

VERSION ANGLAISE – The learner’s forum

Dear representatives,

As learners of French, we are uprooted people. Here in France, we have found a new land in which to resettle. Learning the language is essential to our integration, our professional and social (re)integration.

Today, the bill aiming to “control immigration and improve integration” has prompted us to express our views on the current conditions for learning French. We would like to draw your attention to the following points:

- **Not all learners have access to French courses:**

The training on offer does not match demand.

There is a significant time lag between the first course and each language level. Very small towns don't necessarily offer courses. This sometimes means that we have to move houses or travel long distances.

- **Our learning conditions are not good:**

The composition of language level groups is not always appropriate. Levels are often mixed.

The number of learners per group is often high. It's difficult to learn in groups of 15 or more.

- **The courses don't necessarily correspond to our needs:**

Our situations are very different.

Some learners went to university in their own country, while others never went to school. We don't have the same educational backgrounds, the same language needs and we are not necessarily available at the same time. The language training provided by OFII is not enough, and not everyone has suitable training.

Thinking of training courses only in terms of levels is not enough!

We need a wide range of courses: intensive courses lasting 30 hours a week, courses lasting 6 hours a week, courses taught in other in our mother tongues, specialised courses (oral or written, schooling, the world of work, etc.), conversation workshops, etc.

- **Childcare facilities for young children are limited:**

Learning parents are often forced to put their learning on hold until they have a place in a nursery.

- **Our professional qualifications are not recognised:**

What motivation is there to learn French, knowing that we will never be able to practise the profession for which we studied?

- **Working conditions for trainers are often difficult:**

The working conditions of trainers will have repercussions for learners.

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If we are to be properly supported, the resources must be in adequation with the objectives and needs of each individual. Trainers have a heavy administrative workload.

They don't always have the time to prepare lessons and monitor learners' progress.

Who wants to become a trainer in these conditions?

- **Volunteers are too often isolated:**

Too much of the welcoming and learning process is under the responsibility of volunteers, who are not always in a position to help. Training for volunteers should be offered systematically.

We appreciate their work and commitment, but it should be complementary to training provided by a professional.

Volunteers could also be in charge of other activities, not just French lessons: outings, cultural or sporting activities, etc. This would enable us to respond to other expectations and other ways of learning.

We're very motivated to learn French, to rebuild our lives here and to participate in society. Unfortunately, some of us are discouraged because we face many obstacles while learning French.

As learners of French, we demand access to :

- **French language training provided by professionals throughout France,**
- **a wide range of training courses to meet the diversity of our needs,**
- **priority access to nurseries, in the same way as workers or trainees on vocational training schemes**
- **the recognition and enhancement of our qualifications**

This forum has been discussed and written by people learning French in France, who are taking part in an [action-research project run by the collective Le Français Pour Tous](#). It was initiated by Gülten Boyaci (Centre social et culturel l'Albatros, Lingolsheim), who was later joined by Salah Issa (The Coraplis Charity, Niort) and Radwan Idriss (association Echange Culturel et Solidaire Franco-Soudanais, Tours). All three have contributed their experiences and discussions with learners from their networks.