor from the IOM who proceeded to assess her individual circumstances (in particular, access to social rights, level of education, level of understanding of French and professional aspirations) and invited her to sign an Integration Contract, while introducing her to the specific services that accompany it, listed as follows:

- the civil education day, compulsory for all those who sign the contract, comprised of an introduction to fundamental rights (liberty, safety, property), the institutions of the Republic, and the fundamental values of French society (democracy, secularity, gender equality etc.);
- language training, provided free of charge and organised by a training centre close to her place of residence. As her level of French was very poor, she was offered 350 hours of French language classes;
- the information day on life in France aimed at giving her practical information on the various public services (health, employment and training, housing, education).

As Mrs S.'s husband is currently seeking work, a personalised follow-up service by a social worker was proposed, which she accepted.



Along with her contract, signed by the prefect of the administrative department, the social auditor gave her all the appointment dates for the various services, as well as a welcome booklet and a practical information guide on her municipality.

At the end of the welcome session, Mrs S. thanked the social auditor, telling her *“for me, it is important to sign a contract to know how the French live, to know my rights and duties, to learn French and later to be able to find a job”*.

