

**THEMES OF THE DEBATES OF THE VICHY MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON 3 AND 4 NOVEMBER 2008**

In an area within the competence of each Member State, France would like to further harmonise ideas and practices within the European Union with regard to the following subjects that it assesses to be of primary importance.

The following subjects such as the promotion of EU values, the integration process, access to employment and diversity within employment, the integration of women, intercultural dialogue and the governance of integration policies, are contained in the outline of a draft statement to be examined at Vichy. France would like this draft, as discussed by the ministers in Vichy, to serve as a basis for the conclusions to be adopted by the JHA Council on 27 and 28 November 2008 and to help advance the common agenda for integration policies in Europe.

France has wished three of the topics mentioned above to be further debated: learning of the language of the host country, access to employment and promotion of diversity within enterprises, and promotion of the European Union's founding values.

Learning of the host society's language and values, as well as access to employment are considered to be key elements in the integration of immigrants and their families. Many member States are already taking actions in these domains in different ways. Experience sharing during this conference will allow to compare and analyse objectives, content and results of the existing mechanisms.

I. Integration in Europe

European Pact on Immigration and Asylum

The European Council considers that legal immigration should be the result of a desire on the part of both the migrant and the host country to their mutual benefit.

The European Council stresses the importance of adopting a policy that enables fair treatment of migrants and their harmonious integration into the societies of their host countries.

To that end, the European Council agrees :

(..) g) to invite Member States, in line with the common principles approved by the Council in 2004, to establish ambitious policies, in a manner and with resources that they deem appropriate, to promote the harmonious integration in their host countries of immigrants who are likely to settle permanently; those policies, the implementation of which will call for a genuine effort on the part of the host countries, should be based on a balance between migrants' rights (in particular to education, work, security, and public and social services) and duties (compliance with the host country's laws). They will include specific measures to promote language learning and access to employment, essential factors for integration; they will stress respect for the identities of the Member States and the European Union and for their fundamental values, such as human rights, freedom of opinion, democracy, tolerance, equality between men and women, and the compulsory schooling of children. The European Council also calls upon the Member States to take into account, by means of appropriate measures, the need to combat any forms of discrimination to which migrants may be exposed ;

(..) h) to promote information exchange on best practice implemented, in line with the common principles approved by the Council in 2004, in terms of reception and integration, and on EU measures to support national integration policies.

Previous Europeans Meetings

THE COMMON BASIC PRINCIPLES
(Groeningen, Netherlands, November 2004)

1. The foundation of European integration policies

The legal integration of immigrants continues to be within the competence of each Member State. However, in order to provide a common framework for their actions, the Member States of the Union, at the first Ministerial Conference on Integration organised in Groningen under the Dutch Presidency in November 2004, adopted a set of principles which represent a common reference framework and provide structure to the integration policies implemented since that date. These are known as the eleven Common Basic Principles.

2- The eleven Common Basic Principles

"1- Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States."

"2- Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union."

"3- Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible."

"4- Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration."

"5- Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society."

"6- Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration."

"7- Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, inter-cultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens."

"8- The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law."

"9- The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration."

"10- Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services is an important consideration in public-policy formation and implementation."

"11- Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective."./.

**COMMISSION COMMUNICATION ON A COMMON AGENDA FOR INTEGRATION
FRAMEWORK FOR THE INTEGRATION OF THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS IN THE
EUROPEAN UNION, SEPTEMBER 2005,**

The Hague Programme, adopted by the European Council of 4-5 November 2004, underlines the need for greater co-ordination of national integration policies and EU initiatives in this field. It further states that a framework, based on common principles, should form the foundation for future initiatives in the EU, relying on clear goals and means of evaluation. On the basis of this decision, the **JHA Council of 19 November 2004** adopted Common Basic Principles to underpin a coherent European framework on integration of third-country nationals, and the European Commission presented its communication on A Common Agenda for Integration on 1 September 2005. This communication emphasises the following objectives :

1. Strengthening the implementation of the common basic principles

The first part of the communication presents a series of actions in the form of tables that can be implemented by the Member States of the EU for each Common Basic Principle. The list of these actions, which build upon the Handbook on Integration, is indicative and not exhaustive and it leaves Member States to set priorities and select the actions, as well as the way in which they are to be carried out within the context of their own national situations and traditions. These actions should be seen as main elements of all national and EU integration policies. The Commission recommends incorporating a gender perspective into all relevant actions, as well as paying specific attention to the situation of immigrant youth and children.

2. Encouraging a more coherent approach towards integration at EU level

In this framework, the Commission recommends :

- Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services (Common Basic Principle 10) and developing indicators and evaluation mechanisms (Common Basic Principle 11) through a whole series of measures
- In the context of the admission and residence of third-country nationals, ensuring that equality of treatment and rights for immigrants are taken into account;
- Developing cooperation and exchange of information on integration using the following tools :

**** National Contact Points on Integration***

National Contact Points will continue to play an important role as their flexibility and technical character facilitate the exchange of information and experience. Focusing their work more closely on the Common Basic Principles will support the development of the European framework.

**** Handbook on Integration***

The Handbook, addressed to policy-makers and practitioners at local, regional, national and EU level, was welcomed by stakeholders and a second edition is planned for 2006.

**** Integration website***

Le programme de La Haye a expressément demandé la création d'un site Internet accessible au grand public afin de tenir l'inventaire des bonnes pratiques, de promouvoir les échanges dans toute l'Union européenne.

**** Involving stakeholders***

Given that a comprehensive approach involving stakeholders at all levels is essential for the success of integration policies, the Commission announces its intention to set up a European Integration Forum.

**** Annual Report on Migration and Integration***

The Commission's Annual Report will be an important instrument to monitor the further development of integration policies in the European Union.

THE POTSDAM CONFERENCE, GERMANY, MAY 2007

1. Strengthening integration policies in Europe

Organised under the German Presidency in Potsdam in May 2007, the second European Ministerial Conference on Integration stressed the need to promote a global and coherent approach to integration policies, migrant flow management, development and cooperation with the countries of origin, and recognised in particular the complementary and interlinked nature of immigration and integration.

Following on from the Groningen Conference (November 2004) and the Common Basic Principles which were adopted by it, the Potsdam Conference resulted in the Justice and Home Affairs Council of 12-13 June 2007 adopting of a set of 11 conclusions which both :

- serve as a reminder of the commitments undertaken and the initiatives launched by the European Commission, in particular the publication of the "Handbook on Integration" for use by decision-makers and local practitioners, the creation of the European Integration Fund and the effective establishment of the network of National Contact Points on integration reporting to the Commission ;
- and propose new areas of discussion and study.

2. Declaration of new areas of study in relation to integration

With the support of National Contact Points, the European Commission was asked to :

- explore and clarify the various conceptions of and approaches to ideas of citizenship and participation in public life ;
- examine the added value of developing common European modules for immigrant integration ;
- d analyse measures that will contribute to improving the public image of immigration ;
- explore how integration programmes and policies can contribute to the prevention of social alienation and radicalisation ;
- promote the development of common indicators and indexes that could be used in order to assess integration policy outcomes.

3. Focus on intercultural dialogue as a tool to promote integration

Recognising that intercultural dialogue has become an important instrument in fostering the successful integration of citizens of different origin, culture and religion in Europe, the Council of 12-13 June 2007 invited Member States to undertake exchanges of experience in this area.

With the support of the network of National Contact Points, Germany was asked to produce a proposals report on this subject, which would also examine the creation of a flexible procedure for conducting exchanges of information in order to respond to problems or questions related to intercultural matters likely to affect or be of interest to several Member States.

4. The link with the Vichy Conference

At the Potsdam Conference, it was decided that both the Commission, examining new areas of study related to integration, and Germany, investigating intercultural dialogue, should present their reports at the next European Ministerial Conference on Integration, namely the conference taking place in Vichy under the French Presidency.

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION
TO THE 2008 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON INTEGRATION**

On 8 October 2008, the Commission adopted a report to the Ministerial Conference on Integration taking place on 3 and 4 November 2008 which examined the topic of "Strengthening actions and tools to meet integration challenges". This document is presented by the Commission as a response to June 2007 Council Conclusions stressing the need to consider approaches to integration that involve society as a whole.

The report is in two parts:

Definition of the actions required to meet integration challenges which are based around five themes :

- greater participation of immigrants in the host society and greater ease in acquiring the nationality of the host State.
- strengthening the situation of immigrants in the host society, by consolidating their rights and empowering them. Among the measures recommended, the Commission also underlines the importance of the host society and the media in playing a greater role in fostering knowledge and understanding of the contribution made by immigration.
- the added value inherent to an integration policy designed to prevent social alienation. In this regard, intercultural and interreligious dialogues, and their promotion, can be essential instruments to actively fight racism, discrimination and the isolation of immigrants.
- the development of new instruments such as Common European modules for integration, used as building blocks for comprehensive integration strategies covering all aspects of the integration process. These tools could also be used as points of reference in the design of integration policies in the different Member States.
- use of common tools to evaluate integration policies. To this end, the Commission recommends the definition of indicators to analyse and compare mechanisms, and improved collection of the information available.

2 – Reminder of the measures that should be developed in host societies to strengthen immigrant integration

The key areas focused on are employment, social inclusion and education, which Member States should continue to work on as a priority both for immigrants and their families.

In the report's conclusion, the Commission refers to the European Pact on Immigration and Asylum adopted by the European Council on 15 and 16 October 2008, and to monitoring of the commitments undertaken, particularly with regard to evaluation of integration policies.

Presentation of actions in employment and learning the language and values in some member states of the European Union ;



GERMANY

1. Teaching of language and values

Compulsory language courses and the teaching of values of the host society are prescribed within the framework of the Integration Course (Integrationkurs) as provided under Article 43 of the Immigration Act (Zuwanderungsgesetz) and are mandatory upon application for or renewal of residence permits. An initial audit carried out by the Aliens Department establishes the conditions for participation.

Language training :

Compulsory German language training is scheduled for newcomers, foreigners benefiting from social allowances and people “who strongly need to be integrated”. The duration of the training varies between 430 hours (in case of intensive training) to 1245 hours for reading and writing teaching. Standard duration is 645 hours. This concerns newcomers and migrants already living in Germany :

- foreigners settled on a long-term basis, nationals of other Member States of the EU, recently repatriated Germans and naturalised citizens
- New arrivals immigrating for the purposes of family reunification, labour immigration, or humanitarian reasons;
- Applicants for naturalisation, which can be applied for following 8 years of residence.

In the case of family reunification, migrants must take an A1-level language test in their country of origin. Free courses (online and audio lessons) are available.

Language training in Germany is designed to achieve Level B1 (oral and written) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This level is compulsory to be granted a long-term visa or naturalisation. Training costs are of 1€/hour, but people benefiting from social allowances are exempted from tuition fees. The system makes provision for financial incentives including the partial refund (up to 50%) of the €630 paid by foreigners taking such courses on passing the final exam.

Teaching of values :

Teaching on norms and values is provided in conjunction with language training (45 hours / 30 hours for an intensive course): It covers German history, values and culture, its legal order and its political institutions.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

Like other job-seekers, may be referred by the Public Employment Service which offers the same services and allowances to everyone.

Besides, certain measures designed to assist people who are, in principle, able to work, have been set up by the Ministry of Labour and municipal agencies. Since 2005, there has also been an advice and information network aimed at encouraging those who have immigrated to enter the workplace: Integration by Qualification, which is funded by the German National Employment Agency and the European Social Fund.



AUSTRIA

1. Teaching of language and values

A compulsory integration course is prescribed for migrants under article 14 of the Settlement Act within the framework of an Integration Agreement (Integrationsvereinbarung) upon application for or renewal of residence permits. The training model is determined according to the migrants needs

Language training :

Language training consists of two modules.

- Module 1 whose objective is to enable migrants to acquire a language level which is sufficient for them to express themselves within the scope of their everyday lives ;
- Module 2 whose objective is to give oral and written language skills which allow them to participate in everyday life in Austria and to acquire citizenship as well.

Training costs :

- 375 euros for Module 1. Refunded by the federal authorities if the 75 hour module is completed within one year ;
- 1500 euros for Module 2. The federal authorities may bear up to 50% of the costs or €750, if the 300 hour module is completed within 2 years.

The objective of the training is to achieve Level A2 (oral and written). A certificate is issued after Module 1, and an A2-level German exam is required at the end of the training. In the event that the candidate fails the exam, he or she has the right to take the exam again within 5 years.

Entry onto Austrian territory is subject to obtaining an "Integration Agreement". Migrants who do not know the language must enrol on a German language course upon their arrival.

Teaching of values :

This teaching is incorporated into the language courses (The values of European democratic society, political institutions, the Government, the regions, assistance for accessing social services and the social protection system in Austria).

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

The competent authority is the Ministry of the Economy and Labour. A programme for integration support and for integration into the workplace has been established



BELGIUM

1. WALLONIA

1. Teaching of language and values

Language training :

There is no compulsory training course for learning the French language in the Walloon region. A command of the French language is not considered to be compulsory in the Walloon region but more as a factor facilitating the migrants' integration. Nevertheless, funding is provided by the French Community of Belgium for language lessons. In general, the institutions that provide these lessons are Walloon Education institutions, after-school programmes (Ecoles de Devoirs) and literacy programmes (Lire et Ecrire, Alpha and so on)..

Teaching of values :

Similarly, there is no compulsory citizenship education. However, teaching is available from a number of providers and social services on the subject of Belgian institutions. This training broaches the legal and administrative realities of how Belgian institutions function. It is organised according to the needs and requirements in the area.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

There are no special arrangements in relation to assistance and guidance in seeking employment for newly-arrived migrants. Nevertheless, the latter are taken care of at the same time as the whole foreigner population which is looked after by Regional Integration Centres (CRI) accredited by the Walloon Government which are responsible for:

1. Developing integration activities on a social and socio-professional level ;
2. Promoting training for foreigners or foreign born people and the personnel from the services designed partially or wholly for these people ;
3. Supporting or providing guidance for foreigners or foreign born people in all their steps towards integration, preferably by using agreements concluded with local authorities and associations ;
4. Promoting the participation of foreigners or foreign-born people in cultural, social and economic life ;

There is an institution designed to combat discrimination called the Centre pour l'Egalité des Chances et de Lutte contre le Racisme (CECLCR).

With regard to the promotion of diversity, a "Walloon Award" for multicultural enterprise is awarded to businesses that respect good practice in terms of integration and to those conscious of the need to promote diversity.

At federal level, there is also an Equality Diversity Quality Label

2. FLANDERS

1. Teaching of language and values

The route to civil integration comprises two components: a primary and a secondary component. The primary component is coordinated by the Inburgering or Integration reception service and consists in a training programme together with individual support. The training programme consists of Dutch language courses and social and career guidance courses. The content of this training programme is fixed in a “Civic integration contract” concluded between the migrant and the reception service.

This route is designed for foreigners who are 18 years of age or more who have come to settle on a long-term basis in Flanders. Belgians who were not born in Belgium with one parent not born in Belgium also fall within this route.

Language training :

The programme of the language training is set out in a “civic integration contract” and is two-tiered with a primary and a secondary component. This training programme relates to three categories in particular:

- New arrivals ;
- Long-term immigrants who have been living in Belgium for more than one year ;
- Ministers of religions recognised by religious communities and by the Flemish authorities.

In addition to adults, newly-arrived minors also fall into the target group.

New arrivals who pass the compulsory test which is equivalent to level A1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages are excused from Dutch language lessons.

The tests used to measure the level of knowledge of Dutch are those from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Depending on the candidates' standard, level A1, A2, B1, B2 and C1 tests (but not level C2) are used.

Passing the A1 or A2 level test attests to a sufficient level of knowledge of the language. All the same, there is no penalty for the migrant if they fail the final evaluation..

Teaching of values :

A special social guidance course acquaints migrants with Flemish society. This course covers issues such as the structure of the Belgian Government, education, employment mobility, health, and so on. Particular attention is given to values. Social orientation is provided by the Inburgering or Integration reception service. Migrants who are required to follow the course must satisfy the conditions set out; namely, they must attend 80% of the course short of which they run the risk of a fine.

The reception service organises the social orientation module depending on its requirements. The social orientation training module consists of a course of circa 60 hours taught in the native tongue of the immigrant or a contact language.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

Within the framework of the civic integration pathway, a career guidance module is offered to support the person being integrated and to encourage them to continue their education, to find a job, to get involved socially and culturally and in voluntary work and leisure activities. The experience and qualifications (such as diplomas) obtained by the person being integrated in their country of origin forms a starting point for this support. The VDAB, or Office flamand de l'Emploi et de la Formation professionnelle (Flemish Office for Employment and Professional Training) is responsible for providing career coaching to the migrant.

The module consists in a collective session and an individual session which makes it possible to determine the conditions for long-term career counselling. For migrants, a large choice of sector-specific language training courses is available. Further training is offered to migrants in need of additional skills. Training pathways are organised for foreigners whose diplomas are not recognised.



DENMARK

1. Teaching of language and values

In the framework of the Introduction Programme for Foreigners as provided by Act No. 375 of 28 May 2003 on Danish lessons for foreign adults and Act No. 839 of 5 September 2005 concerning the integration of foreigners in Denmark, an individual contract is agreed between the commune and the new arrival setting out the content of the Introduction Programme. This contract is concluded one month after registration in the commune at the very latest. A skills assessment determines the content of the contract. This programme is free for migrants.

Language training :

The Introduction Programme provides for courses in Danish as a second language (3 years on a part-time basis or 1 an a half years on a full-time basis), the objective of which is that the migrant can hold a normal conversation in Danish and read and write texts of the same level as that determined when the individual contract was prepared.

The teaching of the Danish language is always linked to the professional integration programme. There are three options for learning Danish according to the candidate's qualifications :

- Level 1 for people with little or no literacy in their native language ;
- Level 2 for people who were partially schooled in their country of origin ;
- Level 3 for people who have completed secondary or higher education.

Level 1 and level 2 Danish exams are provided under the programme. Furthermore, on completing the level 3 course, the migrant can choose between a level 3 exam and a Danish higher education exam. A certificate of attendance is issued to people who are unable to successfully complete any of the three levels in the event that they do not sit the exam.

Teaching of and values :

A civic course called "Danish society and culture" forms an integral part of the language training.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

There are regional centres for the evaluation of immigrant and refugee qualifications. Furthermore, as a part of the Integration Plan, agreements have been signed between the government and labour market operators.



SPAIN

1. Teaching of language and values

As part of the 2007-2010 Strategic Citizenship and Integration Plan, the Programme of introduction to Spanish society provides for a global reception programme using personalised integration pathways. The Programme of introduction to Spanish Society includes teaching on norms and values, rights and obligations as well as language.

Language training :

A lot of immigrants come from Spanish-speaking countries. For the rest, adult training centres offer free language courses. These courses are organised, in a decentralised way through municipalities and associations, in accordance with the migrants' levels of language knowledge and at different times of the day to allow as many people to take part as possible. Language learning is one of the components of the programme of introduction to society. In order to cater for the specific characteristics of Spanish regional languages, the document makes reference to learning the languages of the host country. This training is not subject to any final evaluation and the level of language knowledge is not material to obtaining a residence permit. The objectives set out by the plan are the acquisition of the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to participate independently in society and to access resources and social services.

Teaching of values :

The teaching of norms and values briefs migrants on Spanish institutions and procedures for accessing public services, legal advice, guidance on the basic rules and values prevailing in Spain as well as current social and cultural practices. It is both a civic and a practical training.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

The 2007-2010 Strategic Citizenship and Integration Plan is designed to set up a reception system to ensure the rapid socio-professional integration of immigrants. Initiatives include:

- combating discrimination during recruitment or in the workplace.
- strengthening the presence of immigrants in programmes developed within the framework of active employment policies.
- including the principle of wage equality in all public policies.
- putting tools into place to promote wage equality and non-discrimination.

In 2000, the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia known as OBERAXE was created (the equivalent to the HALDE in France) within the framework of the law relating to the rights and freedoms of foreigners in Spain and their social integration. It began its mission in 2006..



ESTONIA

1. Teaching of language and values

Within the framework of the new 2008-2013 Estonian Integration Strategy, one of the objectives of Estonian integration policy will be to provide migrants with language training and courses introducing them to Estonian culture and society. This programme will be developed on the basis of the experience of several EU Member States in partnership with local authorities, schools and state institutions.

Language training :

To obtain a permanent residence permit, migrants must have level B1 proficiency in the Estonian language. Migrants under 15 years and over 65 years are excused from this rule as are the disabled and those who have received an education in Estonia.

For certain high-level professions, level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is required. In contrast, for migrants schooled in Estonia at elementary, secondary or higher education level, no language test is required.

Since the 1st July 2008, the language levels have been changed for those of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, and the tests include receiving (listening, reading), producing (oral expression, writing), interacting (taking part in a conversation) and mediating in Estonian.

Teaching of values :

Within the framework of the 2008-2013 Introduction Programme, there will be a citizenship education module (free for all those applying for naturalisation). European Union-related issues will be touched upon during this course. Currently, a citizenship test is only compulsory for those applying for naturalisation. Courses are available to this end.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

Professional training and practical information will also be included in the new Introduction Programme which is currently being developed.



FINLAND

1. Teaching of language and values

Within the framework of the Local Integration Programme and the Individual Integration Plan as envisaged by the Act on the Integration of Migrants and the Reception of Asylum-Seekers of 1999, the immigrant undertakes, by means of an agreement between him- or herself and the commune, to complete a free language course. This agreement must be sealed within five months of receiving social assistance benefits or 3 years after registration in the commune at the latest. An initial audit allows an individual plan to be set up

Language training :

Language training provides for Finnish or Swedish language courses in various formats and at different levels (full-time courses or evening classes). The objective is to acquire basic language skills, oral and written.

There is no exam included in the integration course, but the migrant can obtain a Finnish or Swedish language aptitude certificate (National Certificate Finnish Language Test) – intermediate level. Failing this language test is not penalised but does delay access to measures to assist integration by several years.

Teaching of and values :

The Integration Plan makes provision for information on Finnish society, customs and culture in order that the migrant becomes aware of the values, norms and attitudes of Finnish culture (education system, history, taxes, etc.). This training also aims to improve professional skills.

At the end of the training, the migrant receives a certificate indicating the total number of hours training as well as a note on the language level attained.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

With regard to the least qualified migrants, they can obtain further career training. A significant part of the training is devoted to coaching within the framework of the professional project for a period of one year.

In the case of economic migration, the costs of language and career training are borne either by the employer or by the migrant.



FRANCE

1. Teaching of language and values

Language training :

France offers a twofold mechanism for migrants settled on French territory to learn French :

- for newly-arrived migrants having signed the Contrat d'accueil et d'intégration (Reception and Integration Contract): free training of no more than 400 hours (compulsory when prescribed) and taking an exam at the end leading to a level A1.1 certificate, just below level A1 ;
- For migrants over 26 years of age settled in France for several years: a free training course of no more than 200 hours, which can be retaken once. Migrants involved in a naturalisation procedure, newly single women households and migrants whose level of French is below level A1.

France also promotes the learning of the French language by salaried migrants within the framework of their career (Act of 4 May 2004).

Teaching of values :

A citizenship course is taught to newly-arrived migrants having signed the Reception and Integration Contract: this one-day course, provided free-of-charge, consists in a presentation on French institutions and the values of the Republic, particularly equality between men and women and secularity.

Within the framework of the Act of 20 November 2007, migrants subject to family reunification or foreign spouses of French citizens will, from the end of 2008, be evaluated for their knowledge of French and the values of the Republic in their country of residence, after which training will be provided if necessary prior to arriving on French territory.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

The following measures have been established :

- support for rapid integration into the workplace for those signing the Reception and Integration Contract, who will systematically be subject to a skills assessment and benefit from partnership agreements with, for example, sectors of professional activity suffering a labour shortage (human services, transport and logistics, etc.) and major financing networks or industry groups, with a view to putting these people and employers in direct contact ;

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- Measures to support the integration of young foreigners and those from immigrant families, particularly young graduates, by sponsorship arrangements and putting them into direct contact with businesses ;
- Encouraging migrants to create new businesses by making it easier and safer for the entrepreneur both upstream (advice, access to micro credits) and during the first few months following start-up ;
- The development, in partnership with the business world, of corporate tools for promoting diversity and preventing discrimination in human resource management, such as the diversity charter signed by more than 1900 employers and the diversity label, making it possible to verify the extent of businesses' commitment and the effectiveness of measures that have been adopted.



GREECE

1. Teaching of language and values

Language training :

Language courses are provided for migrants and fall within the competence of the General Secretariat for Adult Education in the Ministry for National Education. These courses are funded by the Government and result in a certificate of A2 level (of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) competence in Greek language been issued. Obtaining this certificate is a condition for obtaining a long-stay residence permit.

The majority of legal migrants is of Albanian origin and is able to learn Greek language more easily than other migrants, because of geographical proximity between Greece and Albania that allows to go back and forth between both countries. This phenomenon is can also be explained by the high number of family reunifications done by the host country.

Teaching of values :

Learning of the host country's customs and values, as well as its history and civilisation are dealt with in the framework of language training, and in a specific course organised by adult training centres of the Ministry for National Education.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

No provision has been made for professional training for new coming migrants, since the migrants who are admitted for work must produce a contract of employment. When they arrive in Greece, they are allowed to participate in professional trainings organised by the Ministry for Employment.



ITALY

1. Teaching of language and values

Several measures addressing the teaching of the Italian language to immigrants have been established by public and private bodies.

Language training :

At a national level, in addition to the language courses provided under bilateral agreements with certain third countries, the Minister for Employment, Health and Social Policy, in conjunction with the Ministry for Education, funds language, civilisation and civic education courses which must be run by the Regions and local authorities for immigrants from outside the Community lawfully living in Italy. All these courses are free of charge.

The practical organisation of these courses falls within the competence of the communes, in partnership with the schools. The minimum duration of these courses is 90 hours for A1 level courses and 120 hours for other levels (A2 and B1). Courses must be organised for certain times of the day or using criteria which make it possible to cater for the needs of as many people as possible at the same time (housewives, the unemployed, the employed, etc.) and for their different needs (literacy, a business critical qualification, etc.).

The Ministry has the objective of reaching an A1, A2 or B1 language level depending on each migrant's potential. Extra-Community immigrants can take a final exam at the end of the course and obtain a certificate attesting to their knowledge of the Italian language recognised by certifying agencies.

Teaching of values :

In general, optional Italian language lessons also provide the basics of civic education and Italian civilization.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

There are no special arrangements to help migrants find employment given that residence permits are issued solely to those who have an employment contract.

Within the framework of combating discrimination, numerous initiatives have been set up, such as the "National Award for Good Practice in the Integration of Foreign Workers".



LUXEMBOURG

1. Teaching of language and values

The bill concerning welcome and integration of foreigners in Luxembourg provides for the creation of a Luxembourgish Office for Welcome and Integration. It will be in charge of drafting an integration contract, which will be offered to every foreigner legally staying on the territory of Luxembourg, willing to stay for a long period. The integration contract will provide, along with other things, for language training and citizenship education.

Teaching of values :

The objective is for migrants to get a language level allowing them to express themselves in daily life (target: A1 level). The training cost is 5€.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

There is no specific provision concerning assistance for newcomers in finding employment. Like every job-seeker, immigrants may be oriented by the Administration in charge of employment.

The Luxembourg Government decided in 2003 to provide financial support for the efforts of foreigners to integrate by learning Luxembourgish for professional reasons. The Ministry of Labour and Employment can grant credits to businesses that submit a grant request for courses in Luxembourgish for their employees.

The Government Commission for Foreigners (CGE) has set up since 2002, with European financial support, annual initiatives to combat discrimination for the general public as well as more targeted initiatives. It started with the field of employment, and was widened over time to other public areas.

The bill mentioned above provides for the elaboration of a national action plan on integration that encompasses also actions of prevention and fight against discrimination.



NETHERLANDS

1. Teaching of language and values

Within the framework of the Civic Integration Act (WI) and the Civic Integration Abroad Act (WIB), there are several integration programmes and schemes in the Netherlands.

Language training :

The condition for obtaining an MVV (provisional residence permit) is to take a Citizenship Integration Test from one's country of origin. The migrant is wholly responsible for preparing themselves for this test. An information and training pack is available for new arrivals who have to take the test and costs 65 euros.

Migrants who must sit this exam in their country of origin are new arrivals who have not yet attained level A2 in the Dutch language or who have not been schooled in the Netherlands for a period of at least 8 years (compulsory schooling up to the age of 18 years).

Once they are on Dutch territory, the language and citizenship training programme is not compulsory but the final exam for this programme allows migrants to obtain long-term residence permits.

Local authorities, in collaboration with language institutes, can in some cases offer an "integration bursary" to cover all training and exam costs.

The duration of the courses may vary enormously according to the abilities and knowledge of the migrants. Since 1st January 2007, fines may be imposed on migrants who do not turn up at the reception meeting organised by the local authorities, who do not participate enough or at all during language lessons (particularly if they have received an "integration bursary") or who do not sit the final test within the prescribed period

Teaching of and values :

In the two cases mentioned above (abroad and in the Netherlands), knowledge of Dutch culture and society represents a significant part of the exams.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

The most important parts of the government plan are :

- Action to monitor and combat discrimination ;
- Traineeships offered to migrants in order that they acquire professional experience ;
- Training on seeking employment for migrants from outside the European Union ;
- Action aimed at encourage diversity policies in businesses and organisations ;

Themes of the debates Integration in Europe

- The implementation of regional work plans ;
- A study on the effectiveness of migrant integration programmes ;
- Action to promote the creation of new business by migrants.



UNITED KINGDOM

1. Teaching of language and values

Language training :

There is no specific language policy for migrants. The latter may access language courses leading to a qualification (*English for Speakers of Other Languages, ESOL*) through continuous training run by the *Learning and Skills Council*

Migrants who are in a legal situation which allows them to request a permanent residence permit may attend free of charge after 3 years of residence (only 1 year of residence for spouses in the framework of family reunification). In all other cases, the courses must be paid for.

Since 2006, a test on the language and knowledge of customs and values of the United Kingdom has been imposed on those applying for permanent residence or naturalisation. Training is not compulsory and non-attendance is not penalised. Courses are organised by local authorities or by central government. They are funded by the Ministry of Education and the funds are divided up by the competent Learning and Skills Council.

Courses are on offer at all levels but the level required for the test is either ESOL entry 3 level (equivalent to the Council of Europe's B1 Level) or progress from an ESOL level towards the next level after level 3. Success in the exams organised for each level leads to a certificate being issued which is recognised by universities and when seeking employment.

Those failing the language or citizenship knowledge test are refused permanent residence. However, their residence permit can be renewed. Candidates can take the test as many times as they wish. Criteria for the exemption of the elderly and handicapped have been drawn up.

Teaching of and values :

There is no compulsory scheme to learn customs and values for new arrivals. Nevertheless, since 2006, there has been a test imposed on those applying for permanent residence or naturalisation. Learning about citizenship and values is included in the language lessons.

People who already have a good level of English can ask to just take a test on their knowledge of British history, society and institutions, for which preparation can be facilitated by reading a national handbook entitled "Life in the United Kingdom". The test includes the following units : the geography and history of the United Kingdom, the electoral and parliamentary system, the United Kingdom as a diverse society, Europe and the Commonwealth, Human Rights, working in the United Kingdom, the health system, accommodation, education, local and Community commitments, and understanding and knowing the law.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

With the exception of refugees, there is no particular support offered to new arrivals with regards to access to employment. British policy in this regard is to supply the same access to everyone at the Public Employment Service (placement, allowances and professional training being pooled into a one-stop shop called Jobcentre Plus).



SLOVENIA

1. Teaching of language and values

Language training :

The Decree on the integration of foreign citizens recently introduced by the Government sets out the conditions for Slovenian language training. The Slovenian Ministry of the Interior will start to implement Slovenian language programmes at the beginning of 2009.

The Slovenian language programme is not compulsory whatever the status of the learner. The Ministry of the Interior is also responsible for organising training for refugees which lasts approximately 6 months. For other foreign nationals, training courses will start in 2009 and it has not yet been decided how long they will last.

The objective for third-country nationals holding permanent residence permits is to pass the exam in Slovenian language at level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The immigrants' levels are assessed at the end of their training. A diploma can be issued to them but there are no consequences to failing.

To date, only refugees receive Slovenian language training. 60% of them take Slovenian language courses. The training of other immigrants will begin in 2009.

Teaching of and values :

According to the Aliens Act, immigrants are able to learn the country's history, its culture and its constitutional organisation. A Decree on the integration of immigrants recently introduced by the Government defines the conditions for learning in these areas. The Slovenian Ministry of the Interior will start to organise this training in 2009. Refugees are now receiving this education.

These courses are not compulsory and are provided free of charge. There is no penalty for absenteeism. The objectives are to learn the social, cultural and political values of Slovenia. Refugees can access 30 hours of training, and other immigrants will have the same right from 2009. At the moment, this education is provided separately. There is no official recognition of the courses taken but there will still be an exam to sit at the end of the course.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

There are no schemes to make access to employment easier for new arrivals than for other foreign nationals.

There is an Office for Equal Opportunities which handles cases of discrimination in public and private spheres.



SWEDEN

1. Teaching of language and values

Language training :

Swedish courses are offered within the framework of the “Swedish for Immigrants” scheme (Sfi) to all foreign nationals aged 16 years and above without any prerequisite knowledge of Swedish registered as residents in a commune. These courses are free and funded by the communes. The migrant is issued a certificate if he or she passes the test at the end of the training. The teaching methods vary from one commune to the next and according to peoples’ needs, but often there are 3 to 4 hours of lessons every day.

Teaching is divided into stages so that immigrants who have difficulty acquiring theoretical language skills can now obtain a certificate proving that they have attained certain specific levels of education in Swedish. The trainee student is issued a certificate at the end of the course.

Teaching of and values :

One of the objectives of the integration scheme is to impart knowledge about Swedish society and its values. This training is included in the Swedish language course (see above), but some communes organise special courses, seminars and conferences on these issues as well.

Training must provide students with knowledge about different aspects of Swedish society such as the fundamental democratic values of the country, the rights and obligations of its citizens, gender equality, children’s rights, working life in Sweden, and so on. Sometimes, outside operators such as NGOs, the Social Security Agency, businesses and the Employment Agency take part in this introductory programme.

2. Assistance in finding employment, combating discrimination and promoting diversity

To receive general education or to benefit from measures for integration into the workplace, it is often necessary to have obtained a language certificate. For the most part, the Employment Agency only considers people who have not reached the level required to enter the job market.

Since September 2006, new schemes designed to facilitate the return to work of people who have drifted away from the job market have been set up. In particular, these involve “new departure” jobs where the employer enjoys total exemption from employer costs when employing people receiving unemployment pay, sickness benefits, an invalidity pension or other income support for more than one year. Refugees and immigrants through family reunification can access “new departure” jobs for three years after obtaining their residence permit. Moreover, a special scheme aimed at new immigrants, “springboard-jobs”, has been in place since 2 July 2007 and links subsidised employment with lessons in Swedish. Resources have also been allocated to the public employment services to

evaluate the professional experience of new immigrants in order to speed up their entry on to the job market.

It is envisaged that in 2009, a new structure, the “Discrimination Ombudsman” will be set up to combat discrimination with renewed vigour. Furthermore, a Council for integration into the professional world has been established by social partners to support action in the domain of integration and combating discrimination in the workplace.

II. Integration in France

**INITIATIVES TAKEN BY BRICE HORTEFEUX
TO ASSIST LEGAL FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN FRANCE WITH MORE EFFECTIVE
INTEGRATION**

A. INVOLVEMENT THROUGHOUT THE INTEGRATION PROCESS

For immigrants, successful integration involves overcoming obstacles and providing for the future of their children in France.

Integration is a process which starts in the country of origin and continues in the years following arrival in the destination country.

Preparations are made prior to immigration, particularly in relation **to the learning of the French language and France's values**, which are now assessed by a test.

This involves a mutual commitment on the part of the host country and the immigrant, expressed by the **Reception and Integration Contract** and, for family immigration, the **Reception and Integration Contract for Families**.

This may be continued long after arrival in France, in particular through measures such as the **school for parents** and tools such as the **"Living French" booklet**.

ASSESSMENT IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

For more effective integration, family members who wish to settle in France have an assessment of the level of their knowledge of the French language and French values.

If required, they will attend free classes for a maximum period of two months before a visa is issued. The issue of a visa by the diplomatic or consular authorities is dependent upon a certificate attesting that they have attended the required classes. However, issue of a visa will not depend on the results obtained in any test.

How will this take place?

The National Agency for the Reception of Foreign Persons and Migration (ANAEM) is responsible for this measure, in close cooperation with French representation in the country concerned.

Persons concerned will be foreign nationals of more than sixteen years of age and less than sixty five years of age for whom family immigration is applied, or spouses of French nationals of less than sixty five years of age applying for the visa.

The following persons are exempted from taking classes in French language and / or French values: persons who have been educated for at least three years in French abroad or one year spent in higher education in France; persons who reside in a country where such studies are difficult, if not impossible to follow owing to major troubles (war, natural disaster, etc.); persons for whom following a course of study involves constraints which are incompatible with their physical or financial capabilities, or with their work commitments.

This measure was introduced by Act n° 2007 – 1631 of 20 November 2007, relating to the management of immigration, integration and asylum.

THE RECEPTION AND INTEGRATION CONTRACT

Integration of foreign persons into French society is assessed in particular with regard to **their personal commitment to abide by the principles governing the French Republic and sufficient knowledge of the French language**. In this perspective, the signing of a **“Reception and Integration Contract”** between the State and the person wishing to settle in France became obligatory from 1st January 2007.

Monitoring of this contract is taken into account for obtaining a full residence permit. If the persons concerned do not abide by their commitment, the Prefect may decide not to renew their residence permit.

Article L.311-9 of the Code of Admission and Residence of Foreign Persons and the right to asylum (CESEDA) stipulates that “foreign persons admitted for the first time to France ... and who wish to reside in the country permanently, must prepare for their integration into French society. To this end, they will enter into a Reception and Integration Contract with the State...” (Art. 5 of Act dated 24 July 2006).

The State will be responsible for providing the following:

- citizenship education lasting one day, which will include “an introduction to French institutions and values particularly equality between men and women and secular principles”;
- language training which is approved by the issue of an initial French language diploma, which may be up to 400 hours of classes, according to the needs of the person concerned;
- an “information session on life in France”, which is aimed at familiarising new arrivals with the workings of French society ;
- social support, if the personal or family circumstances of the signatory so warrant this support.

Since 1st January 2007, these services have been in place and financed by the National Agency for the Reception of Foreign Persons and Migration (ANAEM). The contract is signed for a period of one year, which may be renewed for the same period of time.

Results from the Reception and Integration Contract as of 30 June 2008

Introduced on a pilot basis on 1st July 2003 in 12 French Départements, then made compulsory from 1st January 2007, the Reception and Integration Contract has been signed by 361 447 persons since it was introduced on 30 June 2008.

More than 150 nationalities are represented. Principal countries of origin in 2007 were from the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) (43.1 %) of which 20.8 % were from Algeria, 15.5 % from Morocco and 6.8 % from Tunisia; then Turkey, with 6.3 %. Women accounted for the majority of signatories, with 53.9 %, a slight increase on 2004 (52.2 %).

In 2007, signatories of the contract were mostly from French-speaking countries or had a knowledge of French considered adequate to be exempted from language classes during the ANAEM reception procedure.

In conclusion, around a quarter of applicants were asked to take a course of language training to enable them to gain a basic level of language competence.

Initial Diploma in French Language (DILF) :

Foreign persons who are issued a visa at the end of their integration preparation, sign the Reception and Integration Contract upon their arrival in France.

They may complement their French language training and take other modules listed in the Contract, in particular the “Family” section, if they have dependent children.

Persons whose level was considered adequate on sitting the initial test abroad or who attained this level at the end of their course in the country of origin, are exempted from taking a language course in France. They will however be required to confirm this level by sitting the DILF exam (Initial Diploma in French Language).

This exam is taken by all foreign persons who take a course in French language on their arrival. 10 200 DILF diplomas have been awarded since 1st January 2007.

THE RECEPTION AND INTEGRATION CONTRACT FOR FAMILIES

Act n° 2007-1631 of 20 November 2007 relating to the management of immigration, integration and asylum created a **Reception and Integration Contract specifically for families, for those persons who have arrived to join their families in France, as they have children**. This contract is signed with the State by the parent who is already a resident in France and the parent who has arrived from the country of origin. It includes a course on **the rights and duties of parents in France**, in particular with regard to compulsory education.

1. The contents of the “Family” Contract and the consequence of non-compliance

This contract, an example of which is attached, is a complement to the Reception and Integration Contract. It is intended to assist parents in assuming their responsibilities within French society, so that their children can likewise develop within it.

The signatories undertake to :

- ✓ participate in the "Rights and duties of parents" training day ;
- ✓ endeavour to comply with compulsory school attendance for their children aged 6 to 16.

Whenever parents and, where applicable, their spouses are absent from the training without just cause and have not replied to follow-ups from ANAEM, ANAEM will notify the Prefect. The Prefect will then evaluate the possible consequences for renewing the initial residence permit for the rejoining spouse.

In addition, if considered justified, for example if parental deficiency is reported, the Prefect may notify Chief Executive Officer of the local authority to evaluate whether there is a requirement for protection measures, for which they have responsibility, or the implementation of a parental responsibility contract, as specified by Article 222 – 4 – 1 of the French Social Action and Families Code (CASF)..

2. Topics covered in the “Rights and Duties of Parents” training day

Four main topics will be covered during the training day :

- ✓ equality between men and women ;
- ✓ exercising parental authority ;
- ✓ the rights of children ;
- ✓ the schooling of children with particular emphasis on :
 - compulsory education, supervising school work and regular school attendance ;
 - family benefits and compulsory schooling ;
 - parent –school links;
 - what parents must do when their child is absent from school ;
 - respect for secular education in schools;
 - support and assistance facilities for parents and children.

SCHOOL FOR PARENTS

Many parents of immigrant pupils have specific difficulties **in keeping up with their children's schooling and familiarising themselves with the school system.**

To enable them to improve their skills, particularly in French, and get to know the school environment better, a circular entitled "***opening schools to parents for more effective integration***" was signed on 25 July 2008 jointly by Brice Hortefeux, Minister for Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development, and Xavier Darcos, Minister for National Education.

The scheme "***opening schools to parents for more effective integration***" will be introduced firstly on a pilot basis in the 2008 – 2009 school year, in twelve French départements; Bouches-du-Rhône, Oise, Puy-de-Dôme, Seine-Saint-Denis, Nord, Rhône, Var, Loiret, Paris, Essonne, Hauts-de-Seine and Val-d'Oise. In each département, two or three locations will be identified, and in each location, two or three schools will pilot the scheme.

The effective start date for the scheme is scheduled for the return to school following the All Saints' Day holiday on November 1st.

This scheme is part of the action programme defined in the framework agreement "to encourage academic success and promote equal opportunities for young immigrants and the children of immigrants" signed on 27 December 2007 by the Minister for Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development, the Minister for National Education, the Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs and their operators.

It is intended for the parents of immigrant children who have not kept to the Reception and Integration Contract (which has only been compulsory since 1st January 2007). It offers, on a voluntary basis, classes to be taken in schools, at times reserved for educational support.

The aims of the classes offered as part of this scheme are as follows :

- to acquire improved proficiency in French (literacy, learning and improvement) through lessons leading to certification (particularly the Initial Diploma in French Language – DILF – or the Diploma in French Language Studies – DELF), which will allow for more effective integration and facilitate job prospects, especially for women, who make up 70 % of family immigration,
- encourage an improved knowledge of French society, through the presentation of French principles and values,
- improve knowledge of the school system, and the rights and duties of pupils and parents, in order to provide parents with improved resources to assist their children on a day to day basis,

This scheme will be an additional part of measures planned in the "Espoir Banlieues" (Suburban Hope) Plan, decided on by the French President, when it is implemented in problematic areas.

THE « LIVING FRENCH » BOOKLET

The “Living French” booklet is a reference guide in the form of a personal record **which immigrants can use to develop their learning of the French language**. This document will record, stage by stage, the progress made in their studies of French. It will serve as proof of skills with an employer, for example.

It is also intended for recent immigrants, as well as those already settled for some time in France.

The “Living French” booklet aims to outline the person’s progress in language integration. It will mention:

- the personal information of the holder, i.e. their address, level of French language proficiency and other languages ;
- and also all French language courses taken and the level of French attained at the end of these courses and following assessment, as well as the details and stamp of the training body ;
- and finally any general information relating to French language learning, and particularly any French as a foreign language certificates and the main bodies to contact.

This booklet is intended for:

- immigrants who have signed the Reception and Integration Contract, for whom French language learning has been arranged by the National Agency for the Reception of Foreign Persons and Migration (ANAEM);
- and immigrants who are legally resident, and have been settled in France for several years and for whom French language learning has been presently arranged by the National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunities (ACSE).

This booklet is initially given personally to the immigrant by a language assessment and instruction body approved by ANAEM or ACSE within the framework of public contracts arranged and financed by one of these providers. It is offered to the party concerned on a voluntary basis.

Themes of the debates
Integration in France
Involvement throughout the integration process

For the duration of the immigrant's language training, this booklet must be completed by some or all of the following service providers :

- either by an assessment / instruction or language training body approved by ANAEM or ACSE within the framework of their public contract ;
- or by an assessment / instruction or language training body approved by a local authority (district or regional council) within the framework of its policy to promote the French Language ;
- or by an assessment / instruction or language training body approved by a business within the framework of its policy to promote the French Language within a working environment ;
- or by a prefectural official and a training body in cases where the immigrant is a candidate for acquiring French nationality.

This document has no legal value with regard to the residence rights of the foreign person and consequently cannot constitute an element of proof for legal residence of the party concerned or an administrative document which the authorities can require to examine an application for a residence permit. However, as part of the procedure for the issue of an initial residence permit (for a period of 10 years), foreign persons may be asked to submit their training booklet as one of the elements to be used for assessing French language proficiency.

B. ENCOURAGING EMPLOYMENT OF LEGAL IMMIGRANTS

Successful integration largely depends on having regular and stable employment. The average unemployment rate for foreign persons stands at more than 20 %, which is more than double the national average.

To remedy this inconsistency, it will be necessary to assist immigrants seeking employment, and promote diversity within businesses.

A **record of skills** is the first step towards integration with regard to employment. It will be continued by easier access to jobs which have significant recruitment requirements, thanks to **agreements reached between the State and occupational groups**.

These measures go hand in hand with efforts also being made to promote diversity in businesses, thanks to the **diversity seal of approval**.

THE RECORD OF SKILLS

Organised by ANAEM, **the record of occupational skills aims to enable** foreign persons who arrive in France to settle permanently **to have a record and validation of their previous experience, work skills or abilities when looking for work.** The record of skills is completed before the end of the Reception and Integration Contract, when the person concerned has gained adequate proficiency in the French language to derive full benefit from it.

Introduced by the Act of 24 July 2006, a record of work skills became compulsory with the Act of 20 November 2007, for all signatories of the Reception and Integration Contract, with very limited exceptions if persons are already in employment or about to be offered employment. The record of skills is adapted to the needs and capabilities of the person concerned.

50 000 signatories of the Reception and Integration Contract, out of approximately 100 000 of the total each year, may be eligible for the record of skills in a full calendar year.

A pilot scheme, implemented by two service providers selected by invitation to tender from ANAEM, in close cooperation with the ANPE (National Employment Agency), was launched between mid-November 2007 and the end of April 2008, in four French départements: Paris, Alpes Maritimes, Puy de Dôme and Allier, and concerned more than 300 records. It has allowed ANAEM and the ANPE to develop closer cooperation at local level. This cooperation is necessary to ensure personal follow-up of records. The pilot scheme has shown that the current level of the Initial Diploma in French Language is still not sufficient for a record of skills or to gain any advantage from it, when job referrals can only be made if the person concerned has adequate French language skills.

The Council of State Decree, to be implemented from 1st November 2008, specifies the arrangements for organising the record of skills and the content of exchanges of information between both bodies, to effectively facilitate access to employment for foreign persons who have a record of skills.

AGREEMENTS WITH OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

Foreign persons who arrive in France legally for family reasons may come across many obstacles to vocational integration, and find themselves in work which does not match their qualifications, and in fields which are often far removed from their training or experience.

At the same time, many businesses in the personal services sector cannot fill available vacancies, when they are in a position to offer varied posts and attractive career prospects, in areas which are growing rapidly. Indeed, tens of thousands of jobs will be available over the next few years, especially in assistance to the elderly or in childcare.

It should therefore be a question of **providing more effective guidance to job seekers who have signed the Reception and Integration Contract, training them in jobs relating to personal services and enabling them to progress (in particular by French language courses)**, by mobilising businesses in this sector, with the support of the public services.

Agreements with occupational groups will make it possible to further mobilise the economic sectors concerned, as well as the public employment service, to put the abilities of recent immigrants to most effective use, and avoid long-term unemployment or casual or illegal employments, then, when the record of skills is in use, have various tried and tested solutions at hand for direct access to work.

Directly mobilising businesses also makes it possible to control the taking on of illegal immigrants by businesses, which is detrimental to their swift integration into French society.

The agreement with the National Agency for Personal Services will concern 10 000 foreign persons who have signed the Reception and Integration Contract, every year. Similar agreements are in the process of being reached with transport companies, start-up firms and major companies.

An ground-breaking agreement signed on 11 June 2008

A three-year draft agreement was signed on 11 June 2008 by Brice Hortefeux, Laurent Wauquiez ans, President of the National Agency for Personal Services (ANSP). The agreement contains :

- ✓ 1/ measures aimed at making aware the services involved with the Reception and Integration Contract and its signatories of the job opportunities offered in the personal services sector (information booklets for recent immigrants, training for personnel working with immigrants) ;
- ✓ 2/ a training scheme entitled “employment module for personal services” (MISAP) intended for jobseekers interested in this sector ;
- ✓ 3/ development with ANSP of training for employees in the personal services sector in “French – using the language at work”, as a pilot scheme in 2008 and start of 2009 ;
- ✓ 4/ the conclusion of partnership agreements between the ANSP and employer networks or federations in the personal services sector, to encourage their members to recruit immigrant jobseekers ;
- ✓ 5/ the setting up by the ANSP and the employer networks or federations of employee information on the Accreditation of Prior Learning to gain occupational qualifications and the conditions and procedures of access ;
- ✓ 6/ the drawing up of a report on these measures, to measure the impact on this segment of the employment market and the results in terms of vocational integration. The first report will be drawn up at the end of the fist quarter of 2009, when the record of skills will have been in operation for six months.

THE DIVERSITY SEAL OF APPROVAL

Businesses do not sufficiently reflect the composition of the French population (ethnic origin, age, sex, disabled, etc.) and they often recruit from very confined staff pools. It is therefore essential that the State support them in setting up methods to allow for the development of diversity in recruitment and in career opportunities. This will also facilitate more rapid employment for immigrants and persons from immigrant families.

In 2007, the State asked the National Association of Human Resource Managers (ANDRH) to develop and test a **seal of approval for diversity**, which will cover all types of discrimination, in particular those relating to ethnic origin, with the exception of equality between men and women, which is already covered by a specific seal of approval, managed by the Ministry of Employment.

This seal of approval must encourage equal opportunities within businesses and the public services likewise. It will certify management procedures implemented. It is available to SMEs and VSBs, under optional criteria specified according to the size of the business.

This measure has been agreed upon by management and unions, who signed an inter-professional agreement on diversity, extended by decree on 22 February 2008. It has also been agreed upon by other public and private businesses and employers, as almost 1 900 organisations have signed the diversity charter launched by Claude BEBEAR, Honorary President of AXA.

More than 550 businesses, associations, cities and public service organisations have stated their intentions to apply in the short-term for the seal of approval. The first seals of approval should be awarded at a public event attended by Ministers, at the beginning of 2009.

Themes of the debates
Integration in France
Encouraging employment of legal immigrants

The “diversity” seal of approval is awarded by an official French certification body to businesses, AFNOR Certification.

A service standard, developed together with AFNOR was published at the beginning of September 2009. The seal of approval is based on this standard, in order to give it greater credibility.

Businesses who have signed the diversity charter will be made aware of this seal of approval as a matter of priority.

The introduction in France of the “diversity” seal of approval for businesses assumes particular importance, as it is designed to be included within a European perspective. With the diversity charter, it is part of the common employment themes of France and Germany. More generally, it represents good practice which can be offered to other countries in Europe, and complements the Commission’s wish to work on the preparation for a European Diversity Charter.

Following the invitation to tender from the Department of Reception, Integration and Citizenship at the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-Development, the certification body of the seal of approval, AFNOR Certification, was selected in June 2008. A certification committee, made up of the State, management and unions, as well as representatives of ANDRH will be set up in the very near future, by decree.

The Seal of Approval has been presented to employers since the beginning of September 2008. Around a dozen businesses, which include the largest French industrial groups, as well as SMEs, are currently audited by AFNOR Certification.

C. PROMOTING PATHS TO SUCCESS

Helping immigrants to integrate well also highlights the success of many of them, and gives support to them.

The **Integration Award** illustrates successful paths to integration and encourages them.

The formal nature of **naturalisation ceremonies**, finally, recognises the paths taken by those who have decided to become French citizens

THE INTEGRATION AWARD

The “French integration model” today appears to be failing, especially in relation to unemployment amongst foreign residents – which stood at 22 % in 2007, excluding EU nationals – and their housing difficulties.

Many foreign residents however, from those who come to France to settle permanently, have integrated well into French society.

Many new arrivals experience more of what does not work than what does, at a time when they need to overcome significant difficulties. Some French people also, at times, have a skewed view of immigrant integration. It is therefore important to **highlight cases of immigrants who, in their day to day lives, have integrated reasonably well.**

The fact that they have successfully integrated is, amongst other factors, down to the substantial efforts of the State and public authorities. In particular, they have striven, with language and civic training, to increase access to employment or the representation of diversity, for example, in the media or, since the election of Nicolas Sarkozy, within the highest levels within government.

We should continue in the steps taken by French President, and **pay tribute to these successful paths to integration**, which often go unnoticed, but which are exemplary, and **give credit to the support services provided, in particular from the community, which have given encouragement to them.** By highlighting these examples to French society, the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development is contributing towards a positive representation of immigrants and immigration.

For this reason, Brice HORTEFEUX decided to introduce an **Integration Award**, which was given to ten winners on 3 July 2008.

With a financial endowment, and awarded by decision of a panel of well-known figures, from proposals forwarded from prefectures and a pre-selection committee from the Department of Reception, Integration and Citizenship, the Integration Award (5 winners in 2008) has been awarded to individuals, of foreign nationality or recently naturalised, for the exemplariness of their paths to integration in various fields (economic, social, cultural, civic, sporting, etc). An “Integration Support” Award (5 winners in 2008) has been awarded to individuals or organisations or associations in particular, who have distinguished themselves in promoting successful paths to integration.

These successes must not only be taken into consideration, but also strongly highlighted, by proactive and symbolic action of the State. They well illustrate that France remains true to its principles. When the country opts to welcome foreign persons to its shores, it also takes appropriate measures to encourage their integration. This is the policy direction taken by the government.

CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES

The government, in the **Act of 24 July 2006** on immigration and integration, decided to apply citizenship ceremonies to all foreign residents, not a moment too soon, making it possible to celebrate becoming a French citizen, whether by naturalisation marriage.

It is a matter of establishing “peaceful co-existence”, around the founding principles of the French Republic, indicated and protected by the Constitution – Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, Secularism and Democracy – which assume their full proportions, of course, within the framework of the European Union.

Organisation of these ceremonies devolves upon the Prefect in each département in France or, whenever they obtain authorisation, the Mayors, in their capacity of Civil Registrar. Persons who acquire nationality by marriage are now combined with those acquiring nationality by naturalisation.

In France today, where there has never been, unlike in Canada or the United States, a long tradition with regard to citizenship ceremonies, these are now organised in almost all départements. The organisation rate for ceremonies in the prefecture is by and large half-yearly (38 % of départements) or quarterly (34 % of cases). This rate is, in 20 % of cases monthly and, in 4 % of cases, weekly.

The procedure for ceremonies is currently as follows: the prefect, or his or her representative, or the mayor, read a formal statement, in almost all cases (92 %). In 90 % of départements, the national anthem then follows. In 94 % of départements, a film (DVD "Becoming French", 6 minutes long) is shown. In ceremony rooms, the French flag is hung alongside the European flag. In 59% of cases, the bust of Marianne, the emblem of the French Republic, is also present and visible.

Information gathered over the initial months will be used to determine the definitive format for these important ceremonies.

Acquiring nationality, which is both a formal and convivial occasion, is valued highly by the new French citizens, who have recognition of their past achievements, and also by the public authorities, who demonstrate the importance of the institutions and values which unite the country.

A consensus has therefore been established, within a few years in France, to mark the occasion of joining our country, as it is also marked in many Member States of the European Union.

D. IMPROVING THE ORGANISATION OF STATE SERVICES

As part of a general review of public policies, it is necessary, to encourage the integration of immigrants, to simplify administrative procedures and make State services more efficient.

Updating of the **policy to acquire French nationality** and the setting up of a **Department for Integration**, as well as a **single operator** are part of these far-reaching changes.

POLICY FOR ACQUIRING FRENCH NATIONALITY

The right to nationality was developed over the centuries, as the same time the French nation was being developed. The attribution of French nationality by birth results either from jus sanguinis (born to a French parent) or jus soli (born in France to a parent born in France), or lastly, when reaching the age of majority, by a combination of birth and residence in France.

Voluntary approaches to acquire nationality are mainly a matter for the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development, which is responsible for naturalisations. These concern naturalisation and reintegration by decree and declarations of nationality after marriage. Other declarations are a matter for the Ministry of Justice.

The Act of 24 July 2006 relating to immigration and integration lay down **stricter requirements for the acquisition of French nationality** and made the citizenship procedure more formalised..

The acquisition of French nationality must in effect crown the achievements of the progress made to successful integration, and honour a specific relationship with France.

I - Conditions for acquiring French nationality

1) Acquisition by declaration

The main 2 types of declaration represent more than 95 % of declarations

- a) By young people born in France to foreign parents and who can attest to 5 years residence (declaration signed and registered by the judge)
- b) By the spouses of French nationals who can provide evidence of 4 years living together (declaration signed before the judge or the consul and registered by the Minister responsible for naturalisation)

2) Acquisition by decree of the Prime Minister, on the proposal of the Minister responsible for naturalisation)

By any foreign person of majority age holding a residence permit. The application for naturalisation or reintegration into French nationality is submitted to the prefecture at their home address, which prepares a file and sends its recommendations to the Minister responsible for naturalisation for a decision.

The Minister responsible for naturalisation examines whether conditions of eligibility have been met (residence, assimilation, especially language and customs) and has, in addition a discretionary power to decide whether or not to grant French nationality.

II - The effects of acquiring French nationality

a) collective effects: when a parent acquires French nationality, the unmarried minor child of that parent also becomes French, automatically and under certain conditions ;

b) francization : a francization application for the first name and / or surname to lose its foreign sounds may be made when applying for French nationality, or within a year of French nationality being acquired.

French citizenship procedure: more formalised

This procedure is organised by the prefect or the mayor authorised by the prefect, within six months following acquisition of French nationality.

III. Acquisition of French nationality: results

a) - Number of persons who have acquired French nationality

Year	Decree	Declaration	TOTAL
2003	77 102	30 922	108 024
2004	99 368	34 440	133 808
2005	101785	21 527	123 312
2006	87 878	29 276	117 154
2007	69.831	30.989	100.820
2008 (6 months)	39.287	7.053	46.340

b) - Number of decrees

For information purposes, in 2007, 56 naturalisation decrees were issued (69 875 persons) and 32 individual decrees opposing acquisition of French nationality, or withdrawal of nationality, especially for reasons of fraud.

The Public Policy Modernisation Council, in a decision taken on 12 December 2007, considered that it was necessary, in relation to dealing with naturalisation applications by decree, **“to eliminate double applications, in order to reduce processing times, while preserving equal processing of applications.”**

THE SETTING UP OF A DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR INTEGRATION AND A SINGLE OPERATOR

✓ **A department responsible for integration**

The Decree of 26 December 2007 relating to organisation of the central administration of the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development provides, **for the first time, for the setting up of a central administration department with full capacity with regard to integration: the Department of Reception, Integration and Citizenship.**

It is responsible for all matters relating to the reception and integration of immigrants who are settled legally and permanently in France. Within this framework, it provides the development, impetus, implementation, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of measures concerning integration, from signing of the Reception and Integration Contract to the acquisition of French nationality, where applicable.

To this end, it will intervene in various areas, such as French language learning, access to employment or housing, citizenship and participating in French values, targeted assistance for specific groups of foreign persons (such as women, students, and elderly migrant workers).

It will manage and coordinate regional State services on these matters and will supervise the National Service for the Reception of Foreign Persons and Migration (ANAEM).

It will also contribute to working out regulations concerning the acquisition or withdrawal of French nationality. It is responsible for naturalisations and the registration of declarations of nationality by marriage. Access to nationality being the outcome of successful integration, 100 000 foreign persons, on average, become French citizens every year.

The work of the department is affected by strong inter-ministerial involvement, which is exercised in particular via the Inter-ministerial Committee for Integration.

✓ **A single operator**

Furthermore, as the Minister has until now has relied on two large public organisations with interwoven competence for the implementation of his integration policies, the national Agency for the Reception of Foreign Persons and Migration (ANAEM) and the Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunities (ACSE), the Public Policy Modernisation Council, on 4 April 2008, decided to **eliminate duplicate applications between these two agencies**, and set up, based on the National Agency for the Reception of Foreigners and Migration, a new operator to deal with immigration and integration. This public administration body will be named the “**French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII)**”.

French Office for Immigration and Integration

It will be responsible, throughout the country, for the reception of foreign persons holding, for the first time, a permit authorising them to reside in France and, when they wish to reside in France permanently, to commit them to a path of integration into French society for the first five years of their residence in France, as well as implementing measures for learning the French language which are adapted to the integration requirements of the foreign persons. It will take over the previous duties of ACSE on these matters.

The operator will also have responsibility for being involved in any administrative, health or social actions relating to:

1° The admission and residence of foreign persons for a period less than or equal to three months;

2° The admission into France, for the purposes of rejoining family members, or marriage to a French person, by foreign nationals from countries outside the European Union; to prepare their integration, the Office will be responsible for organising tests and, where applicable, any training from the country of origin;

3° The admission into France, for work purposes, of foreign nationals from countries outside the European Union and nationals mentioned in paragraph three of Article L. 121-2; to this end, the Office will facilitate the work of businesses abroad.

4° The organisation of medical checks for foreign persons admitted to reside in France for a period of more than three months;

5° The reception and monitoring of asylum seekers, particularly under the conditions specified in part II of Article L. 348-3 of the Social Action and Families Code;

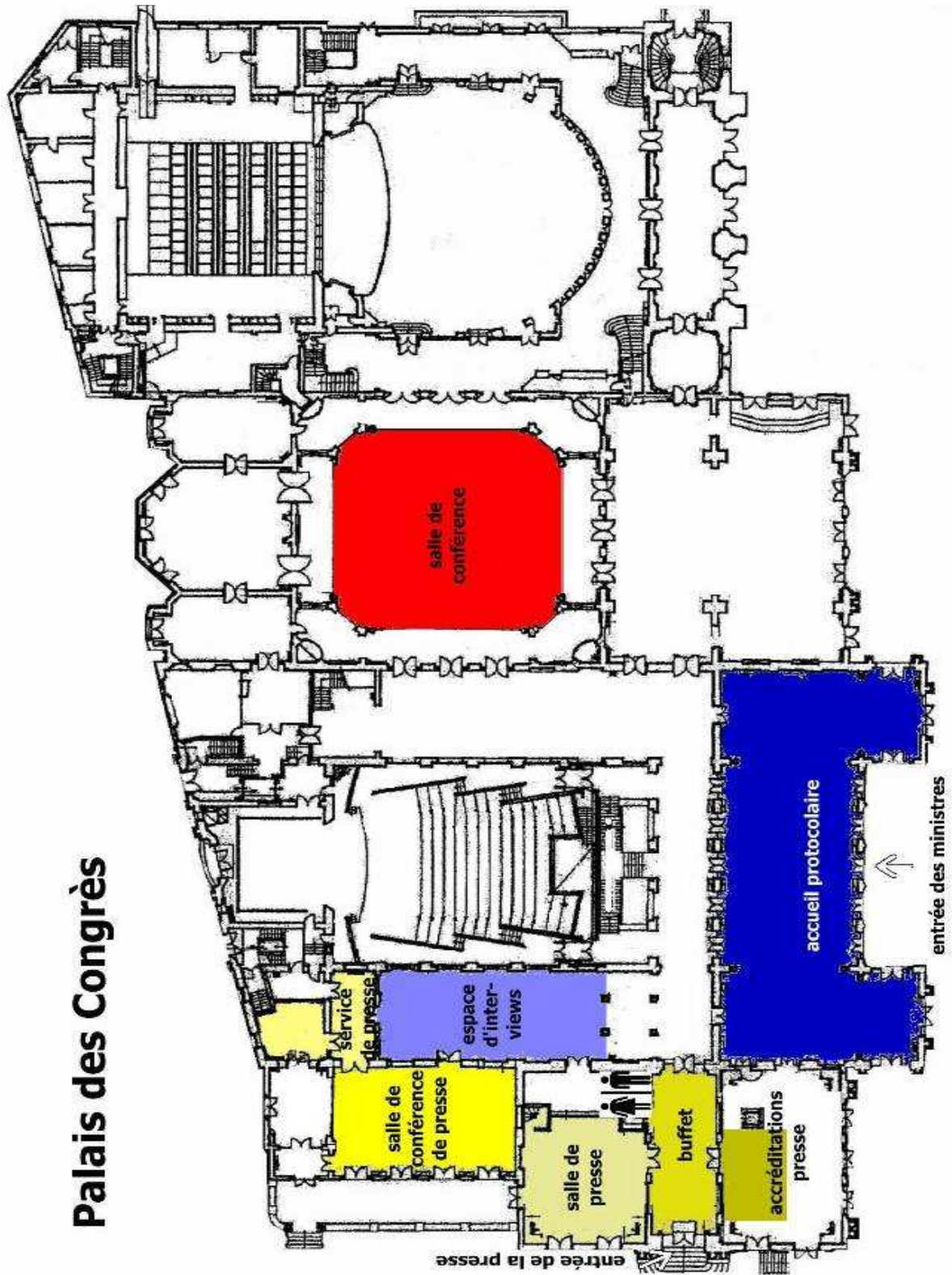
6° The return and reintegration of foreign persons in their country of origin, as well as any joint development actions.

Access to the Palais des Congrès



Map of the conference

Palais des Congrès



Spectacle



EUROPA DANCE

Young European dancers

Europa Dance was founded in 1999 by Jean Albert Cartier, drawing inspiration from the Youth Orchestra of Claudio Abbado.

Why not apply what had succeeded for young musicians to young dancers, by offering them an indispensable bridge between the end of their studies and their entry into professional life ?

It is on this basis that, since it was founded, Europa Dance has hosted nearly 250 dancers aged between 16 and 21. With a classical training, they have been selected, with the assistance of H el ene Trailline, from the conservatories and private schools of Europe.

After eight years, 90% of the dancers emerging from the Europa Dance Academy are dancing professionally. Some are already starring in major international ballet companies such as the San Francisco Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre, the Het National Ballet of Amsterdam, the English National Ballet, the Culberg Ballet and the companies of Jiri Kilian, Nacho Duato, John Neumeier, Lyon Opera etc.

2008 Edition

For its tenth year, Europa Dance is bringing together 22 dancers aged 18-20 from 8 European countries to offer them a high-level apprenticeship with a major tour in France and overseas, allowing them to transition from the end of their studies to the start of their careers. The production this year is dedicated to "Picasso and Dance". The set, curtain and costumes have been designed in the style of original Picasso works.

With the agreement of
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Dancers from :
Spain, Finland, France, Italy, Netherlands, Slovenia

Dancers

Virginie BA  T-DARTIGALONGUE
Barbara CALOSSO
Noemi COLLANTES PEREZ
Giulia GABRIELLI
Jaana NURMINEN
Lejla PANTIC SINDRIC
Anne-C  line PIC-SAVARY

Rashaen ARTS
Olivier COEFFARD
Guillaume DEBUT
Arturo NARANJO
Matthijs OOSTHOEK
Raul SERRANO
Philippe SOLANO

Flamenco Dancers

Maria BARRIENTOS GONZALEZ
Iomar FERNANDEZ SALINERO
Elena MIÑO YUDEGO
Elena PALOMARES SERRANO
Guerau CABRERA CUADRADO
Alberto QUEJIDO MARTIN
Francisco ROBLEDO
Juan Carlos SANCHEZ

PICASSO AND DANCE

After 8 years of productions of the great contemporary choreographers, from Balanchine to Jiri Kylian, Mats Ek, Nacho Duato, Ohad Naharin, William Forsythe etc, Europe Dance presents the production "Picasso and Dance" bringing together 3 ballets: *Pulcinella* (1920), *Mercure* (1924) and *Cuadro Flamenco* (1921).

These ballets are presented with sets and costumes based on Picasso works, with the agreement of *Picasso Administration*.

As for the choreographies, *Cuadro Flamenco* is based on the original version, while the two others are being staged for the first time: by Ana Maria Stekelman for *Pulcinella* and Thierry Malandain for *Mercure*.

This production offers both an insight into the heritage of dance and a modern vision of the works of Picasso.