

SEVRES SEMINAR

Linguistic integration of adult migrants in Europe

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These two working days have brought together specialists from six European countries: Germany, Austria, Denmark, Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, to compare their legislation and language tuition systems for immigrants with those of France. These issues are the subject of recent developments in the seven countries concerned, particularly for newly-arrived immigrants.

The contributions by various experts have been particularly instructive and have prompted discussion enabling assessment of a certain number of issues concerning the question of linguistic integration of immigrants

The following is not intended to be a recital of all these contributions and discussions, but rather to present the most interesting aspects which have been identified during the two days and which may provoke reflection and action.

A country-by-country analysis is included with this summary report.

1) Philosophy behind initiatives and legal provisions

In spite of setting up the Schengen area, national jurisdiction over immigration issues is plainly sought by all countries, and the principle of subsidiarity applies. It should be noted that migratory phenomena vary from one country to another, and that answers to the questions they raise differ. Furthermore, measures taken in one country may have a major impact in neighbouring states. Two examples illustrate recent developments. Not so long ago, immigration in France concerned men who spoke little or no French, with relatively few professional qualifications: today, it comprises mostly women, benefiting from family consolidation, often having had little education in their country of origin. In Denmark the number of asylum seekers and immigrants benefiting from family consolidation is falling, while that of other immigrant categories has increased.

Laws

Spain's law dates from 1985, Germany is to vote on a new law on 9 July 2004; in the Netherlands, the 1998 Integration Act is currently being amended; Denmark, in addition to its 1999 Integration Act, adopted a language tuition Act in 2004; Great Britain applies the provisions of the 2002 Immigration Act; Austria instigated an integration contract in January 2003, while France is progressively introducing an entry and integration contract which will be generalised in 2006. Language measures are coercive for immigrants in Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark and also in Austria. Where language skills are required by the host country, mastery of the language is an obligation which is a condition for residency. In France signature of the entry and integration contract by new immigrants is not yet obligatory, but observance of the contractual undertakings determines the grant of a residency permit. Only Spain and Great Britain offer courses to immigrants who are not naturalisation applicants without imposing any particular constraint on them.

Laws are therefore recent, consideration still fluid, political decisions undergoing development, sometimes reversed. In England, the Crick report is awaiting endorsement and implementation by the authorities. The German government is opposed to poorly-qualified immigrants, contrary to the ideas of the European Commission. The treatment of migratory flows has come to the fore within the European Union, and is a sensitive political issue. Finally the level of language skills required is the corollary of the political choices which govern integration issues.

Language levels required as an obligation

The required level for immigrants varies considerably on a scale of six levels in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. Extremes are represented by Germany and Denmark, where the relatively high B1 level is required both for oral and written skills, and France, where a level below A1, oral only, is required under the entry and integration contract. The Netherlands directs tuition towards mastery of level A2, the other countries towards level A1. Clearly, the linguistic ability demanded looks like a higher or lower fence to get over and correspondingly a potential brake on acceptance of illiterate or poorly-qualified immigrants.

Integration concepts

All the countries represented seem to be applying a policy of immigrant integration : it appears that the community model has been abandoned where it prevailed, while at the same time the more demanding integrationist model has encountered difficulty in places.

The term integration, common to all languages of the countries represented, is prone to variations in interpretation. Thus, in Germany and the Netherlands, the word is closer to the old meaning of assimilation, implying that the immigrant is invited to blend into the culture of his host country. On the other hand, the objective of integration will be understood by others as fully respecting the immigrant's culture of origin and is aimed at strengthening their rights. This divergence of meaning and objectives results in a diversity of political solutions and required tuition, according to country.

It appears therefore that language tuition is considered by certain countries as a right of the immigrant and by others as an obligation, which has a direct impact on acceptance of responsibility by the authorities. They may shoulder responsibility for all or part of language tuition, or may, on the other hand, leave the immigrant to take the initiative.

The requirements and expected performance in the integration model also vary according to the stakes involved : obtaining refugee status, application for a long-term residency permit, or naturalisation. In the majority of countries, asylum-seekers are not compelled to follow linguistic integration procedures.

Finally, in all countries considered, and in spite of the variability of required levels, language skills are recognized as necessary skills for integration. Almost all agree however that an insufficient linguistic level leads to socio-professional marginalisation.

The authorities concerned and division of jurisdiction

There are major differences between countries and development of administrative organisation in certain countries. Denmark created an Integration Ministry in 2001, whereas the Netherlands transferred the immigration portfolio to the Justice Ministry, while leaving former immigrants under the aegis of the Social Affairs and Employment Ministry.

In Germany and France, responsibility for the system and its financing is entirely that of the State. Elsewhere, local authorities participate to a greater or lesser degree in arranging and financing initiatives. In Austria, tuition of new immigrants comes within the remit of the *Bund* ; the regions may, on their own initiative, finance programmes for other immigrant categories (ex-immigrants, women, the poorly-educated).

Categorisation and treatment of persons concerned

All countries, except Spain, practice variable segmentation of the immigrant population eligible for language tuition. One generally distinguishes three major groups which may be treated differently : refugees (and sometimes asylum-seekers) ; naturalisation applicants ; newly-arrived immigrants (potential long term residency applicants). These groups are of very unequal size and proportion, according to the country concerned. Germany has noted that, even though flows are constant, the numerical distribution changes : in the space of a few years, asylum-seekers have reduced from 400 000 to 40 000.

Certain countries also separate the situation of the illiterate and distinguish literacy procedures from those of language tuition. It should be noted for the record that France also distinguishes illiterate people who have never been to school, from the illiterate who, in spite of an education, have not mastered basic skills.

The obligation of language tuition varies in its effect on different categories of immigrants. In Great Britain, if the recommendations of the Crick report are adopted, the obligation would concern naturalisation applicants, of whom there are significant numbers (4 500 000),

but not those in a family consolidation situation. In France, on the contrary, it relates to those eligible for the entry and integration contract, most of whom are foreign members of French families or beneficiaries of family consolidation.

The issue of ex-immigrants

The procedures are designed as a priority, even exclusively, for new arrivals. The need for language tuition for longer-resident immigrants is unequally determined and satisfied, depending on the country. In the Netherlands, the Social Affairs and Employment Ministry is responsible for reintegration. In France, a 1995 survey revealed that 1 400 000 immigrants (excluding new arrivals) had a potential need for instruction in French, 1 056 000 in both oral and written French. These figures should be compared with the 100 000 annual new arrivals eligible for the entry and integration contract, 40 000 of whom need language courses.

The illiteracy issue

In France, even though decreasing, the still-significant number of illiterate new arrivals makes them eligible for obligatory language courses, which partly explains the extremely low level (below A1 oral only) of the skills currently required in the entry and integration contract. In certain countries, the illiteracy issue is not taken into account in the public tuition offer. In Germany, the illiterate may take the test as many times as necessary within 5 years to qualify for a residency permit.

Responsibility for immigrants, contracting, constraints and contributions

The responsibility of public authorities is necessarily linked to the immigrant's personal responsibility for his integration. However it is a fact that, for a variety of different reasons, immigrants have difficulty in regularly following a course. So that the immigrant feels fully responsible for his tuition, different solutions are applied, ranging from incentives to constraints.

These may involve, as in Austria and France, a genuine integration contract, containing rights and obligations, signed by the immigrant and the authorities of his host country : this contract is obligatory in Austria but not in France. The contract may relate, as in the United Kingdom and Denmark, to individualised training courses.

Exemption from payment for lessons by the beneficiary is the rule in France, Spain, Denmark and the United Kingdom.

However, in the other countries immigrants are obliged to contribute financially to their courses. They may be given a shorter or longer period to follow this tuition.

Contributions may be required or incentives offered : in the Netherlands, language courses are the exclusive responsibility of immigrants, who pay the costs; they are partially refunded by the State if the immigrant passes the "integration test" ; in Austria, the partial refund to immigrants of course costs decreases after 18 months of tuition ; Denmark offers to shorten the time for obtaining a residency permit by two years for those who pass the language test.

2 Organisation of language courses

Course objectives and content

Two principal objectives are evoked by all countries, even if their relative importance varies. The primary aim of language courses for all countries is indeed social integration, or even the assimilation of immigrants. In Denmark, a specific Integration Ministry has been created with responsibility for immigrant entry and their language courses. In Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and Denmark, language courses are obligatorily associated with lessons on civilisation and culture (30 hours in Germany). In Denmark, a significant role is given to civic education. In Great Britain, the Crick report made proposals in this direction in 2003, but awaits ratification by act of parliament or statutory instrument. Only Spain and France do not formally link language courses to civics : in the French entry and integration contract, only one day of obligatory civic tuition is envisaged, but is dissociated from language courses.

The second aim is access to employment. It is more or less closely linked to the first. The link is not very explicit in France and Spain. It is more clearly expressed in Germany, and is explicit in Denmark. It is recommended in Great Britain in the Crick report.

The offer of tuition

Liberal ideology, prevalent to a greater or lesser extent in most European countries, invites selection of training bodies by invitation to tender and allocation of procurement contracts. Only Spain seems to distance itself from this system.

Where immigrant integration by language, or even life-long learning, is a public policy priority, non-profit making public bodies are involved on a large scale all over the country : adult education institutes in Germany, vocational training bodies in Austria, State schools and regional universities in Spain. The associations sector operates in parallel to this network in offering tuition.

The associative network designation covers a wide range of diversely professionalised organisations. A third sector involves private commercial training organisations (Austria, the Netherlands).

The majority of countries consider that entry procedures, language assessment and prescribed courses should be linked. In France, the imminent introduction of a National Agency for entry and migration will take this route.

Length, cost and financing of obligatory courses

The connection between the level to be attained and the hours necessary is disconcertingly disparate. It takes 100 hours in Austria to reach A1 level ; in Germany, 630 hours to reach B1 ; in Denmark, the number of hours is determined according to the immigrant's needs, i.e., 340 to 2 000 hours annually to attain the equivalent of written B1 and oral B2 ; in France, 500 hours maximum to reach a level lower than A1. Spain and Great Britain have not yet fixed an obligatory target level, nor a limit on course hours.

Costs per person in-training also vary widely, according to hours, teacher remuneration, the openness of the market and any financial contribution by immigrants to their courses. In Austria, the State refunds 50% of tuition costs during the first 18 months with a limit of €182

per person, for courses whose prices range between €200 and €1 000 ; refunding ends after two years. In Germany, courses cost €1 600 per person, part of which is financed by the immigrants, up to a limit of €630. In Denmark, the annual average cost is approximately €8 000 per person and is funded entirely by the State. In the Netherlands, the State refunds the immigrant part of the course costs when he passes the language 'integration' test.

Tests and certification

Here again the situation varies. In France certification, currently under development, is the responsibility of the State. In Germany, the Goethe Institute shoulders responsibility. In Austria, where there is no national test or examination, teachers determine the level attained by the immigrant. Great Britain is working towards standardisation of certification. The test is centralised in the Netherlands, and is designed by a national commission.

The link between linguistic and vocational training

Access to employment appears to be an essential objective everywhere ; however, the link between language courses and initial or continuous vocational training for adults is unequally structured in the various countries. In Germany, professional integration is presented as an objective and a motivation for language courses, but without any particular connection to employment agencies : neither is there opportunity for linguistic improvement in the labour market. In Denmark, 15 to 18 vocational training establishments are in charge of language courses ; language courses may also be integrated into continuous training. In the Tyrol, but not at Austrian federal level, German courses may be a part of continuous training. In Spain, 1215 adult vocational training schools are entitled to give Spanish courses to foreigners, and even literacy classes. It is in Great Britain that the link seems more developed : language tuition may form part of a vocational qualification course ; training institutes are widely involved in language courses ; and most particularly, language centres are obligatorily assessed and marked by adult education inspectors. In France, language tuition is expressly included, since the act of 4 May 2004 relating to life-long vocational training and social dialogue, among the types of training activities entering the scope of continuous vocational training within the context of further education.

3) Educational issues

The specifics of teaching a "foreign language"

In spite of old arguments, everyone seems to agree that the teaching of the host country language must apply specific methods distinct from those used in native language teaching in schools. Teachers must therefore have appropriate training in most countries. But such training does not yet determine everywhere the aptitude to teach in languages centres for immigrants.

Methods and tools

The communicative approach seems to prevail over traditional methods in the majority of countries. In Denmark the trend is: abandonment of frontal teaching ("talk and chalk"), training by objectives, formative assessment, a good interaction between collective tuition and personalised courses, and use of communication and information technologies.

The production of teaching aids for immigrants is developing due to recognition of the teaching of foreign and second languages. The Spanish education ministry has produced a set of specific educational tools which it makes available to training organisations without any obligation to use them. This material also covers literacy teaching. A major role is given to the intercultural approach. In the United Kingdom, the production of tools has become an essential element for the authorities within the framework of a national strategy for development of basic skills ("skills for life"). In order to improve educational quality, the Department for Education and Skills published a practical guide addressed to all language teachers of refugees and asylum-seekers.

Tuition courses

The rate of learning being dependent on the pupil's level of education, certain countries have instituted streamed courses. In Germany, pupils are placed in groups corresponding to three learning profiles : slow, average, fast. Denmark has established three programmes : for those with little education, those with a short education and the with higher education. In France, the course is determined by the regulatory body : the first criterion is mastery of the spoken language.

In Denmark, immigrants benefit from streamed courses with the same number of hours : the organisation provides a foundation course for the three courses leading to level B1 to which are added additional modules leading to B1-B2 for pupils with an average education and C1 for pupils with higher education.

Teacher training

Where the language course is an obligatory condition of residency for immigrants and when implemented by the authorities, an effort has been made to train teachers. Initial teacher training becomes a requirement. Ideally, holding a higher education diploma is supplemented by specific training in teaching foreign and second languages.

In Denmark, a one-year course in teaching Danish as a foreign and second language is obligatory.

In France, a national training system is at the disposal of teachers.

In Germany, 140 hours of further training is offered to experienced teachers lacking specific German foreign language tuition. Great Britain has created a reference system for language tuition on three levels (oral + written), used on a national level (National Curriculum for English Language). Currently, 6 000 teachers have been initiated in the use of this reference system. A policy of very dynamic teacher training has been put in place to professionalise the sector.

Remarks and recommendations

The situations encountered in several countries are in the course of evolution. In Germany, the application of the 9 July 2004 act will undoubtedly result in changes. In France, the entry and integration contract will only be generalised from 2006. Great Britain is waiting to hear the fate of the Crick report recommendations. And we await the views of the new Spanish government.

It is for this reason that the participants in this seminar wished to meet again in June 2005 to collate the expected developments.

Mentioned below are some of the matters which should improve convergence and ensure reciprocal good practice.

1) Language level

This is a crucial issue, which impacts all systems.

It seems that the B1 level required in Germany is very high and almost inaccessible in 630 hours for immigrants lacking a good knowledge of their own language. On the other hand, the French level (A1.1) seems too low to enable the functional use of everyday French. Furthermore, validation only of oral competence in the language does not offer a guarantee of autonomy in the contemporary world, and does not seem to correspond to the requirements of successful integration.

It appears that the minimum level for such obligatory language courses is the A1 level, assessed both on oral and written skills, necessary for ordinary everyday situations and access to independence.

2) Division of administrative jurisdiction

This is the rule in several countries but can cause difficulties if not clearly specified in legislation or regulations.

Division of jurisdiction can be at State administrative level or shared between the State and local authorities.

The attribution of jurisdiction to the Justice Ministry in the Netherlands comes up against the problem that this ministry does not have statutory coordination with local authorities. In France, the responsibility for immigration and employment are managed by two distinct sections of the Social Affairs Ministry, while general responsibility for the French language is shared between the Education ministry and that of Culture.

3) Teacher training

The quality and general economics of courses are directly impacted by professional training of those involved, especially teachers. To achieve this, development of specific initial teacher training (qualified in foreign and second language teaching) is a necessity, simultaneously with diversification of in-service training of those in office.

4) Quality control

Without necessarily seeking normalisation and full standardisation of tuition and tests, the issue is reducing disparity in cost, course length and financing as revealed during these two days. Currently, few countries are able to assess with any precision their immigrant language tuition systems. Only Great Britain has a team of inspectors specialised in language courses, under the Adult Learning Inspector system. Language centres are inspected every three years, particularly on the quality of their teaching, and are marked on a scale of 1 to 5. A centre which receives two bad marks may be disqualified. This assessment procedure must, it seems, accompany recourse to the marketplace, which is becoming generalised in most countries.

Situation in each country

GERMANY

Adoption on 9 July 2004 of the new immigration law:

- worker immigration : gives preference to "highly qualified" immigration of foreigners ; maintains a freeze on immigration of unqualified and poorly-qualified persons ;
- asylum : refugee status will also be granted to victims of non-state persecution ;
- security : facilitates deportation of suspected terrorists or where violence is defended ;
- integration : obligation to follow a programme.

The act provides for creation of a federal agency for migration and refugees (*Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*) to implement the integration programme.

Germany's population is 8.9 % foreign. The integration programme is targeted on those settling permanently in the country, i.e., permanent workers, refugees, immigrants entering as dependents (80 000/year), *Aussiedler*¹ (50 000/year), and Russian Jews (20 000/year). Foreigners already settled in Germany will also be able to take courses, depending on available places, at the rate of 50 000 to 60 000 per year.

Aussiedler must take a German language test in their country of origin before obtaining permission to stay.

Once settled in Germany, new arrivals must follow an integration programme including a 300-hour language module (renewable once - 600 hours maximum) and 30 hours of civic and social instruction (German culture, law and civilisation). Language courses involve a final test which must confirm attainment of level B1 (oral + written) of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. As far as possible, the integration programme should be followed in the year after entering the country, but the right to participate lasts for 2 years.

New arrivals will be penalised for absence from courses : it may entail a reduction of 10% in welfare benefits during the period of absence and will be taken into account on extension of the residency permit. Success in the final test will enable the immigrant to lodge a naturalisation application one year earlier than the period stipulated in the act (8 years).

This programme is run by the federal agency for refugees and immigrants, controlled and financed (230 M€) by the federal State (Interior Ministry). Immigrants contribute to the course taken, if their resources permit, up to a maximum of €/hour.

On (lawful) entry into the country, new arrivals are given an orientation test (designed by the Goethe Institute) to determine their initial language skills and any linguistic needs. Individual interviews also enable determination of the learning profile of new arrivals (3 profiles, slow to fast learners). If language skills are sufficient (higher than level B1), the immigrant is not sent for language tuition. The language course must be determined on an individual basis ; the teacher must be able to adapt lessons to each specific profile. Intermediate tests (for levels A1 and A2 respectively) will punctuate the language course until the final examination ; all linguistic skills (expression, comprehension, reading, writing) will be assessed.

¹ People of German extraction from Eastern Europe (former USSR countries and other European Communist states). *Aussiedler*, their spouses and children, have the right to German naturalisation. Since 1990, almost 2 million *Aussiedler* have arrived in Germany.

From the continuous training sector, language tuition organisations are selected and approved after an invitation to tender : they are often recognized public service bodies (church and trade union organisations, adult education institutes), but private organisations are also in the language tuition market. Steps have been taken to guarantee the quality of tuition : a supervisory body arranges visits by inspectors to the organisations and ensures homogeneity of courses and examination standards.

Teacher training is provided and organised, particularly as not all teachers have initial specific training: teachers have access to 140 hours additional training. Teacher certification is in the experimental stage. Furthermore, teacher remuneration has been looked at in order to homogenize practices and attract new recruits to the profession.

Employers involve themselves very little in language courses for their employees ; there are few advanced language courses within companies.

Germany no longer wants poorly qualified immigration which it considers to have had disastrous social consequences ; as a result, the integration programme, more rigorous than in other European countries (Germany: reaching level B1 in a maximum of 630 hours; France : reaching level A1.1 oral in a maximum of 500 hours), is an instrument of immigration policy.

AUSTRIA

In January 2003, the "Integration Agreements" came into effect. The Austrian federal Government (Interior Ministry) implemented an obligatory integration contract from 1 January 2003. The introduction of this measure has provoked intense debate in Austria, associations criticising it for only promoting linguistic assimilation to the detriment of complete integration including, in particular, promotion of employment. The principal objective of the measure is, in effect, acquisition of a basic level of German, enabling immigrants to participate in the social, economic and cultural life of the host country. The integration programme is targeted on nationals of other countries entering Austria lawfully from 1 January 2003 with a view to long-term settlement, and on any foreigner who settled in Austria after 1 January 1998 who does not yet have a permanent residency permit. The contract does not concern the following :

- European Union nationals, nationals of countries with which Austria has concluded specific conventions ;
- those who can produce a diploma of German language studies (level A1 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*) or prove appropriate knowledge of the German language ;
- very young children or those of school age ;
- old people or those impaired by bad health ;
- highly qualified workers living in Austria for less than 2 years.

On issue of a residency permit, new arrivals receive necessary information on the integration contract (brochure). By signing a residency permit application, the new arrival declares that he accepts the integration contract. Residency permits cannot be issued without this declaration.

New arrivals undertake to follow a course on German language and civilization, for a total of 100 45-minute units, i.e. 75 hours. This course comprises 3 modules : everyday life ; administration ; an introduction to the country and the Austrian State (European and democratic values). The language objective to be attained is level A1. Tuition is not subject to a final test ; assessment of skills acquired is done by the teachers throughout the course. If competence is considered satisfactory, the trainee will receive a diploma. Training organisations are private contractors ; they must be approved by Austrian Funds for integration (*Österreichischer Integrationsfonds*). No specific training is required for teachers, who are often volunteers.

The new arrival may also fulfil the commitments entered into by taking a language test lasting about 20 minutes which, if successful, will exempt him from taking a course.

The cost of the programme is estimated at about €350 / person but each training organisation is free to fix its own fees. The federal State contributes 50 % of the cost of the programme (with a maximum of €182 / person), if the commitments are fulfilled within 18 months of contract signature. The other part of tuition costs is borne by the beneficiary. However, local communities or associations may contribute to these expenses if the new arrival's financial situation so justifies, so that the residual sum borne by the trainee averages between €80 and €100 /person.

The integration contract lasts 1 year. If the new arrival refuses to participate in the integration programme, his unemployment benefit may be stopped for between 6 and 14

weeks. At the end of the one-year term, the residency permit of the person concerned is only renewed for one year (instead of 2). If the contract is fulfilled in less than 18 months, the new arrival obtains a 50 % rebate of the course expenses from the State (maximum €82); if the contract is fulfilled in 18 to 24 months, the rebate is only 25 % of the course expenses.

If the new arrival has not started his language course within 3 years of his arrival in Austria, he must pay €200 to the State. At the end of 4 years, if the contractual commitments are still unfulfilled and no valid justification has been produced, the State initiates a procedure to revoke the residency permit. However, this strict measure can be relaxed in certain cases, particularly for family reasons.

Initial assessment:

- 15 to 20 % of those targeted should follow the course, others proving sufficient mastery of German ;
- 9,000 people complied with the conditions of the contract in 2003 ;
- 75 hours of language lessons is sufficient for 90 % of participants to attain level A1 ;
- up to June 2004, 2 000 people had fulfilled the commitments of the contract, either in having lessons, or by passing the test ;
- there are child-minding problems, which result in poor participation by women, particularly illiterate women.

At regional level, immigrants other than new arrivals may be involved in language tuition activities. For example, the Tyrol finances tuition of long-settled immigrants. Local communities also subsidise this type of initiative. These are initiatives in a field where the jurisdiction of the local authority is not fixed.

Job centres have little to do with integration but take responsibility for language tuition of job seekers. Many immigrants are forced to accept poorly-qualified posts. German courses are regarded as continuous vocational training and are subsidised as such in certain areas on their own initiative. The regions finance welfare benefits.

For those with little or no education in their mother tongue (particularly women), there is a network of basic language tuition ; this network is made up of associations, particularly parent-teacher associations, or have a marked social character, such as mosques, etc.

DENMARK

Adoption in 1998 of an integration law, giving responsibility for integration to local authorities (orientation and coordination by the Ministry for Integration and Immigration).

Local authorities are responsible for :

- housing refugees : refugees are relocated throughout the country on their arrival in Denmark ;
- entry programme for new arrivals and refugees ;
- granting of an entry allowance.

The entry programme covers refugees and immigrants entering the country under family consolidation. An amendment to the 1998 Act was passed in July 2003 to include asylum-seekers in the entry programme.

Local authorities are obliged to offer entry programmes to all new arrivals (above) aged over 18 in the month following their entry. The programme lasts a maximum of 3 years, and is based on an individual contract made between the immigrant and the local authority in the month following entry into the country. Immigrants who follow an entry programme are not authorised, save in special circumstances, to move for 3 years.

The programme is flexible according to the immigrant's needs ; it is free for beneficiaries and includes language instruction, training courses, courses on Danish society, etc, the very explicit objective being social integration and access to the labour market. Immigrants must follow the courses for 30 hours per week for six months in the case of the most comprehensive formula. However, if he is working, the local authorities must offer night or weekend courses. The offer of tuition must also be flexible (duration, rhythm, etc).

The system for asylum-seekers is a little different : they must follow an entry programme including, in particular, courses in the Danish language and culture, and English. All asylum-seekers aged between 17 and 25 must follow between 5 and 10 hours of lessons per week ; children aged 7 to 16 have these lessons in asylum-seeker centres. Observance of the programme enables asylum-seekers to receive the whole of their benefits.

The Integration and Immigration Ministry defines the orientation and content of Danish courses. Since the act relating to Danish language teaching of 1 January 2004, language instruction includes three courses, determined according to the previous scholastic level of the pupil: absence of schooling, curtailed education, minimum primary education. Each course is assessed by a test, organised centrally twice a year by the Ministry. It is split into 6 six-monthly modules ; each module is validated by a test designed to encourage the immigrant in his learning. The level of the final test has not yet been determined. To acquire Danish nationality, the immigrant must have a spoken level of between B1 and B2 and a written level of B1.

Local authorities may run the language courses themselves, or sub-contract to public or private external organisations. In all cases, they are responsible for the quality of instruction. Teachers must have adequate professional qualifications in teaching Danish as a foreign language : they must follow training for a year, in addition to their initial training.

There are about 50 language centres, and a number of organisations which offer language instruction. Approximately 46 000 immigrants were trained in 2003. There are about 1 600 teachers.

The system is obligatory ; it governs both the grant of welfare benefits, and permanent resident status. However, "good integration" (3 years stable employment, and establishment by the immigrant of "significant ties to Danish society") enables him to apply for permanent residency after 5 years instead of 7. If the immigrant fails his examination, the Government considers that the outstanding commitments are fulfilled if he has obtained a certificate of active participation in the programme (minimum 85 % participation rate). Still, the system has an absence rate of around 25 %. Furthermore, the immigrant must prove that he is seeking a job no later than a year after his arrival : the entry allowance may only be allocated when the immigrant or his spouse is unable to find a suitable job offer.

The cost of the entry programme (about 120 M€ for language tuition) is borne by the State, which finances the local authorities on the basis of : (1) a fixed sum per individual who signs a contract ; (2) a sum according to the programme offered (up to €1000/month for the complete programme) ; (3) a bonus according to the programme results : €2 500 each time a new arrival passes his Danish examination within 3 years, an additional sum if the immigrant finds employment, etc. This method of financing encourages local authorities to make special integration efforts. Local communities may get together if they want to jointly manage entry programmes. Local integration boards may be created by local authorities (there are currently about 70) : they advise local and central Government on integration policy.

SPAIN

1985 Act relating to education rights : foreign students may, like their Spanish counterparts, attend school without charge; specific teachers offer language courses to those who need them. The 2002 Act covers educational quality.

Free language courses, whose duration is not limited, are offered to immigrants. The State (Interior and Education ministries) finances this measure via autonomous regional government. There are 1215 state adult education schools in Spain, which offer diploma courses, literacy classes, and language instruction. Streamed groups are formed according the trainee's knowledge. Associations also play a major role in immigrant language tuition.

The Education Ministry provides teachers with educational tools, often developed pursuant to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, but their use is not obligatory.

Language tuition is not obligatory for immigrants ; neither is it systematically assessed by testing. However, Cervantes Institute certification, the DELE (*Diplomas de Español como Lengua Extranjera*) may be offered in a training course.

Involvement by companies in the language instruction of employees is almost non-existent.

Spanish foreign language teachers have access to teacher training in regional teacher training centres ; this is dedicated, free and paid training.

There are inspectors for the whole adult education system.

FRANCE

The French government wished to mark a turning point in its public policy of integration into the Republic : the inter-ministerial committee on integration, which met on 10 April 2003, set out an action plan to promote firstly, entry of new immigrants by creating a public entry body with a comprehensive role, and an entry and integration contract ; secondly, social and professional advancement of immigrants and their descendants ; and finally, to fight against intolerance and promote equal rights. In this context, a firm priority has been defined to teach the French language to the immigrant population. In fact, the potential need is great: according to a survey carried out in 1995, nearly 1.4 million immigrants (excluding new arrivals) had at that time a potential need for instruction in French. Where naturalisation applications are concerned, deferment due to poor language assimilation, another indicator of need, accounts for more than 18 % of unfavourable decisions.

This long-term interministerial integration programme whose preparation, implementation and supervision are the responsibility of the Ministry for Employment, Labour and Social Cohesion (population and migration department), provides for the establishment of a real public service for the entry of new immigrants in France, whose objective is to deal with all new arrivals (from outside the 15-state EU) by 2006. The target population of this entry policy is those foreigners entering for the first time into France with a view to staying long-term : principally, family consolidation beneficiaries, foreign members of French families, statutory refugees and their families, foreigners having been the subject of regularisation measures and permanent workers, namely, 110,000 to 120,000 persons per year. Organisation of the public entry service will be ensured by ANAM², currently being created.

The essential and innovative instrument of this entry policy is the entry and integration contract, established in part of the country since 1 July 2003 and whose generalisation throughout the country is planned for 2006. This individual contract, for one year, renewable once, comprises reciprocal undertakings by the parties, which entail for the immigrant observance of the laws and values of the Republic, having instruction in civics and, if necessary, language tuition : and for the French State, organisation of access to individual rights, knowledge of the law, principles and values of the Republic and language instruction. The entry and integration contract is signed on entry at the Office of International Migrations (OMI), when each new arrival, seen individually, is offered not only the tuition services under the contract, but also participation in the optional information modules on life in France and where needed, language assessment, an interview with a social worker, personalised social management and support. The cost of the entry programme is funded entirely by the State.

The objective of language tuition under the contract is acquisition of basic spoken language skills (the equivalent today of A1.1 oral level of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*). Language courses are organised and financed by FASILD³, their duration between 200 and 500 hours. Each signatory of the entry and integration contract achieving the required language level receives a ministerial certificate of language skills (AMCL), issued on behalf of the Ministry for Employment, Labour and Social Cohesion,

² The National Agency for Entry and Migration (ANAM) is a public body under the aegis of the Employment Labour and Social Cohesion Ministry. ANAM will be created by amalgamating the Office of International Migrations (OMI) and the Migrant assistance social service (SSAE).

³ Integration and anti-discrimination action and support funds (FASILD) is a public body under the aegis of the Employment Labour and Social Cohesion Ministry.

whether or not he has followed a course. Obtaining the AMCL exempts foreigners wishing to acquire French nationality from the language test under the procedure. Courses are entirely free for immigrants, and may under certain conditions be remunerated. The offer of tuition must be flexible (geographical proximity, flexibility in rhythm and timetable, etc).

Signature of the entry and integration contract is not obligatory, but once the contract is signed, the prescribed tuition (language and civics) is obligatory. In addition, the Act of 26 November 2003 relating to control of immigration, residency of foreigners in France and nationality, provides that issue of an initial residency permit is subject to republican integration of the foreigner into French society, assessed in particular by an adequate grasp of French and the principles which govern French society. Signature of the contract and its observance will therefore be important in assessing this integration condition.

Elementary mastery of the French language, a major plank of the entry and integration contract, is the first step in comprehensive language instruction, incorporating both oral and written skills, and enabling effective access to a common right of employment and training (pre-qualifying and qualifying training, employment), liable to be offered to immigrants wishing to improve their mastery of French.

In addition, the French authorities are currently finalising the design and development of an overall system for assessing and certifying language skills, adapted to all immigrants, from non-readers/non-writers up to readers/writers, and leading to national certification whose first stage would be level A1.1 oral required under the entry and integration contract. Finally, these initiatives are an occasion to consider the opportunity for raising the current standard required under the contract and tested by AMCL, in particular by introducing an objective of mastery of written skills, at least to A1.1 level. If this option were to be adopted, award of the AMCL would be replaced by that of a national elementary certificate in accordance with the common European Framework of reference for languages.

THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands has 16 million inhabitants, 10 % of whom are foreigners. The immigrant unemployment rate was around 10 % in 2002 (26 % in 1994). The country has seen important political changes in the last two years ; in particular, the Liberals and Christian Democrats have outlined a new integration policy, thereby redefining the former system created in 1997. On this basis, the **Integration of Newcomers Act** should be adopted in the months to come, with establishment of the system in 2006.

The new integration system (**New Entry Programme**) is directed at foreigners lawfully settling long-term in the Netherlands, and to asylum-seekers, i.e., approximately **17 000 persons per year**. Foreigners in the country for a long time (around 460 000 people) may also benefit from it, but without obligation. The **Justice Ministry** is responsible for the establishment and coordination of the entry policy. The new policy is based on the following major principles :

- the individual responsibility of the immigrant, involving a **financial contribution** to the tuition followed (local authorities may assist those unable to bear the cost) ;
- opening up the language tuition market : competition among organisations (previously only regional training centres had authority) ;
- assessment of language skills in the **country of origin**: to be allowed to enter the Netherlands, immigrants seeking a residency permit under family consolidation must have a test in their country of origin, proving a language level at least equivalent to oral A1 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. This test must be taken in the country of origin embassy ; as there is no written test, there is a certain amount of fraud in this system ;
- the integration programme lasts a maximum of **3 years** ; it includes tuition in civics and language. It is assessed via an **obligatory test**. The immigrant must achieve language skills equivalent to A2 ;
- testing is necessary for the system to work effectively : in the event of success, the State partially refunds (up to 50 %) the expenses incurred by the immigrant for his tuition ; access to permanent resident status. Linked to certain welfare benefits.

A commission determines the level of tests and chooses the subjects ; it is composed of representatives of the authorities, minorities, and the world of work. The Netherlands wishes to establish a centralised test extending beyond merely linguistic skills : *what use is language put to in everyday life ?* The test will have 2 parts : a general part identical throughout the country (theoretical part) and a section focused on more practical skills, decentralised in the various language schools, in the form of continuous assessment throughout language tuition. Failure in one of the two parts entails failure in the test. However, given the varied origins of those entering the Netherlands, the test must allow the different profiles of the target groups to be taken into account.

In addition, the State has signed agreements with vocational training bodies ("reintegration institutes") to enable unemployed newcomers to use acquired language skills in a professional context. The entry and integration policy will be linked to employment policies.

Entry and integration measures for immigrants via language have not hitherto been the subject of real, concerted and coordinated national policy. However, realisation of the importance of language tuition is beginning to see the light of day in Great Britain. In particular, the **Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002** provides for entry centres for newly-arrived asylum-seekers, relocation of these people in Britain, and optional language courses.

The Act also provides for a test to qualify for naturalisation, based on different skills, including mastery of English. The Home Secretary, David BLUNKETT, appointed Sir Bernard CRICK, Home Office adviser, to coordinate a 'think tank' to make proposals for drawing up and implementing this **naturalisation test** on "*Living in the United Kingdom*" (**Crick Report**, September 2003). No government steps have to date been taken on the basis of these proposals (final decision planned for summer 2004), but the principles of the programme are as follows :

- necessity for language tuition to advance economically ;
- importance of integrating people into society (social, cultural, relational aspects) ;
- respect for multiculturalism.

Consideration of an integration policy at the moment in Great Britain seems to be directed more towards citizenship entry (approximately 120 000 applicants for naturalisation/year) than on entry into the country. The Crick report established a programme of language skills to attain, **integrated** with themes such as education, health, rights and duties, multiculturalism, etc. The desired objective would be individual advancement of skills rather than acquisition of a standardised level, but the final objective of the authorities is **access to employment**. Tuition would be **free** for immigrants ; the cost of tuition is estimated at £3 700/person. Tuition would be assessed by a test, success in which would give access to British citizenship. The certificate awarded would certify mastery of English, but also knowledge of common British values. British citizenship acquired in this way would involve an official **ceremony**.

The major part of British immigration concerns **applications for asylum**. Great Britain has 4.7 millions foreigners, one million of whom have language needs. All those concerned may theoretically have **free** language tuition. However, supply outstrips demand. Tuition may be provided by various bodies : national associations ; national refugee agencies ; the voluntary sector ; further education institutes (Further Education Colleges, Adult Education Providers). There are several organisations specialising in identifying language needs and the orientation of populations towards training, in particular JobcentrePlus (equivalent of the French ANPE). Employers are gradually becoming more aware of their responsibilities for **employee** language tuition. It is also possible to take a qualifying vocational course incorporating language instruction. Finally, certain initiatives leading to qualifications may be remunerated.

Language tuition is financed by the **Home Office** through a programme for asylum-seekers (National Asylum Seekers Skills - NASS), run by **JobcentrePlus**, and **regional development agencies**.

Great Britain has created a **reference system** for language learning on 3 levels (oral + written), used throughout the country (National Curriculum for English Language). Currently, 6 000 teachers have been trained in the use of this reference system. A highly

dynamic teacher training policy has been implemented to **professionalise** the sector. The Government also finances an official body of **inspectors** (Adult Learning Inspectorate⁴) which strictly supervises language tuition organisations (once every 3 years on average). The results of inspections are published on the Internet.

⁴ www.ali.gov.uk

Policies for integration via language of adult migrants in Europe

	Total population (% foreigners/ total population)	Language provision on entry and integration of new immigrants	Responsible body Cost	Eligible population	Free tuition for immigrants	System duration Tuition duration	Language attainment target Test	Effect on other provisions	Language / naturalisation link
FRANCE	59.9 m (5.6 %)	Entry and integration contract (CAI) not (currently) obligatory: language tuition + civics tuition (1 day)	Ministry for employment, labour and social cohesion. Operators : OMI + FASILD	Migrants entering for lawful long-term stay in France (family consol., spouses of French persons, permanent workers, refugees and their family): 100 to 110 000 pers./year.	Yes + remuneration in certain cases.	CAI : 1 yr renewable once. Language courses: maximum 500 hours	Level A1.1 oral. Currently, final assessment and issue of certificate (AMCL). Planned: test and issue of certificate.	Linked to permanent resident status.	Yes (level A1.1 oral).
SPAIN	40.7 m (2.3 %)	No. Free language courses. No concerted policy.	Interior and Education ministries, through autonomous regional government.	All sectors.	Yes.	Unlimited duration.	None.	None.	Conditions required: good conduct + adequate integration.
DENMARK	5.4 m (5.0 %)	Obligatory entry programme and signature of an individual contract: language tuition + other training.	Integration and Immigration Ministry. Operators: local authorities. Cost : 120 M€ -	Immigrants entering the country under family consol., refugees, asylum-seekers.	Yes.	Programme: 3 years. language tuition: 30 hrs/week for 6 mnths max.	Target not yet fixed. Test.	. welfare benefits . permanent resident status	Yes (level B1/B2 oral and B1 written).
GREAT BRITAIN	59.3 m (4.1 %)	No. Planned system for acquiring British nationality (Crick Report).	Home Office. Cost : £3,700 /person.	Naturalisation applicants (120 000 / year).	Yes.	Undefined.	Advancement, based on initial level of pupil. Test. Official ceremony.	Access to British citizenship.	Yes.

GERMANY	82.5 m (8.9 %)	Obligatory integration programme: language course + instruction in civics and society (30 hours).	Interior ministry. Planned creation of national agency to operate. Role of regional offices for refugees and immigrants. Cost : 230 M€	Immigrants settling long-term in the country: permanent workers, refugees, family regrouping, <i>Aussiedler</i> , Russian Jews. Foreigners already settled: according to available places (not obligatory)	No: immigrants contribute up to €1 /hour maximum	2 years maximum language courses: maximum 630 hours	Level B1 oral + written. Test.	. welfare benefits . permanent resident status . may apply for naturalisation after 7 years instead of 8.	Yes.
NETHERLANDS	16.2 m (4.2 %)	NEW Entry Programme (not yet implemented): language course + civics course. Obligatory integration test.	Justice ministry.	Foreigners settling lawfully and long-term + asylum-seekers: 17,000 pers./year.	No. The State may refund up to 50 % of the cost if successful. Possible support from local authorities.	Programme : 3 years maximum.	Level A2. Final test.	. partial refund by State of cost of language course . permanent resident status . linked to welfare benefits	?
AUSTRIA	8.2 m (9.4 %)	Integration contract: language course + civilisation / culture course.	Interior Ministry. Cost : €350 /pers. for language course.	Nationals of other countries entering Austria lawfully after 01/01/2003 for long-term residence.	No. Contribution of migrant between 80 and €100 .	Contract: 1 year; language course: 75 hrs (100 units of 45 mins).	Level A1. No final test (continuous assessment during tuition). Issue of diploma.	. interruption of unemployment benefit . residency permit . refund of course cost by State . financial penalty . deportation from country	Yes. Level required depends on socio-cultural level.