



## Migration Profile

### FRANCE

#### A. Executive Summary

France is a State governed by a semi-presidential Republic. It is a founding member of the European Union. The French population was composed of roughly 9.9% migrants in 2019, of which approximately one half came from African countries and one third came from other Member States of the European Union. Migration to France is primarily motivated by family reunification and largely disconnected from the economic situation. In recent years, the overall number of migrants who arrive in France could be considered relatively low in comparison with other European countries, given the country's total population. The vast majority of legal migrants to France come because they have the right to do so, based on the right to family life (while their presence may rejuvenate the age pyramid and compensate for a declining workforce). In recent years, there has been an increase in student immigration to France, particularly through "talent passports." In the absence of a policy on demographics, and with a restrictive policy on economic migration, the regulation of migration in France is primarily a legal issue, managed by public actors and associations. The regulation of migration in France is based on mechanisms that involve the law, but there are also many "grey areas" and non-legal issues, relying on members of civil society.

Detention centres are a striking element of the migration management system, including for asylum seekers under the Dublin Regulation and vulnerable migrants. Despite being only the 15th European country in terms of asylum requests, asylum laws and policies are increasingly restrictive in France. Refugees experience a particularly high rate of unemployment compared to other migrants. The lack of work often leads to a lack of opportunities for integration into society. In several sectors related to receiving and managing migratory flows, the State is overwhelmed: this is particularly true in the case of housing. Likewise, the integration of migrants into society is mainly done through nearly 900 charitable associations that are active in France.

In recent years, immigrant populations struggle to fit in to the social fabric and territorial organisation of France, which has been unable to overcome socio-spatial separation and even segregation. This has led to various illusions about, and frequent stigmatisation of, immigrant populations. The various forms of "segregation" that affected the immigrant population for decades are now being inherited by the descendants of earlier migrants, as well as new arrivals. The territorial areas where migrant populations and their descendants are concentrated have created new internal borders, with a disproportionate share of violence and social despair. This is especially the case among young people, who often turn

to drug trafficking and delinquency, or to Islamist extremism that sometimes flourishes in these areas.

The efforts made against human trafficking in France, by the State as well as by civil society associations, are bearing fruit, but still lack coordination in the collection of information. The most numerous victims are Nigerian women who are caught up in prostitution networks that exploit their vulnerability as migrants. France effectively combats human trafficking on its own soil. However, its attempts to outsource the management of migratory flows to countries of origin or transit, in coordination with the European Union, have tended indirectly to develop human trafficking systems in those other countries. This is particularly the case in Libya.

## **B. Country Profile**

### **I. Basic Information**

The French Republic is one of the founding and leading countries of the European Union. As an integral part of the Schengen free-movement area and the Euro zone, the country has a global influence and is a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, NATO, G7, and G20, as well as many other multilateral organisations and institutions. The French Republic operates under a semi-presidential regime. Decision-making is highly centralized; government operations are largely centred around its capital, Paris. (In fact, France's territory extends over five continents thanks to its overseas regions: French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, and Réunion.)

The population of France is mainly concentrated in the north (with Paris being by far the most populous metropolitan area in the country) as well as the south-east. The French economy has diversified into all sectors. France is the most visited country in the world, with 89 million foreign tourists in 2017. In recent years, the country has gone through several socio-economic crises, manifested through different movements, which reveal significant social fractures and increasing inequalities. France has also had to face numerous terrorist attacks that have catalysed an already turbulent political debate about the implementation of the French principle of *laïcité* (secularity) and about social integration. Having been among the countries hit earliest by the COVID-19 pandemic, the French population was locked-down during the first wave of infections between March 17 and May 11, 2020. It was once again locked down during the second wave between October 30 and December 15, 2020. The restrictions and waves of confinement brought about by the pandemic have caused a new economic, social and structural crisis. At the end of 2019, the unemployment rate was 8.1%. The COVID-19 crisis raised this figure to 9% in the third quarter of 2020. Among other things, the pandemic has revealed the weaknesses of recent health policies and led to a temporary restriction of several fundamental freedoms, including freedom of worship, as places of worship were restricted or closed.

### **II. Internal and International Migrants**

France was home to roughly 6.7 million immigrants in 2019, which constitutes approximately 9.9% of the total French population of about 67.8 million (July 2020). Among the immigrant population, 2.5 million (37% of immigrants) have acquired French citizenship

and 4.9 million have not. Immigrants who do not have French citizenship therefore account for 7.4% of the overall population, compared to an average of 8% for the rest of the European Union. Of these 4.9 million migrants who are not French citizens, 4.2 million are immigrants; the rest were born in France of foreign citizenship. In 2019, 46.5% of immigrants living in France were born in Africa and 33.3% were born in Europe. At that point, the main countries of origin were Algeria (12.6%, 1.6 million – 90% of Algerian emigrants migrate to France); Morocco (12%, 1 million); Portugal (9%, 687,500); and Tunisia (4.5%, 400,000). Then in descending order: Italy, Turkey, Spain, United Kingdom, Romania, Belgium, Comoros, Guinea, Senegal, Germany, China, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Poland, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Mali, Madagascar, Serbia, Vietnam, and Russia. A small portion of migrants comes from other Asian countries and the Americas. In 2018, total personal remittances from migrants to their country of origin amounted to roughly €13.24 billion. In 2019, the annual change in the number of migrants present in France compared to 2018 was +1.4%. In 2019, there were a total 140,000 European migrants who entered French territory – without need for a residence permit – and another 400,000 migrants from third countries.

Among the 272,000 people who obtained a residence permit in 2019 (compared to 256,000 in 2018), there were: 92,000 students; 45,000 persons who come from French families (including many people who regularized their status after living in France for a long time); 43,000 persons from families of foreigners legally residing in France; 38,000 refugees (or sick people who came to France for treatment); 34,000 migrants, most of whom were employees who came for the purpose of work; and 19,000 persons who came for other reasons. These residence permits are generally issued after at least one year of residence in France, often after several years, as was the case for 70% of people who received a first residence permit in 2018. The slow pace and complexity of the administrative procedures for obtaining residence permits vary greatly depending on the reason for immigration. This frequently puts migrants in a vulnerable situation while waiting for a response.

France is among the European countries that receive the most migrants through family reunification (accounting for over 40% of new immigrants – European or not – in 2018). In 2017, France welcomed a total of 258,400 students. Of these students, 30% planned to return to their country of origin after their studies, 25% intended to stay in France, 36% were still undecided, and 9% were thinking of moving to another country.

A total of 68.8% of immigrants in France are of working age. In general, recent immigrants have more polarised levels of education than the general population, with greater proportions of both low education, on one hand, and higher education, on the other. In 2019, immigrants had more difficulties in finding a job than non-immigrants: the unemployment rate among immigrants was 13% among men and 15% among women, compared to 8% for non-immigrant men and women. In contrast to labour migrants, almost all of whom were employed, family migrants had an unemployment rate of 19% in 2019. The causes of higher unemployment among migrant populations include: the fragility and instability of their status in France; educational qualifications that are often lower than the French average; fewer years of experience in the French labour market; and a lesser fluency in French, especially for the most recent immigrants. In terms of the nature of their jobs, immigrants are more likely to be workers or in intermediate professions than the rest of the population. The

unemployment rate is almost twice as high for people from Sub-Saharan Africa as for other immigrant populations, even though they are generally better educated than these other populations. For Sub-Saharan migrants, even though they occupied a diverse range of jobs before migrating, in France they are primarily employed in the secondary sector (especially as maintenance and construction worker in the case of men; and maintenance workers, care assistants, and child-care workers in the case of women). This leads to a significant professional downgrading and a depreciation of human capital. Though it is typical in the migration process, this depreciation seems to be accentuated by the regulatory restrictions for migrants in the French labour market and by the segmentation of the labour market. Moreover, people from Sub-Saharan Africa are among those who face the highest degree of discrimination (more frequent identity checks, as well as a higher frequency of provocation, insults, and defamation in recent years). Acquiring skills and qualifications that are recognised by the French labour market allows migrant students to access professions with higher qualifications. The French Bishops' Conference reports that migrants are frequently promised jobs, but employers are discouraged by the administrative slowness of the prefectures in obtaining regularisation. At the same time, any legal migrant over 25 years of age with insufficient resources can benefit from an active solidarity income (*Revenu de Solidarité Active*) allocated by the State.

Though it is very difficult to estimate, the number of irregular immigrants in France in 2017 was roughly 300,000 to 400,000 (fourth largest irregular population in Europe in absolute terms after Germany, the United Kingdom, and Italy). The situation of these migrants is largely unreported by public services, but according to many NGOs their circumstances are very precarious, often abject. These migrants are forced to work in the informal economy, as they do not have the right to work legally. The number of removal measures targeting these illegal migrants totalled 12,178 for metropolitan France and 23,158 for the island of Mayotte in 2019 alone. These removal measures are very costly (averaging €14,723 per person in 2018) and do not always send migrants to countries where people are safe (notably Sudan, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Eritrea). Due to increasing regulations and restrictions, the issuance of OQTFs ("orders to leave the French territory") have become almost routine. In 2019 the policy of detaining migrants was tightened, with an unprecedented increase in the number of detainees, totalling 53,000 (+23% compared to 2018), including asylum seekers in the Dublin procedure, for a duration that has increased by 40% in two years. House arrests are extended from one deadline to the next and are becoming punitive rather than truly effective. In 2018, only 40% of those imprisoned in administrative detention centres and 10.5% of those under house arrest were actually deported.

During COVID-19, the consequences of these group accommodations exposed migrants to a high risk of contamination by the virus. This was the case in detention centres, where sanitary conditions were typically substandard, as well as in street camps. Not having a home in the midst of waves of COVID confinement was a source of increased anxiety and discomfort, particularly for immigrant women living in accommodation centres. This situation was exacerbated by the suspension or limitation of assistance activities carried out by the 900 charitable associations operating in France, which further increased the vulnerability of migrants in the midst of the pandemic. Since sanitary standards were not being met in informal migrant settlements, notably in Paris, Grande-Synthe, and Calais,

some migrants were evacuated. However, the French administration did take steps during the first wave of confinement to renew for a fixed period all residence permits that were about to expire.

French governmental mechanisms offer the possibility of rapid access to health coverage, regardless of the status of the immigrant, legal or not, in situations of social and/or administrative insecurity. Nevertheless, certain structural obstacles often prevent effective access to these rights, including frequent refusal of care by healthcare workers, difficulty in accessing third-party payment, lack of interpretation services, and overcrowding of mainstream health facilities. Moreover, in the areas where many migrants arrive, it has become very difficult to obtain a health card. In addition, there is a lack of healthcare provided for the treatment of psycho-trauma due to migratory journeys, or depression due to situations of stigmatisation and prolonged vulnerability in France. In 2019, cases of discrimination increased. A survey conducted by the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights found in 2019 that 10% of respondents had been victims of discrimination in recent years. In the same year, the number of crimes motivated by racism had increased by 11% compared to 2018, mainly against people of African origin and with a significant increase in the dissemination of racist content on social networks. Frequent controversy in the media and in public opinion about migrants contributes to a feeling of mistrust towards anyone who is not fully integrated into French society. Of those who feel they are perceived as “non-white,” 33% say they have experienced racist language or behaviour at work. It is often the case that migrants, even legal migrants who have the rights associated with their residence permit, feel fear and mistrust that contribute to *de facto* exclusion from employment opportunities, housing, etc., and prevent them from accessing their rights.

One category of migrants is officially protected by French law in theory, but in fact often remains vulnerable because they are regularly left unprotected and in some cases sent back to the border. These are unaccompanied minors, whose numbers totalled 14,900 in 2017. They are individuals under 18 years of age, separated from their legal representatives, generally considered to be children at risk and not migrants. Child protection services offered by the state have become saturated in certain areas because they did not anticipate this influx. Consequently, a certain competitiveness has arisen between unaccompanied minors and children born in France. This has led to a policy of exceptional care for this category of migrants, who had become undesirable and were therefore relegated to external educational partners of the State. The difficulty in verifying the age of certain unaccompanied minors has also been used to justify certain deviations from the law. Identity papers are systematically checked with the intention of combating fraud. While civil status documents, once authenticated, should be sufficient to prove the minority of applicants and allow them to benefit from accommodation, the significant step of a so-called “social” interview is now mandatory for all. The application of the law is thus subject to the arbitrariness of state agents. Even among those who have been able to benefit from the protection of French law and have been able to attend school and pass their high school diploma, once they reach the age of 18 they often find themselves blocked from further studies or training, and sometimes even sent back to their country of origin, even though they no longer have any relatives there. In the midst of the COVID crisis, the State was

completely overwhelmed by the need for aid and accommodation for unaccompanied minors and called on associations and host families for assistance.

Historically, France is a country with high immigration. In 2019, France had 7.6 million first-generation descendants of immigrants (born to at least one immigrant parent, though roughly 50% of the descendants of immigrants were born in France to two immigrant parents). Thus first-generation descendants of immigrants account for 11.5% of the total population. If we add this to the number of immigrants, almost a quarter of the population in France are immigrants and their immediate descendants. If we extend to three generations, 2 out of 5 people in France have a connection to immigration. This is the main particularity of France compared to other EU countries: migratory flows in France do not appear massive, but their accumulation over time produces a massive change. Moreover, recent immigrants generally settle in the vicinity of earlier immigrants and their descendants. As the geographical concentration of immigrants does not change much over the years, the immigrant population (with their descendants) is generally more concentrated than the non-immigrant population. Most immigrant communities are in urban areas, with 80% of them living in the major urban centres (compared to 60% of non-immigrants). This geographical concentration increasingly results in diaspora-type communities in urban areas, which were once rich in jobs but no longer so. This is also where low-cost housing is concentrated. Thus, the logic of concentration of social housing has historically tended to keep populations in place instead of favouring their mobility and integration in the country, amplifying ghetto dynamics. These areas, which are increasingly home to exclusively immigrant populations or descendants of immigrants, have seen a sharp increase in social violence, and many types of trafficking have appeared, particularly drug trafficking.

### **III. Emigration and Skilled Migration**

In 2019, 2.3 million French nationals were living outside France, of whom about 37% lived in the European Union. The mobility of French people within the European Union does not generally require a residence permit. In 2017, 89,400 French people were studying abroad in higher education institutions.

### **IV. Forced Migration (internally displaced persons, asylum seekers, and refugees)**

The UNHCR estimated that at the end of 2019, there were 407,900 refugees and 102,200 asylum seekers in France. In 2018, this refugee population consisted of: 23,918 Sri Lankans; 18,534 Afghans; 16,483 Congolese from the DRC; 15,898 Russians; 15,822 Syrians; 14,700 Sudanese; 13,778 Serbs and Kosovars; 11,196 Turks; 11,193 Cambodians; 9,264 Guineans; 8,131 Iraqis; 7,821 Vietnamese; 6,617 Laotians; and 5,419 Mauritians. Over the course of 2019, 123,000 people submitted a first asylum application (+12% compared to 2018). Many of the asylum seekers had previously been in another European country (40% in 2018), particularly Germany. In 2019, the majority of asylum applications that were filed came from Afghanistan (10,000), Albania (8,000) and Georgia (7,700).

For those who do not come from French-speaking countries, a high protection approval rate is a motivation for many asylum seekers filing applications in France. France's protection rate is higher than in other European countries for certain origins, especially for Albania or

Afghanistan (with around 80% of protections granted). In general, these applications only very partially reflect the disorder in the Middle East and are often at odds with contemporary migration trends in other EU countries. In terms of the number of asylum applications, France is situated very close to the mean among European countries. In proportion to its wealth (GDP per capita) and population, it ranks 15th among European countries in the number of protections granted to asylum seekers since 2015. Of the 114,000 asylum decisions made in 2019, 75.3% were negative. Once their asylum application has been rejected, many applicants, unwilling or unable to travel to their country of origin, find themselves in an illegal situation, homeless, without rights, and without resources.

Regulatory systems have been implemented so that all asylum applications are dealt with by the EU country where the applicant first arrived. In the case of an asylum application registered in a country other than the one in which the migrant was initially registered, the migrant can be transferred to the initial country of registration. This procedure, adopted in what is known as the Dublin Regulation (III), is supposed to reduce rebound migration. However, its effectiveness is uncertain and has been called into question, particularly in recent months. The first phase of its application (i.e., placement into the Dublin procedure when the asylum application is registered) has increased nine-fold between 2014 and 2018 in France, for a twofold increase in asylum applications. However, only 7.7% of “Dubliners” were actually transferred in 2018. Under the same Dublin Regulation, in the first half of 2019, 33,628 migrants and asylum seekers, including unaccompanied minors, were stopped at French borders and sent back to Italy and Spain, without the possibility of applying for asylum in France.

In December 2018, 141,698 asylum seekers were receiving the asylum seeker's allowance, intended to compensate for their inability to work. In addition, the law requires that asylum seekers be housed while waiting for a response. However, the number of free accommodation facilities, though on the rise, is increasingly insufficient. Approximately 70,000 asylum seekers are not housed and therefore receive an additional allocation of the asylum seeker's allowance. Despite the many obstacles in this area, France has increased the scope of its resettlement programmes for refugees from countries where they are no longer safe. Among the refugees, 5,600 were resettled from other countries to France during 2019. France has also increasingly sought to redistribute asylum seekers and refugees (sometimes also migrants) across its own territory, away from large cities that face a shortage of low-cost housing. The dismantling of camps in Paris and Calais was the start of a new era for some small towns and villages in the country, many of which began to welcome migrants.

Some 34% of refugees are unemployed. This is not only caused by their general precariousness as refugees; it is also due to social vulnerabilities and stigmatisation in the workplace, similar to those faced by migrants in general. As a result of COVID-19, during the first lockdown, the *Guichets uniques pour demandeurs d'asile* (GUDA) [“Single Point of Contact for Asylum Seekers”] and the *Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides* (OFPRA) [“French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons”] suspended their activities and therefore could not uphold the right to apply for asylum, stating that it was impossible to guarantee public-health standards in the government offices concerned.

*Climate displaced persons*

Metropolitan France is subject to floods, winter storms, and drought, as well as forest fires near the Mediterranean. Its overseas territories are subject to hurricanes (cyclones) and floods. The Global Climate Risk Index proposed by Germanwatch ranks France as the 34th country in the world in terms of lowest climate risk in 2018. France was, on average, 15th lowest in the world between 1999 and 2018. There has therefore been a relative increase in climate risks. In 2019, 32 natural disasters caused approximately 6,200 persons to experience forced displacement. Of these, 3,400 were triggered by a series of floods. In the Ardèche region, an earthquake in November 2019 destroyed more than 800 houses and caused roughly 2,000 long-term displacements. Fires and landslides also forced people to flee their homes over the course of the year.

## **V. Victims of Human Trafficking**

Between 2002 and 2017, 84.6% of all victims of human trafficking in France were women and 3.8% were children. These victims are mostly of foreign origin (Eastern Europe, West and North Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean) but some were French. Nigerian women constitute the majority of victims of sex trafficking. Traffickers often lure them with fraudulent offers of economic opportunities and mainly target undocumented workers who are already present in France. Traffickers often encourage Nigerian victims to apply for asylum in order to obtain a residence permit and thus allow their exploitation to continue. The main means used by Nigerian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Chinese, and French-controlled prostitution rings to maintain their hold on their victims are debt bondage, physical force, and psychological pressure, including drug addiction and voodoo practices. The French government estimates that the majority of the 50,000 people working in the sex trade in France – about 90% of whom are foreign – are likely victims of human trafficking. Many children, mainly from Romania, West and North Africa, and the Middle East are exploited in sex trafficking. In suburban areas, there has been a sharp increase in the number of sex traffickers known as “lover boys,” who coerce vulnerable girls into sex trafficking, often as part of a fictitious romantic relationship. NGO estimates show that between 5,000 and 8,000 French teenagers are victims of sex trafficking, with more than half aged 15 and 16.

Trafficking networks also force children to commit crimes. They exploit the large influx of unaccompanied minors who have come to France in recent years. Romani people (or Roma) and unaccompanied minors in France are at risk of forced begging and forced theft. The families of Roma children are often their traffickers. Immediate or extended family members are the traffickers of 96% of victims of forced crime and forced begging. Approximately 62% of victims of sex trafficking knew their traffickers in advance. Unaccompanied minors in Mayotte are particularly vulnerable to trafficking as protection services (medical care, housing, and education) are not available to them. The attractiveness of the French island of Mayotte, where the standard of living is higher than on the other islands of the Comoros archipelago, results in the entry of thousands of migrants each year via dangerous maritime routes. This makes the smuggling of migrants by local smugglers and traffickers (often fishermen) a very profitable business.

## **VI. National Legal Framework**



The very complex French legislative system that has governed immigration in France since the 1980s has been organised and modified by 21 successive laws and is generally intended to be generous but firm. The general dynamics of French legislation in recent years have included: a tightening of migration policies, in particular those related to family reunification; increasingly security-oriented migration policies (allegedly to combat trafficking and terrorist networks linked to illegal immigration); an attempt – seemingly effective – to reduce the number of illegal immigrants; an attempt – of limited effectiveness – to link immigration increasingly to labour needs; direct immigration of skilled labour, in particular with “talent passports”; greater openness to student immigration (in order to attract the most qualified); and a tightening of asylum policies.

The fight against illegal immigration has become considerably tougher. The possibility of acquiring French nationality, one of the first principles of which is the *droit du sol* (granting French nationality automatically to the descendants of immigrants if they are born in France), has been reduced, in particular in cases of marriage or seniority. To be eligible for a residence permit in the case of family reunification, the legislation is demanding and complex but allows for long-term stays. Ultimately, the final decision on whether or not to grant a family permit rests with the local Prefect, who has “discretionary powers.” Very often, decisions on residence permits are based on this discretionary power, which lends itself to arbitrariness. This arbitrary discretion is conditioned by internal memoranda, depending on whether the administration tends towards openness or restrictiveness.

The French State is a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. In general, the law has extended refugee status to protect a significant number of persecuted foreigners around the world. However, due to the lack of sufficiently open alternative legal channels (including economic ones), many migrants try to seek asylum, including those who are unlikely to be considered “genuine refugees.” Suspicions of abuse of this procedure and an increase in the number of asylum seekers have contributed to a tightening of the legislation towards them. The 2018 Law on Immigration, Asylum, and Integration aimed, among other things, to shorten the response time for asylum applications and the time foreigners are allowed to be in the country before submitting their application. At the same time, the maximum duration of administrative detention prior to expulsion was extended from 45 to 90 days and the creation of new detention centres was planned.

In recent years the French government has reformed the Republic Integration Contract (CIR) for refugees. The reform includes a doubling of the number of hours of free French language classes and a doubling of the time allocated for civics training. France is one of the few countries in the EU where family reunification can take place for refugees – as for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection – without a time limit on residence, without any condition of resources or housing, and at any time. Numerous disagreements between European countries over these differences in management have led to the negotiation of a new European agreement on migrants, refugees, and border management. This concerns the revision of the Dublin Regulation, disproportionately impacting the countries of first entry.

Despite some lack of coordination in data collection, the French government has shown a consistent commitment to investigation and prosecution, as well as the protection of victims of trafficking. The French penal code criminalises sex and labour trafficking and provides for

penalties of up to 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of up to €1.5 million. Two different institutions are in charge of investigating human trafficking crimes: the Central Office for the Repression of Human Trafficking (OCRTEH) with respect to sex trafficking; and the Central Office for the Repression of Illegal Immigration and Employment of Foreigners without Permission (OCRIEST) for labour trafficking. In October 2019, a second national action plan against human trafficking was adopted.

## VII. Main Actors

### *The State*

The French State is key to the management of migration in France. However, civil society organisations and associations are the main actors in the support and integration of migrants and refugees. The defence of migrants' and refugees' rights before the French Ministry of the Interior is carried out by a complex coalition of actors including the Council of State, judges of custody and release (JLD), local elected officials, and associations that take charge of migrants' cases and try to make the best use of the resources provided by the law. There are almost 900 civil society associations, some of which are only local, others national in scope, were never stipulated by any law, but have been gradually and *de facto* institutionalised. The whole administrative and procedural process, as well as the grey areas between the law and administrative practices, would be impossible without their support.

### *The Catholic Church*

The *Service National Mission et Migrations* (SNMM) is a service of the Bishops' Conference of France, placed under the responsibility of the Episcopal Commission for the Universal Mission of the Church (CEMUE). Aiming to promote and deepen the pastoral thrust of the Church's activity in response to migration, the SNMM focuses on humanising the encounter with the foreigner and encouraging local communities to welcome Catholic migration communities. *Secours Catholique* (Caritas France) deals with basic needs (such as food, health, and accommodation) and accompanies migrants in their administrative and legal procedures. It also runs a *Centre d'entraide pour les demandeurs d'asiles et les réfugiés* (CEDRE) which assists around 2,500 people per year, particularly in integration assistance (language courses, etc.). The Order of Malta provides accommodation, legal and social support, French language courses, and assistance with economic and social integration. The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) fights against the isolation and social exclusion of asylum seekers and refugees through integration, temporary accommodation, legal support, return to employment, and advocacy. *CCFD-Terre Solidaire* coordinates, among other things, advocacy and integration activities for migrants. *Emmaus* runs a humanitarian centre and emergency accommodation centres that help migrants with their integration, administrative procedures, and search for accommodation.

The Catholic Church in France, through its various dioceses and supported in particular by the impetus of the Bishops' Conference of France (CEF), mobilises parishes to promote integration, schooling for children, and accommodation, as well as advocating for the defence of the dignity of migrants and refugees in France, for better integration and inter-religious dialogue. In 2017, the CEF, in partnership with *Secours Catholique*, the

Protestant Federation, and the Community of Sant'Egidio, jointly implemented with the French governmental authorities a "humanitarian corridor" for 500 among the most vulnerable refugees in Lebanon. The Catholic Church was also proactive in developing advocacy in negotiations for the 2018 Global Compact on Migration. The Church used the COVID-19 lockdown in early 2020 to strengthen its coordination with partners, launch solidarity campaigns for migrants, and develop long-distance pastoral care for migrants. In addition to being proactive in raising awareness of the issue, both among civil society and the authorities, the Church has been actively involved in combating the exploitation and trafficking of human beings in all its forms.

Created by *Secours Catholique*, the collective of associations entitled *Ensemble contre la traite des êtres humains* ("Together against human trafficking") brings together 28 French associations for a better coordination of the fight against all forms of trafficking. These associations are: *Fédération Entraide Protestante*, *Action Catholique des Femmes*, *AFJ*, *Agir contre la prostitution des enfants*, *Agir ensemble pour les droits de l'homme*, *Amicale du Nid*, *Armée du Salut*, *Association pour la réadaptation sociale*, *Aux Captifs la libération*, *Conseil Français des associations pour les Droits de l'enfant*, *Comité contre l'esclavage moderne*, *Comité protestant évangélique pour la dignité humaine*, *Congrégation Notre-Dame de Charité du Bon Pasteur*, *ECPAT France*, *Espoir - CFDJ - Jeunes Errants*, *la Cimade*, *Fédération des acteurs de la solidarité*, *Fondation Scelles*, *Hors la rue*, *Justice et Paix France*, *Koutcha*, *La voix de l'enfant*, *Les Champs de Booz*, *Mouvement du Nid France*, *Planète Enfants et développement*, *OICEM*, and *SOS Esclaves*. Also active in France, *RENATE* (Religious in Europe Networking against Trafficking and Exploitation), acts to raise awareness and share resources against human trafficking. This European network belongs to the international *Talitha Kum* network, which coordinates and strengthens anti-trafficking activities promoted by consecrated women.

### *International Organisations and Others*

Other non-confessional organisations play an important role in assisting migrants. *Cimade* has set up legal advice centres to ensure that migrants are aware of their rights, and provides legal assistance to foreigners in detention centres or CADAs. *France Terre d'Asile* has 34 reception centres for asylum seekers, which provide legal support, access to healthcare, schooling for children, training for adults, etc. *Médecins sans Frontières* and *Médecins du Monde* provide medical and psychological assistance.

International institutions are also actors in favour of migrants and refugees in France. The UNHCR develops partnerships for the integration of refugees with civil associations and offers training to government officials. It also plays an advisory role with the French authorities and participates in the appointment of approximately 100 assessor judges for the National Court of Asylum. This Court is called upon in the event of an appeal after a negative response to an asylum application. The International Organisation for Migration assists with family reunification procedures in France, as well as the reintegration of migrants in their countries of origin. The IOM likewise raises awareness among the governments of the countries of origin regarding issues related to migration.

## **VIII. Other Important Aspects**

In December 2018, France signed two Global Compacts: for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration; and for Refugees. France highlighted the fact that the text on migrants was not constraining, and that it did not create a right to migration, but rather allowed for managing migration in a more coordinated manner.

In 2018, France was home to roughly 1,500 stateless persons.

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