



Infos migrations

Special ELIPA

Secrétariat général à
l'immigration et à
l'intégration

Number 19 - January 2011

The new migrants of 2009



Commission européenne
Fonds européen d'intégration

In 2009, France received 97,736 applications from new migrants for permanent residence. These new migrants have received a first residence permit and signed a Contrat d'Accueil et d'Intégration (CAI, reception and integration contract). More than a half of these had already been in France for at least two years, or much longer, and 30% were in the course of regularising their situation when permanent residence was granted. Their choice of France is the result of a real wish rather than merely as a default destination. Despite an administrative process that is sometimes quite long and tedious before being admitted, a large majority of these new migrants feel that it progressed satisfactorily, having had sufficient time afterwards to be able to point out some malfunctions. They approve of the support mechanism set up with the CAI even if they are less specific as regards the aid they can expect from it in terms of job searches and housing. These new migrants have expressed, a few months after receiving their first residence permit, their satisfaction regarding their experience in France and 73% of them say that they would like to remain indefinitely.

Three very different profiles characterise migrants receiving their first residence permit

Three principal migrant profiles¹ can be identified, according to the duration of their presence in France: family migrants, mostly women, from the North African Arab countries (the Maghreb: Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) for the new arrivals (less than two years in France), work migrants, mostly men, from sub-Saharan Africa, for those here for more than five years and then finally refugees, often Asian, in France between 2 to 5 years (see graph 1).

Of the persons arriving in France **less than two years** ago, the majority, 92%, fell into the category of family migration, 67% of these being married to French nationals and 18% rejoining their family. This duration corresponds to the average period usually necessary to obtain a residence permit. The families of refugees, 63% of which have been in France for less than two years, also fall into this category, but they represent only 2% of the persons arriving within this period of time.

Half of the "recent arrivals" are from North Africa (21% Algerian, 17% Moroccan and 11% Tunisian). They are mostly women (63%), which explains the fact that a quarter of arrivals are housewives. The overwhelming majority of these new migrants live with their partner: 90% of these arrived to join family and 98% of these as the partners of French nationals.

Of those present between **two to five years** are a large percentage of refugees (38%, 60% of whom are men), as well as family members of French nationals other than partners (23%).

As regards the family members of French nationals, 56% are from sub-Saharan Africa and 22% from North Africa. Almost half live with their partner (46%), their children and possibly other family members.

As for refugees, 40% are Asian, half of which from Sri Lanka, and 23% from sub-Saharan Africa. They mostly live alone (32%) or with family² (28%), but relatively few with their partner (29%).

The authors :

Corinne Régnard

Florent Domergue

« Survey and
study statistics »
division

1. See the definition of the field in insert no. 4, page 14

2. including children

Infos migrations

Page 2

Of the refugees who do not live with their partner, 55% are single, the partner of 33% lives abroad and the partner of 12% lives elsewhere in France.

Finally, foreigners who arrived **at least five years** ago are persons who are regularised: allowed to stay under a work permit (20%), having personal or family links (32%), family members of French nationals (15%) and "other motives for the granting of residence" (15%)³.

Sub-Saharanans are the most numerous (37%), followed by North Africans (27%). Of these two groups, two countries stand out in particular: Mali (15% of those present in France for at least five years), the home country of 37% of work migrants settled in France for more than five years, and Algeria (also 15%) accounting for 20% of persons granted residence for personal or family reasons.

62% of these persons in France for at least five years are men, the younger migrants (25.5 years old on average, against 28.1 years old for the whole), 62% have a job, 16% are unemployed and 6% are "housewives" (against 44%, 23% and 17% of the whole sample). A little more than a half (52%) live with their partner and 29% live with family, and of the latter a quarter (23%) are in single parent families.

The results are still more accentuated when we look at migrants who arrived more than 10 years ago. These are most often men (68%), younger (23.6 years old), less likely to be living with a partner (45%) and from sub-Saharan Africa (40%). Of these, we find that many arrived in France when younger than 15 years old.

Insert 1: Brief description of the signatories of the CAI in 2009

97,736 first-time migrants signed the Reception and Integration Contract in 2009.

They have mostly been admitted for residence as family migrations (74%), those with French partners being a majority (38%). Refugees and stateless persons represent 11% of persons signing the CAI, and work migrants 9%. The 6% remaining are mostly those who have been regularised.

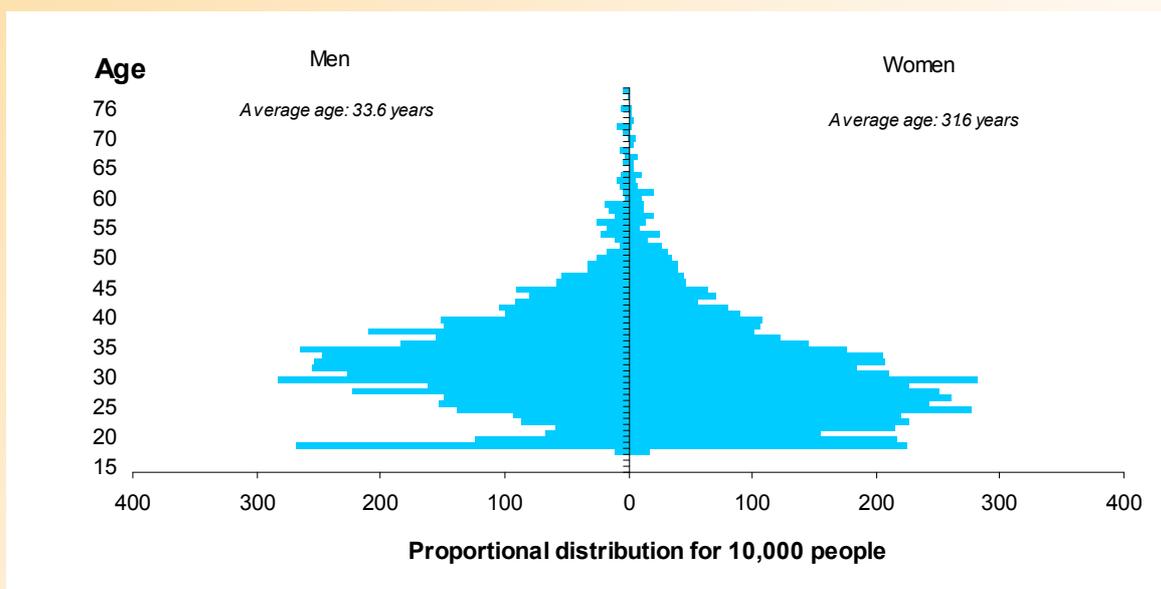
More than a third (36%) are from the Maghreb and 25% from sub-Saharan Africa.

Around 47,000 migrants (48%) have been in France for less than two years, and 10,000 (10%) for less than ten years. The men have been in France for about five years on average (4.9 years), the women for less than three years (2.8 years).

The population is mostly female (52% as against 48%) and quite young (33 years old on average), the men are slightly older than the women (33.6 years old as against 31.7 years old).

Almost two thirds of the men are working (64%), while this is the case for only a quarter of women, however the difference is less pronounced for job seeking (21% of men, 25% of women). A third of women are housewives, women representing 99% of those managing the household.

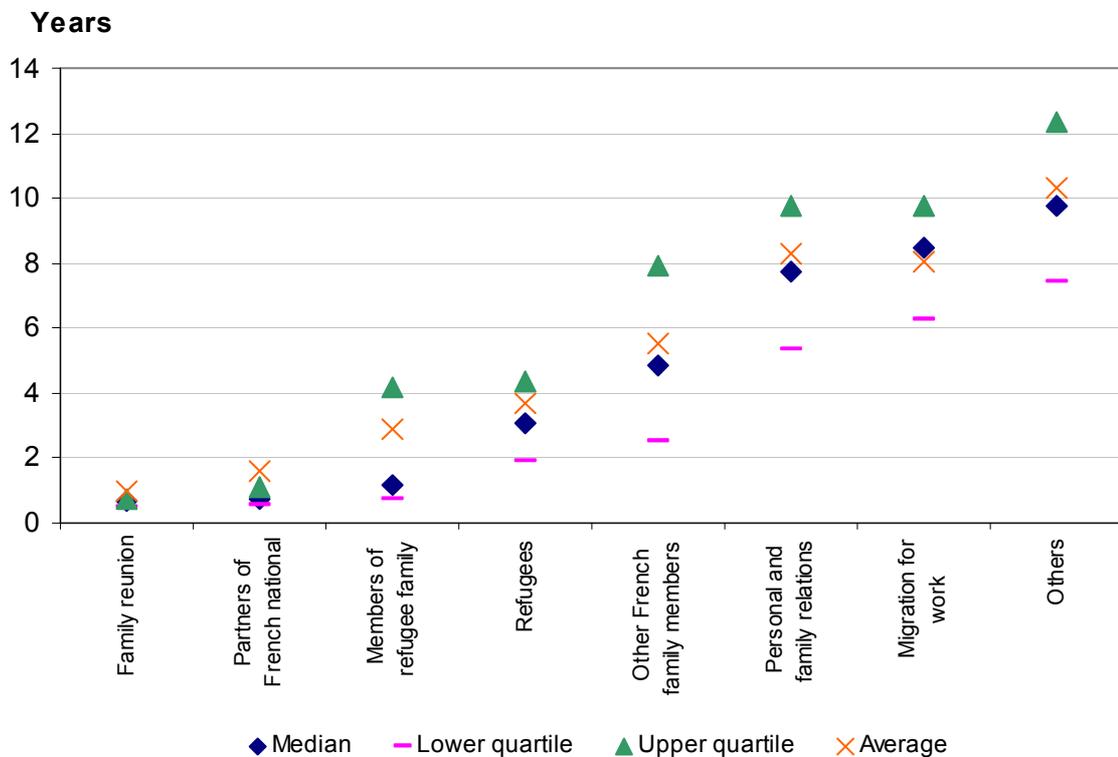
Finally, a greater percentage of men than women live alone or with their family (14% and 17% respectively, while this is only 4% and 8% for women). On the other hand, the percentage of women who live with their partner is greater than is the case with men (75% as against 60%).



Source: ELIPA Survey, 1st wave, SSM-Immigration.

3. Of the reasons not mentioned, refugee, partner of French nationals, family of a refugee, rejoining family

Graph 1 : Duration of presence in France of first-time migrants before obtaining a residence permit according to the reason of admission



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration (ministerial statistics department – immigration)

Leaving to accompany or join one's partner, find work, make a change in life, escape insecurity

"Accompany or join my partner", "Escape insecurity or political problems", "Find work" and "Make a change in my life" are the reason for leaving the home country that are the most often given, at 43%, 20%, 27% and 25% respectively of first-time migrants (see graph 2). The first two reasons were given by 91% and 82% as the main reason for leaving, while the other two were the main reason for only 40% and 28% of foreigners respectively. It is of course normal that family migrants and refugees give as the main reason for migration the wish to follow the partner or escape insecurity, while "a change of life" is clearly a criterion that is felt to be too general to be given as the main reason.

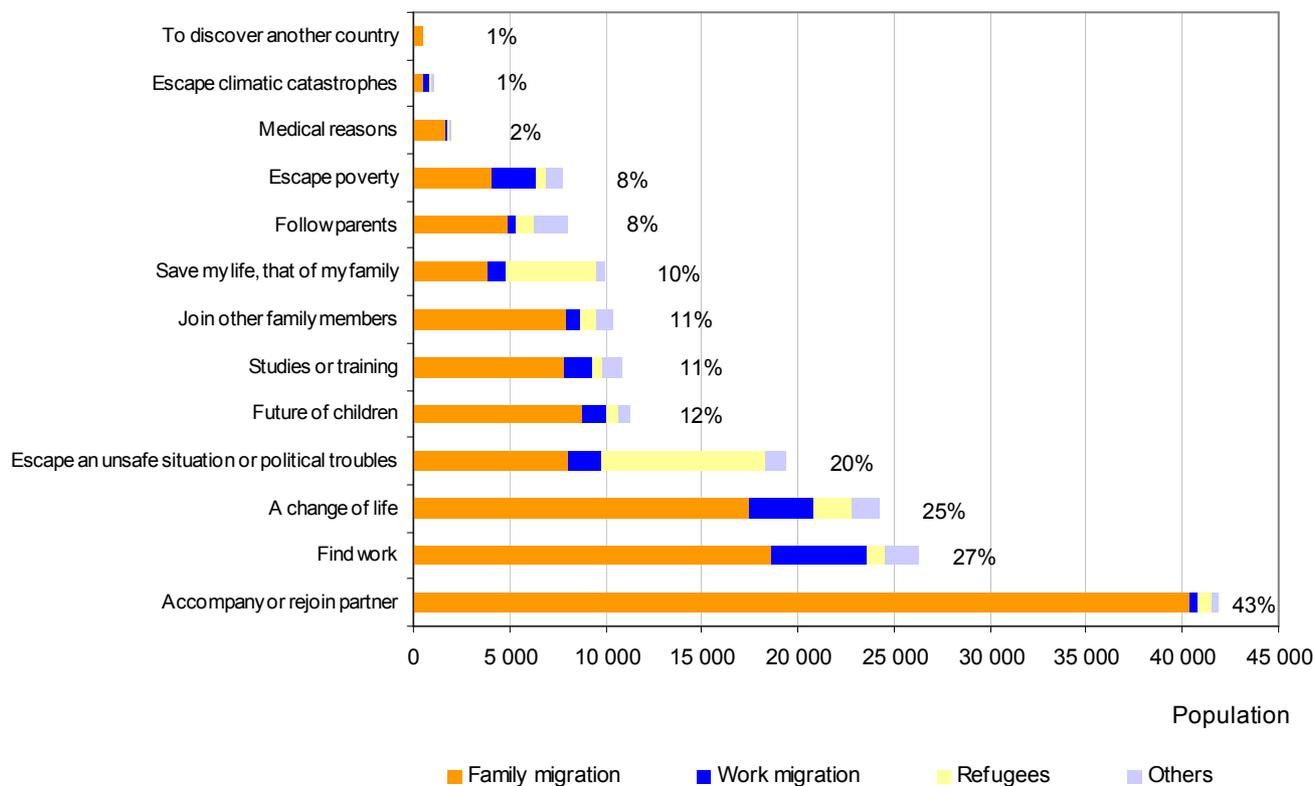
As can be expected, it is refugees who constitute the largest group of those declaring that they left their home country to escape insecurity, a war or political problems, similarly when it is a question of saving one's life or that of members of one's family. These two reasons were given by 77% and 43% of refugees respectively, rising even to 88% and 49% of refugees from Asia. On the other hand, 17% of refugees gave neither of these two reasons. Of those, 25% are Malian, 11% are from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 8% from Turkey and 7% from Sri Lanka. They preferred to give as major reason that they wanted a change of life or to follow their parents.

Paradoxically, 44% of the foreigners granted residence for a work migration did not leave to find work. These left above all to make a change in their lives, to escape insecurity or to study. It is not surprising that 97% of the 42,000 persons giving "accompany or rejoin my partner" as a reason for leaving are family migrants, two thirds of whom (67%) are the partners of French nationals and 17% were rejoining their family. This reason for departure is the most often given (43% of the total mentioned this reason) as three-quarters of first-time migrants were admitted as family migrants.

Those given residence permits for personal and family reasons emphasised medical reasons (37% citing this reason).

Finally, "to follow parents" was mentioned by 22% of the "other reasons" group, the age of which when arriving is very young (20 years old on average).

Graph 2 : Reason of departure, according to the reason of for admission⁴



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration

France: a deliberate choice, often cited for its culture and values

As for the reason for which first-time migrants chose France as their destination, 75% of first-time migrants said the fact that they “know people in France” was an important or very important criterion⁵ (graph 3). This is the criterion most frequently described as important, whatever the origin of the person. The second most ‘important or very important’ criterion is “being attracted to France, its culture and values” (given by almost two thirds of the people interviewed, 37% even regarding this as a very important criterion). It is those from North Africa, the parts of Africa formerly under French colonial rule, and from America and Oceania who regard this as the most important criterion. Migrants from Asia and Europe and the CIS are less likely to feel it is important.

On the other hand, 17% declared that they didn’t have the choice of going to France, and among these a third were refugees and 16% the partners of French nationals or foreigners allowed a residence permit for personal or family reasons.

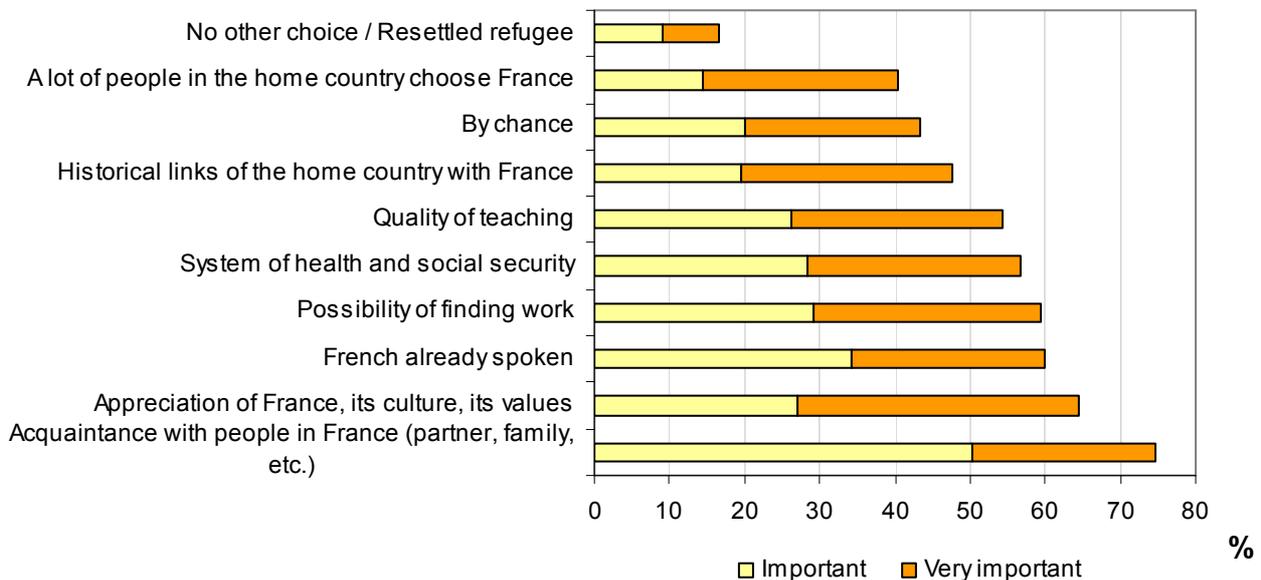
It should be noted that 6% of migrants said that it was only chance that was important or very important in their arrival in France.

Not surprisingly, it is migrants from countries formerly under French administration who are the most numerous to give “historic links with France” and “I speak French” as a very important or important criteria.

4. Possibility for an interviewee to give three reasons. It is the proportion of interviewees of the total (97,736 persons) who give each of the reasons.

5. For each of the criteria suggested, the person interviewed was asked to say if it had played a role that was very important, important, hardly or not important at all in their choice of destination.

Graph 3 : Degrees of importance of each criterion in the choice of France

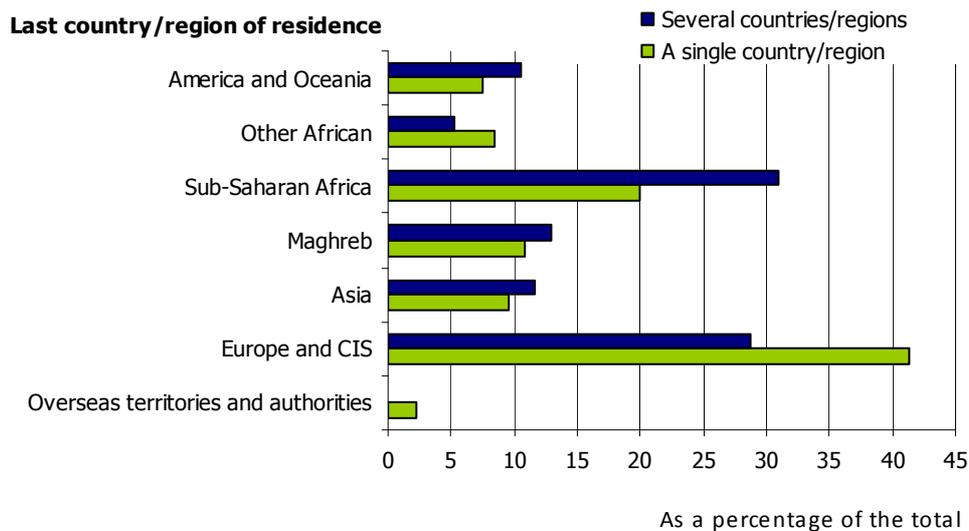


One in ten first-time migrants had a complex migration trajectory

Nine out of ten first-time migrants (90%) have always lived in their country of birth before migrating to France. This "direct migration" involves slightly more women than men (91% as against 88%) and essentially foreigners born in the three countries of Maghreb (38%) or an African sub-Saharan country⁶ (24%).

Of those who had a "complex migration trajectory"⁷, seven out of ten (73%) had lived in one other country (aside from their country of birth) before coming to France. Those who have transited via one country other the country of their birth come for the most part from a European country or the CIS (39 %, Germany, Italy, the Russian Federation) while those that have passed through several countries come mostly from sub-Saharan Africa (31 %, Mali, Senegal, Ivory Coast).

Graph 4 : Last country/region of de residence of first-time migrants who had e complex migration trajectory before settling in France



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration

6. The geographical breakdown is given in Insert no. 2

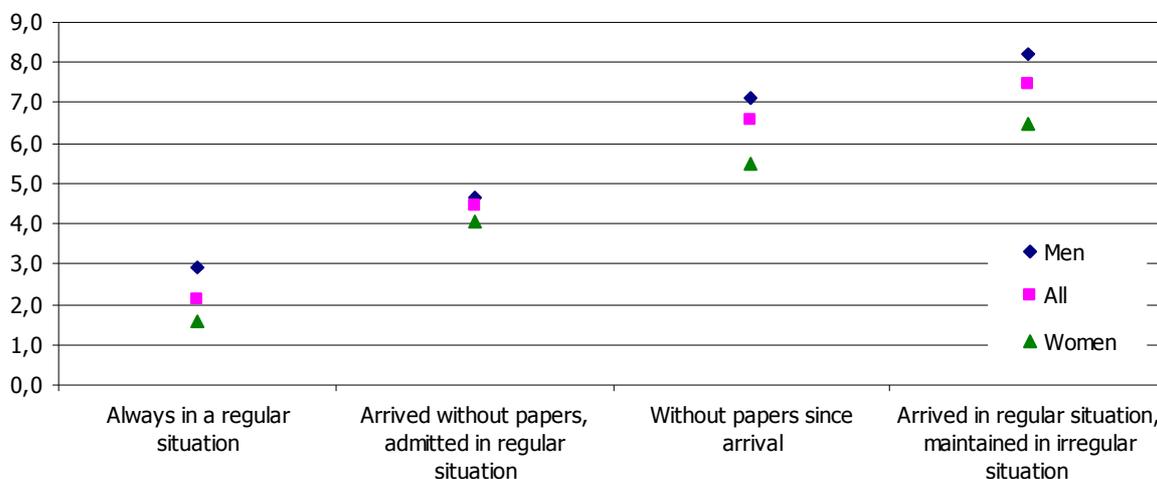
7. Of these foreigners, 4.3% were born in France

Fewer than one in ten new arrivals have never had papers before being admitted for permanent residence

Of 100 new migrants, 62 have always enjoyed a regular situation, 15 arrived in a regular situation but remained in France irregularly (e.g. students or tourists entering the country with a short-stay visa), 9 have never had papers and 8 arrived with no papers but were regularised when granted permanent residence (this is particularly the case for asylum seekers who obtained refugee status). The duration of presence in France before being granted permanent residence is very different according to the administrative situation and the gender of the person (see Graph 5): long periods of presence in France are observed for precarious administrative situations (those without papers, and whose situation is irregular) and for men whatever their administrative situation.

Graph 5 : Average duration of presence in France before obtaining permanent residence, according to gender and administrative situation since arriving in France

Average duration of presence en France



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration

Embassy and consulate procedures that are sometimes rather long but which do not discourage candidates applying to migrate

Most foreigners (91%) recently arriving in France (within the last year) had applied to the embassy or consulate to be granted residence in France. This is the case for slightly more women than men (92% as opposed to 88%), the latter more frequently arriving in France irregularly. This took a year at the most for two thirds of them and two years for a quarter, the average duration being 19 months (see Table 1).

The majority (86%) obtained a visa with their first request from the embassy or consulate. Naturally, the process will have been longer if the request for a long stay visa for permanent residence in France was refused: those who met with no refusal declare an average waiting time of 18 months as against 23 months for those who met with one refusal and 40 months for those who received several. Persons from sub-Saharan Africa are those who declare having been refused several times (4.4% compared to 2.9%) which explains a duration of procedures much greater than the average (24 months).

Slightly more than a half of those who made the request (55%) found that it was rapid, easy and encouraging, while 15% found it long, difficult and discouraging.

Given what has been stated, it is not surprising that we observe the greatest dissatisfaction amongst those from sub-Saharan Africa (26% found the procedure long, difficult and discouraging). On the other hand, those from the Maghreb, America, Oceania, Europe and the CIS seemed particularly satisfied with the context of the procedure, since three out of five found them rapid, easy and encouraging.

Table 1 : Approaches made to the French authorities abroad before arriving in France

	Duration of procedures at embassy/consulate		At least one refusal to grant visa (as %)	General view of the procedures (as %)	
	At least a year (as %)	Average duration (years)		Fast, easy, encouraging	Long, difficult, discouraging
Europe and CIS	58,9	19,4	13,6	57,6	8,9
Asia	77,0	16,4	10,9	48,5	15,8
Maghreb	67,6	18,2	12,1	62,6	12,4
Sub-Saharan Africa	53,2	24,4	21,1	36,8	26,0
Other African	59,6	20,3	30,4	42,4	14,6
America and Oceania	69,1	18,6	9,5	59,5	16,1
All first-time arrivals	67,0	18,8	13,7	55,3	14,9

Source : Elipa Survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM-Immigration.
Field : First-time arrivals arriving in France less than a year before being granted a permanent residence permit.

A quite positive impression of the procedures at the prefecture despite the difficulties encountered

The majority of new migrants had to make their request via the prefecture. Only 9%, holders for the most part of a "long stay visa valid as a residence permit – VLS/TS"⁸ – did not use this route.

Of those that did, the majority declared:

- they were not helped by a lawyer or an association, nor a translator (65%) while 21% declared that they did receive help from a lawyer or an association and only 7% from a translator. In other words, this implies that only 7% were helped by a lawyer or association and also a translator;
- they often had to wait too long to gain entry to the prefecture (54% see Graph 6);
- they often had to wait too long before being able to speak to someone in the prefecture (47%);
- they sometimes had difficulties providing the documents required (32%);
- they sometimes had to provide documents that they should not have been asked for (23%).

These results vary depending on the region of residence. The wait before entering the prefecture and before reaching a reception desk are more frequently declared as long in the Ile-de-France region than in the rest of mainland France (61% and 53% compared to 43% and 38%). Similarly, reception at the prefecture was judged less often to be "quite good" by first-time arrivals in Ile-de-France, (65%, as against 72% of those residing in the rest of the mainland France).

Insert 2: Geographical breakdown

The European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland have different legal systems governing the entry and residence of foreigners in France from non-member countries.

The European Economic Area groups together all member states of the European Union (EU-27) and the three countries of the European association of free exchange (AELE): Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

Europe, as presented in the tables here, therefore excludes the EEA and Switzerland.

As published by the international standards organisation (ISO, list of countries drawn up by the United Nations), with Turkey is classified as part of Asia.

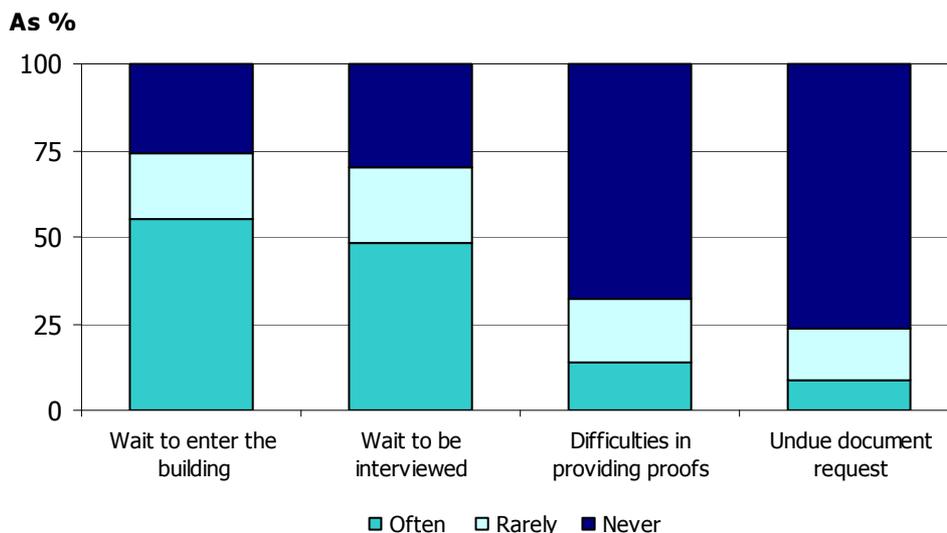
Sub-Saharan Africa is understood here as the countries formerly under French administration: Benin, Burkina-Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, People's Republic of the Congo, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Gabon, Republic of Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and the Gambia, Chad and Togo.

The European part of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is composed of Belarus, the Russian Federation, Moldavia and the Ukraine, and the Trans-Caucasian and Asian part is Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (for the Trans-Caucasus), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan (for central Asia).

8. Created by the decree of 27th April 2009 and coming into force on 1st June 2009, the purpose of this new visa, applicable to certain categories of foreigner, such as partners of French nationals or employees, is to allow foreigners granted this visa to stay in France for a year with all the rights concomitant with the possession of a residence permit, sparing them, for this first year, the obligation of registering at the prefecture.

Generally speaking, those who declare that they had difficulties at the prefecture⁹ had been in France longer before acceptance for permanent residence (4.9 years on average). They were the most often admitted as a partner of a French national (26%) or (for many) regularised based on their personal and family links in France (19%) and very frequently from one of the three countries of the Maghreb (30%), from sub-Saharan Africa (29%) or, to a lesser degree, from Asia (21%). It should be noted that these characteristics are concomitant with the existence of a link between the period of presence in France before being granted permanent residence, administrative reason and origin of the first-time arrivals.

Graph 6 : Procedures at the prefecture



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration
 Field : New migrants having had to make procedures at the prefecture before obtaining permanent permit

It is also for this reason that recourse to a lawyer or an association, coupled with help from a translator, is the case especially for refugees and stateless persons, Europeans or people from the CIS and Asia and those who had been in France between 2 to 4 years.

Aid from a lawyer alone is most frequently requested by those from Africa (excepting the Maghreb), by refugees and stateless persons as well as foreigners granted a residence permit for work or for reasons of personal and family links in France.

Despite these obstacles, two thirds of new migrants declare that they were quite well received at the prefecture and almost nine out of ten (89%) declare that overall the procedure went (quite) well. Negative views are most often expressed by those regularised and positive views by people from the Maghreb (mostly admitted as a family migrant).

Knowing people in France: does this help in taking up residence here?

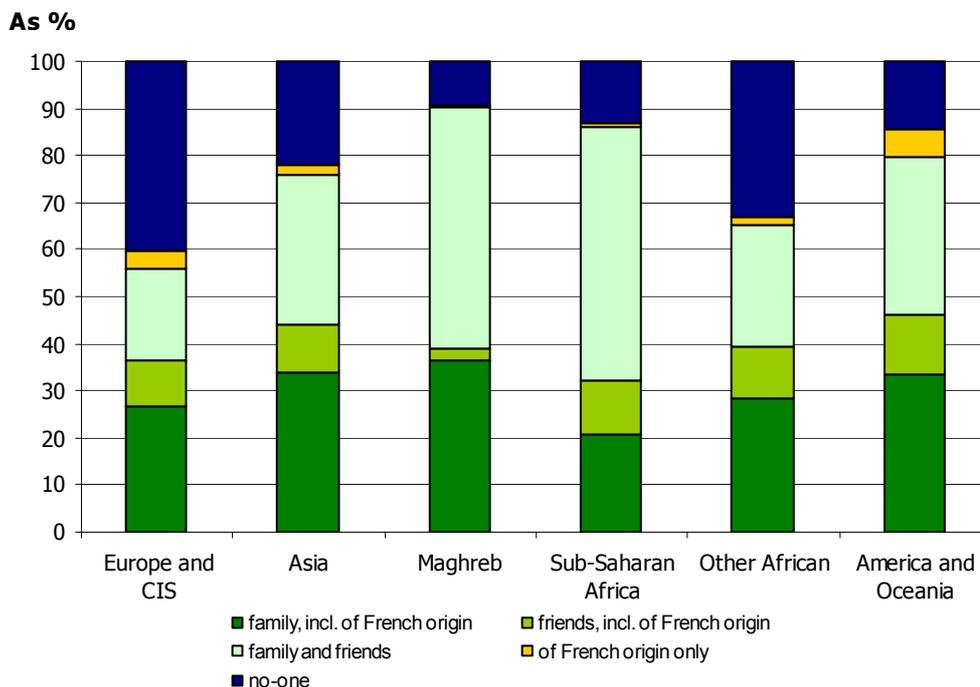
A great majority (77%) of first-time arrivals had never come to France before settling: almost half (45%) were from the Maghreb, then to a lesser extent from sub-Saharan Africa (17%) and Asia (14%).

Around half of new migrants (43%) had family and friends from their country of origin already settled in France, 31% with only family and 8% only friends. It is those from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa who most frequently knew people in France when they arrived (see Graph 7): for the first group it is rather family and the second group more often friends. Only 17 first-time arrivals in every 100 knew no one when arriving in France: this is most common for those from Europe and the CIS or those who had never come to France before (19%).

A large majority (80%) of first-time arrivals declare that the fact they have family and/or friends in France helped them to settle in France, a proportion that is slightly lower amongst those who only know friends from their home country (73%) and quite clearly lower (66%) for those who know only French nationals.

9. That is to say, having to wait too long before entering the prefecture or before being able to speak to someone, having difficulties in providing the necessary documents or being asked to provide unnecessary proofs.

Graph 7 : Acquaintances in France, according to nationality of first-time arrivals



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration

A reception mechanism that is widely approved of

In 2009, almost all the 97,736 new migrants who took part in the half-day reception organised by the OFII (French Office for immigration and integration) signed the CAI. This moment comes at the first stage of the procedure: the reciprocal commitments made by the two parties (see insert 3) are dealt with as well as the objective of each of the training sessions that make up the reception mechanism. A short film gives a brief presentation of life in France and the main principles of the French Republic (secularity, gender equality, freedom of expression, etc.). It is also during the course of this half-day event that the migrant is given a medical inspection (mandatory) and meets a social auditor with the responsibility of having the CAI signed by the migrant, evaluating his/her knowledge of the French language¹⁰ and informing him/her of the various training sessions that will have to be attended. This first stage of the procedure takes place at one of the OFII platforms, usually in French, with the support of an interpreter for those who do not speak French.

As a general rule, the migrants received in 2009 feel that this half-day event went well (81%) or even very well (18%), the proportion of those who were the most satisfied being slightly less for the Europeans and those from the CIS (70%) and Asia (56%). The film, shown in French with the possibility of a simultaneous audible translation, was declared to be of definite benefit: only 6 % of new migrants said it had no value, or did not give a view, this proportion being higher amongst nationals potentially less close to French-speaking regions (Asia - 11 %, Europe and CIS - 10 %, America and Oceania - 8 %), with a direct link with a poor understanding of the film (11 %, 7 % and 5 % respectively¹¹).

By signing the CAI the new migrants feel, in a large majority, that this should simplify procedures when they have to renew their permit, to help them to learn French and obtain French nationality. These results are quite close to what is said at the OFII platforms. On the other hand, their view is clearly less well defined regarding support for entering the job market or assistance in looking for housing, whether private or public.

As for the **medical appointment**¹², less than 4% declare that it didn't go well, or don't give a view, persons from the Maghreb more frequently than all other new migrants (5%) and 84% think that it was useful, those from Europe and the CIS and those from America and Oceania a little less frequently (70% and 73% respectively).

10. The interviewer makes a very general assessment of the skills of the foreigner in spoken French. He/she also has to determine whether the written basics are mastered. If the interviewer feels that the skills are not sufficient to obtain the initial diploma in French (DILF), the foreigner is given a thorough language assessment, resulting in a detailed identification of the needs in terms of language training, with a maximum duration of 400 hours.

11. Proportions including those who did not give a response or refused to give a response.

12. Fewer than 2% of those signing the CAI were excused the medical appointment in 2009.

Civic training is mandatory for all those who sign the CAI. The aim is to provide information about the guiding principles of life in France (democracy, gender equality, freedom of thought, opinion, expression, etc.), the institutions that make up its structure and the essential values that all residing in the country are expected to respect (secularity, social rights, etc.). This training is organised with the participation of an interpreter, if this is deemed necessary.

At the point of the survey, 94% of first-time arrivals had already attended the training course. Of these, almost seven out of ten (68%) declare that they understood everything dealt with by the training. Of course, this understanding¹³ has some influence on the opinion expressed about the training: Of those who understood everything, 84% found it very interesting, but only 69% were of this opinion when they more or less understood and 27% when they had major difficulty in following. Similarly, perceived usefulness diminishes with less understanding (82 %, 71 % and 38 % respectively found it very useful).

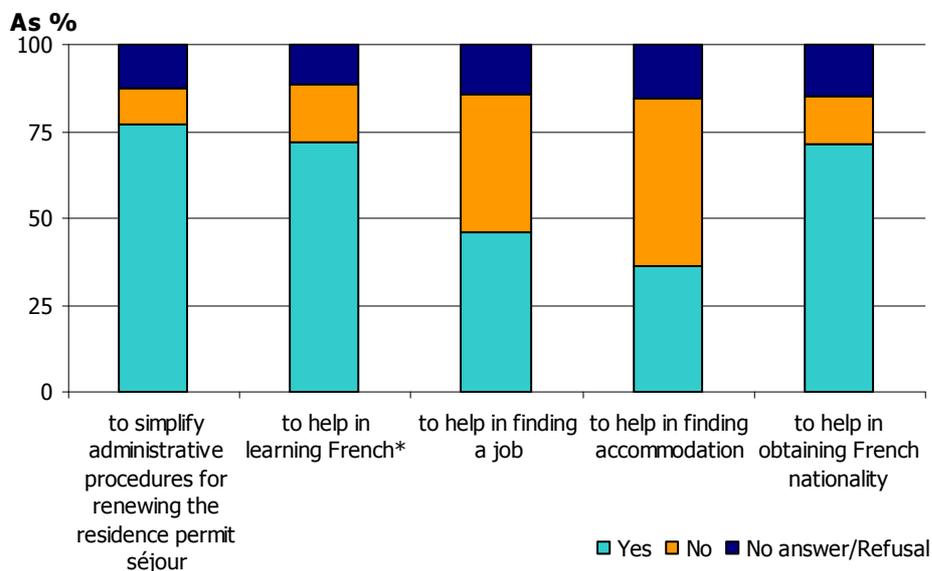
It is those from Asia and Africa, excepting the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa (35% and 26% respectively) who most frequently said that they knew nothing of the values of the Republic before attending the civic training course. However, it is not these people who declared having learned the most¹⁴: it is those from sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb who said they had learned a lot (77% and 75%), and then Africans (excepting sub-Saharan Africa and the Maghreb) (72%) and people from America (72%) and Oceania (66%).

The majority of new migrants who had already attended the civic training declare that they agree with the principle of secularity: 79 % are entirely in agreement and 16 % quite agree. It is the women, particularly from the Maghreb, who are more cautious than the men on the matter of complying with the principle of secularity (one of the values of the Republic dealt with a great deal in the training). They are twice as likely to declare themselves to be in disagreement with the principle of secularity as the men (3 % against 1.5 %, and 4.1 % for women from the Maghreb).

Of those who had not yet attended the civic training course, more than one third (36%) say that they are waiting to be invited and 19% are invited to attend in the next few days. For all of these, the ELIPA survey comes too soon.

A third of those who signed the CAI in 2009 were invited to attend the information day on **life in France**¹⁵ and at the point of the survey, 91% had already attended. A great deal of satisfaction with this day is expressed by the new migrants: fewer than 2% of them declare that they were not at all satisfied and as many that they understood nothing or hardly anything of what was said, while less than one in ten felt the quality of the training was very average, or even poor¹⁶.

Graph 8 : Perceived usefulness of the CAI



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration

(*) : question only asked to foreigners who must follow a language training

13. Proportions including those who did not give a response, or refused to give a response.

14. With no correlation with an understanding of what has been presented during the civic training.

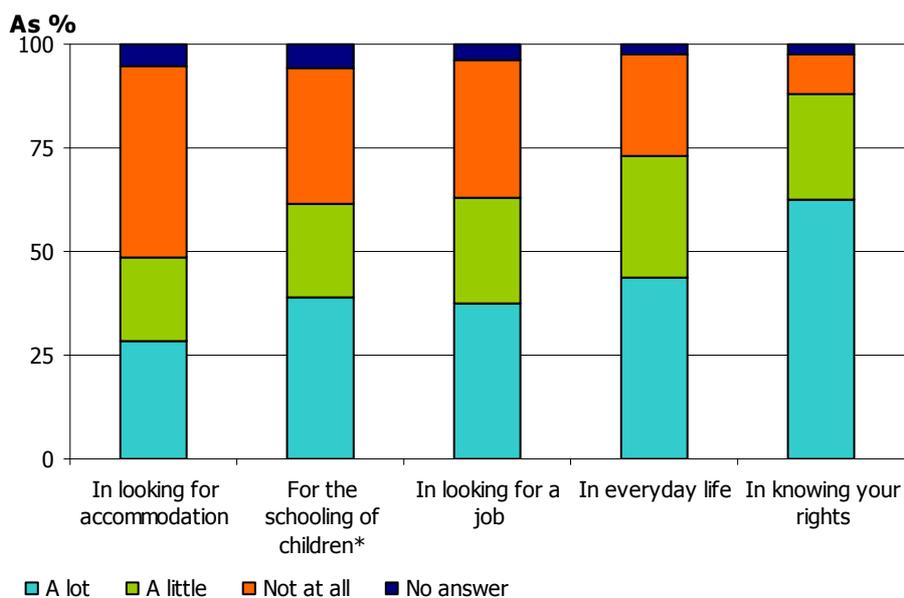
15. As for the civic training, this day, if necessary, is organised with the participation of an interpreter.

16. Mostly women, and generally from the Maghreb or Asia.

Those who attended the training said it was especially useful in terms of access to rights (88%) and in the comprehension of everyday life (73%). On the other hand, they are less convinced when it comes to looking for work and schooling for their children, and really quite unconvinced on the matter of finding accommodation (48%).

Of those who had not yet attended the day, 45% say that they are waiting to be invited and 18% are invited to attend in the next few days.

Graph 9 : Perceived usefulness of the information day about life in France



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration

(*) : Question only asked to foreigners who have at least one child between 2 and 16 years

The reception mechanism includes, for those first-time arrivals who need it (see insert 3), the offer of up to 400 hours of **language training** with the aim of obtaining an Initial Diploma in the French Language (DILF), a diploma that attests to oral and written skills in French.

In 2009, 21% of those who signed the CAI were prescribed language training: almost a third of these (31%) for a duration of 200 hours at the most and 28% for 400 hours (the average duration is 295 hours). Those particularly concerned are women (66%), foreigners from Asia (50%), those who have been in France for less than two years (71%), persons given residence permits for family reasons (77%) or those without diplomas (33%).

There does seem to be some confusion in the minds of first-time migrants when they are asked about the prescription of these French classes. In fact, while 85% are able to correctly repeat the information they have been given (the prescription or not of language training), some weeks after they have visited an OFII platform, 12% expect to be able to attend this training when it has not been prescribed for them. It is therefore very likely that these foreigners, misunderstanding the prescription, are then disappointed to find they cannot attend the language training as they had expected. But, as regards their level of communication skills in French as assessed by the interviewer, this training would have been useful for only a small percentage of them: the interviewer declared that only 10% had difficulties in understanding French. However, these results show an improvement in the understanding of the mechanism compared with what was observed in 2006¹⁸.

The majority of these migrants for whom the OFII prescribed language training (93%) declare that they know the number of hours prescribed and, in four out of five cases (86%), this number corresponds with what had been offered. More than half (61%) of them had already started their language training. A third of those who had not yet begun were awaiting their invitation (27%) or were expected to start soon after the date of the survey (7%). The other reasons given to explain this delay in the taking up of the language training were non-availability (because they work, 12%, or have to look after children, 6%), logistical problems (such as a lack of places in the training centre or no transport to get there). And then 23% declared that they do not need it (whereas for 7% of them the interviewer had said that they had difficulties understanding French) and 4% that the training did not interest them.

17. Three in ten of them even mentioned a prescribed number of hours of training.

18. See C Régnaud, Profiles of migrants received as part of the public mechanism in 2006, MIIINDS, Info Migrations no. 5, December 2008

Finally, a quarter of new migrants for whom the OFII did not prescribe language training said that they would have liked to attend, even though the interviewer reported no difficulty when interviewing for the questionnaire (neither in terms of comprehension of French nor comprehension of the questions). This could be explained, possibly, by their willingness to improve their oral and written French but also possibly because they underestimated their level in the language.

Insert 3: Reception and Integration Contracts

To assist the integration of migrants authorised to settle indefinitely in France, the government decided, in 2003, to create a public reception service run by the French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) with the signing of a reception and integration contract (CAI). This reception mechanism has been set up gradually, firstly as an experiment in 12 pilot departments starting 1st July 2003. Since 2008 it now covers the hundred departments that go to make up the continental and overseas territories of France.

The immigration and integration law of 24th July 2006 stipulates that the reception and integration contract be proposed to all foreigners aged 16 years and older, excepting those from the European Economic Area and Switzerland, on their first-time admission into France, or those who regularly visit the country, wishing to stay for a period in order to prepare for their republican integration into French society (article L.311-9 of the CESEDA), assessed particularly for their personal commitment to the principles that govern the French Republic and their adequate knowledge of the French language. It is this same law that has stipulated the signing of the mandatory contract.

The CAI is signed between the State, represented by the Prefect, and the migrant, for a duration of one year, and may be prolonged for an identical period, on the proposal of the OFII, subject to the successful renewal of the residence permit. By means of this contract, the State commits to offer to the signatory an information session on life in France, a day of civic training, language training, if necessary, and social support if the personal or family situation of the signatory warrants it. Each of the training sessions is free of charge and attendance is recognised with an attestation. As for the migrant, he/she undertakes to respect the French Constitution, the laws of the Republic and the values of French society, to attend a day of civic training and an information session on "living in France" and to attend the language training if his/her knowledge of the language is inadequate, and to sit an examination for an initial diploma in the French language (DILF), which is a qualification of the national ministry of education in French as a foreign language, the level being A1.1.

The **law of 20th November 2007** supplemented the reception mechanism in three areas:

1. Foreigners wishing to come to France to rejoin their family and foreign partners of French nationals will henceforth be subject, **in the country of residence**, to an **assessment of their level of knowledge of French and the values of the Republic**. If the need is established, they will have to attend training for a maximum period of two months, organised by the administration. An attestation that they have attended this training will be necessary for them to be able to obtain a long-term residence permit.

This mechanism has been used for less than 15% of migrants received in 2009. By definition, they are all family migrants. They are from the Maghreb (73%), Asia (15%) and sub-Saharan Africa (11%). Two out of five (40%) had done their evaluation of their knowledge of French and the values of the Republic before their admission and almost as many (37%) had done nothing for either.

2. The setting up, for partners coming to rejoin family, as soon as they have children, of a **contract of reception and integration for the family** (CAIF), to be concluded between the state and the two partners (requestor and the person waiting to migrate). The persons in question have to attend, under this contract, a special training day on the "rights and duties of parents", the content of which is organised around four themes: equality between men and women, parental authority, the rights of children and a focus on children's schooling. This was used in less than 300 cases in 2009.

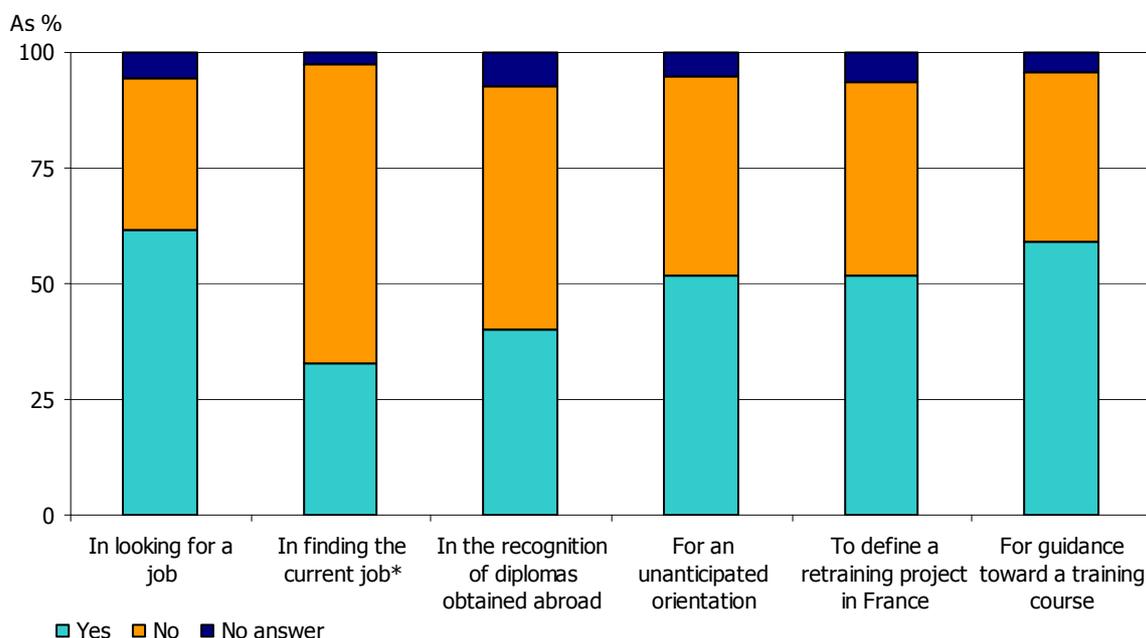
3. The creation of a **professional skills audit** with the objective of helping those who have signed the CAI to understand and be able to present their experience, professional skills and their training in their search for employment. The person receiving this help has to be able to present the results of the audit to a potential employer or an intermediary, so that work can be found quickly. This service, trialled in 2008, has been rolled out over the whole of the territory as of February 2009. It is offered to all those who sign the CAI, with the exception of foreign minors once they are in school, foreigners aged over 55 years, foreigners allowed to enter France with an "employee" permit or with a "scientific" or "artistic and cultural profession" card and foreign nationals who declare and can prove that they already have a professional activity and are not looking for employment. Of a duration of 3 hours, it is conducted in French without the help of an interpreter, which implies that it has been prescribed at the end of language training, or at least after this has been started, for those who are receiving it.

In 2009, the skills audit was prescribed for three out of five (59%) of those who signed the CAI, and in 22% of cases it was coupled with prescribed language training. Of the migrants for whom it was prescribed, seven out of ten (73%) had already attended. As it is conducted in French, without an interpreter, it is foreigners who also attend language training who are the more likely to say that they have had difficulties in understanding the skills audit (72% as against 23%).

Overall, foreign nationals declare that the information presented at the skills audit is useful, particularly for seeking employment (61%), guidance for training (59%) or towards an activity that hadn't been considered (51%), or to define a retraining project in France (51%). On the other hand, new migrants who have had a skills audit are much more cautious as to its usefulness for the job that they hold at the time of the audit and the recognition of their diplomas obtained abroad.

As for other training offered as part of the mechanism, most of those who had not yet had the benefit of a skills audit were waiting for an invitation (67%) or were expecting the audit within a few days of the survey (5%).

Graph 10 : Perceived usefulness of the skills audit



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration
 (*) : question only asked to foreigners who must follow a language training

A satisfactory initial experience that bodes well for the future

95% of migrants say they are satisfied or even very satisfied with their experience in France. This figure may appear to be very high, but this is explained by the fact that many migrants compare their life in France with their previous experience or that of those who have remained in their home country. They much prefer their new life, even if they experience difficulties in integrating. It is also true that the survey was conducted very soon after they obtained their first residence permit, that they had been awaiting for a long time, their satisfaction obviously translating a feeling of security finally attained.

54% of these migrants affirm that the experience was better than expected, 28% as they had imagined, and 18% less well than hoped.

Only 37% of refugees and 32% of refugee families say that their experience has been very good, against 53% of work migrants, a number of the latter certainly relieved that they have finally been regularised.

Satisfaction is more measured as regards employment currently held: 16% of first-time migrants in work at the time of the survey say they are not very or not at all satisfied, mostly those who have rejoined families or are members of refugee families. Also, a quarter of active persons in work who declared a professional activity in the home country judge that their professional situation in France is less good.

Satisfaction is more measured as regards employment currently held: 16% of first-time migrants in work at the time of the survey say they are not very or not at all satisfied, mostly those who have rejoined families or are members of refugee families. Also, a quarter of active persons in work who declared a professional activity in the home country judge that their professional situation in France is less good.

The observation is effectively the same as regards financial situation, where more than one in five foreigners (21%) affirm that this has suffered with their arrival in France (as against 48% who judge it to be better). Finally, the quality of current housing does not satisfy 31% of first-time migrants.

Furthermore, seven out of ten (71%) are expecting to settle in France indefinitely, the highest percentages being Europeans and people from the CIS (78%) and people from the Maghreb (77%), while 11% of first-time migrants from sub-Saharan Africa say they are prepared to make return trips between their home country and France¹⁹.

There is often a correspondence between the degree of satisfaction and the nature of the plan to migrate. Thus, 11% of those considering returning to their home country after several years in France are having some difficulty with their life in France (against 3% of those expecting to settle permanently in France).

There is on the other hand no link between satisfaction with life in France and the possibility of bringing a member of the family later, since the percentage of migrants wishing to have their family join them is the same, whether their experience in France is good or not (25%).

Insert 4: Longitudinal survey of the integration of first-time arrivals

The longitudinal survey of the integration of first-time arrivals (ELIPA) has as its main objectives knowledge of the integration trajectories in the three years that follow the granting of the first permanent residence permit and an assessment of the reception mechanism.

This reception, set up by the French office of immigration and integration (OFII), consists of supporting the migrant by offering various training sessions and personal services (free language training lasting up to 400 hours, training in the values of the Republic, a skills audit, referral to a social worker, "Living in France" training).

The survey was conducted with a representative sample of 6,107 migrants aged 18 or older, nationals of countries outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland, who had just obtained a permit for permanent residence in France, and had been received by the OFII between September 2009 and February 2010 in one of four regions: Ile-de-France, PACA, Rhône Alpes and Alsace.

Face-to-face interviews were directed by SOFRES between March and June 2010 in 14 languages (French, Albanian, English, Arab-Berber, Bengali, Chinese, Spanish, Russian, Serb, Soninke, Tamil, Thai, Turkish and Vietnamese) by interviewers/translators.

These same migrants will be interviewed again a year later (2nd wave, in 2011) and then three years later (3rd and last wave in 2013).

The scope of the survey groups together migrants, candidates for permanent residence and so excludes:

- 16-17 year olds eligible for the CAI;
- temporary migrants: students, temporary workers (especially seasonal workers), those on work placements and asylum seekers;
- employees working on secondment, holders of a "skills and talents", "scientific" or "commercial" card, senior managers and their accompanying families;
- holders of a "visitor" or "artistic and cultural profession" permit, former combatants and foreign nationals who are ill.

On the other hand, it does include nationals of the two New Member States that entered the European Union in 2007 (Romania and Bulgaria), which are still in a transitional period, for the case of a stay for professional reasons.

The persons within the scope of this survey are thus designated as "new migrants", "first-time migrants" or "signatories of the CAI".

This survey is coordinated by the Department of Statistics, Studies and Documentation (DSED) of the Ministry of the Interior, Overseas, local and regional authorities and Immigration. Providing scientific support are some departments of the ministry (primarily the Department of Reception, Integration and Citizenship, the OFII and the HCI, the High Council of Integration) as well as some external partners (DARES, INED, INSEE, OFPRA et OCDE).

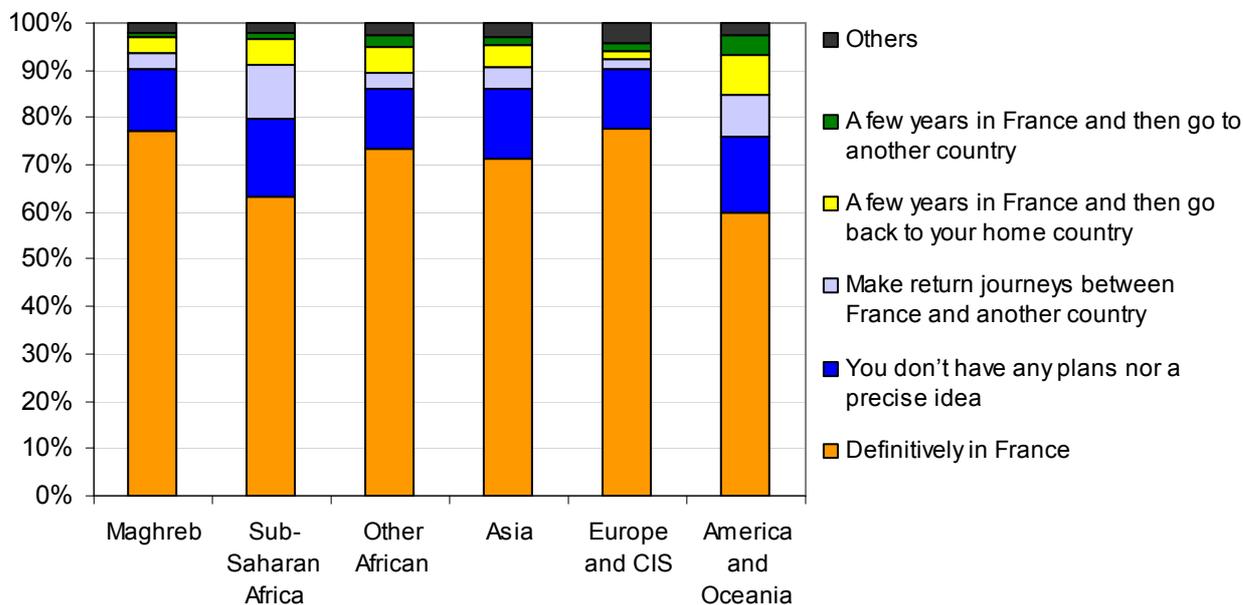
It is financed fifty percent by the ministry and fifty percent by the European Fund for Integration of the European Commission.

For more information:

http://www.immigration.gouv.fr/spip.php?page=dossiers_det_res&numrubrique=232&numarticle=2132

19. Those interviewed may have understood that, in speaking about "making return trips between their home country and France", the interviewer was speaking about holidays, whereas in actual fact it is quite long visits/absences (possibly for professional reasons) that were meant.

Graph 11 : Distribution of migration plans according to nationality



Source : ELIPA survey, 1st wave (2010), SSM –Immigration

Ministère de l'intérieur, de l'outre-mer, des collectivités territoriales
et de l'immigration
Secrétariat général à l'immigration et à l'intégration
101, rue de Grenelle 75323 Paris cedex 07
Tel : (33) 1. 77.72.61.81 Fax : (33) 1. 77.72.00.00

Immigration.gouv.fr/ressources/statistiques/publications
Directeur de publication : Jean-Patrick Bernard
Rédactrice en chef : Nicole Cadanel
Maquette : Evelyne Coirier

Infos migrations n° 19

ELIPA Survey
The new migrants of 2009

January 2011