



GENDER & MIGRATION in FRANCE: "a brief overview"



This document has been elaborated under the European funded project GEMMA (www.gemmaproject.eu) which aims to improve the flow of communication between researchers, policy-makers and civil society organisations in the field of Gender and Migration research.

(GEMMA is a project funded by the European Commission, Directorate General Research - Unit L Science, Economy and Society - Contract Number 217194)

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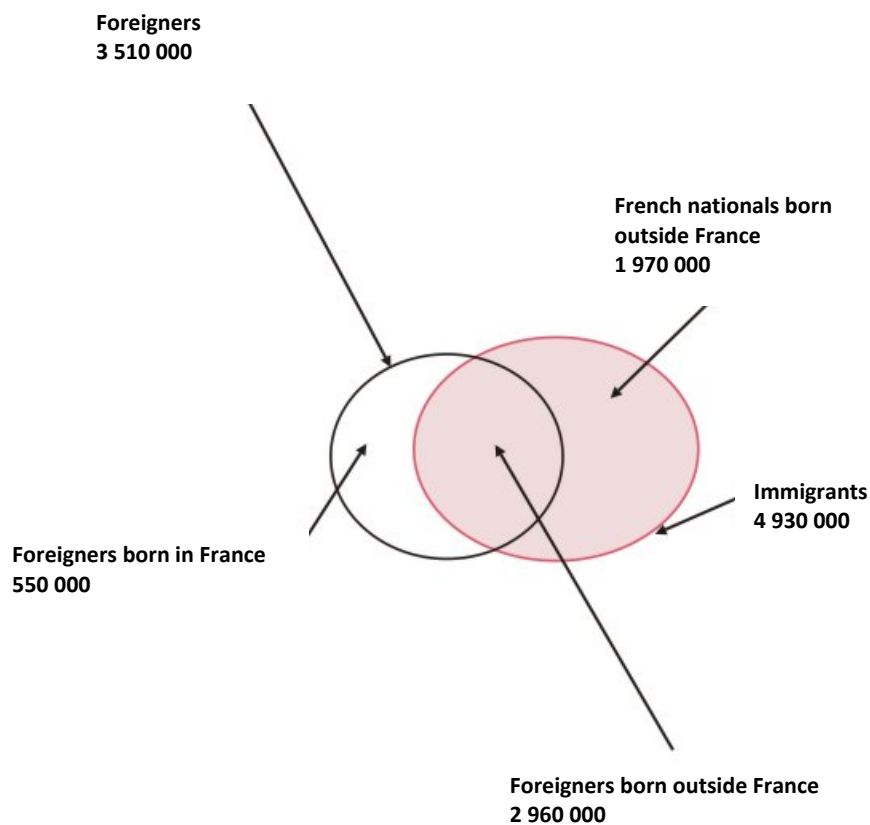
1. Introduction

In line with the French official definition, in this document all persons who have been born outside France and are now living in France are considered as “immigrants”, regardless of whether they have obtained French nationality or not. In contrast, the notion of « foreigner » refers to the nationality: every person who does not possess the French nationality is considered as a “foreigner” (“étranger”).

France has a long history of immigration. In contrast to its European neighbours France experienced a demographic deficit during the late nineteenth century and was from very early on obliged to rely on foreign labour. The proportion of immigrants in the population was 7% in 1931 (8.2% of men and 5.1% of women), subsequently decreased and, in 1968, increased again; in 1974 the government decided to limit the recruitment of immigrants focusing on asylum and family reunion only.

In mid-2004 there were 4.9 million immigrants registered as living in France (8.1% of the population) and 3.5 foreignersⁱ.

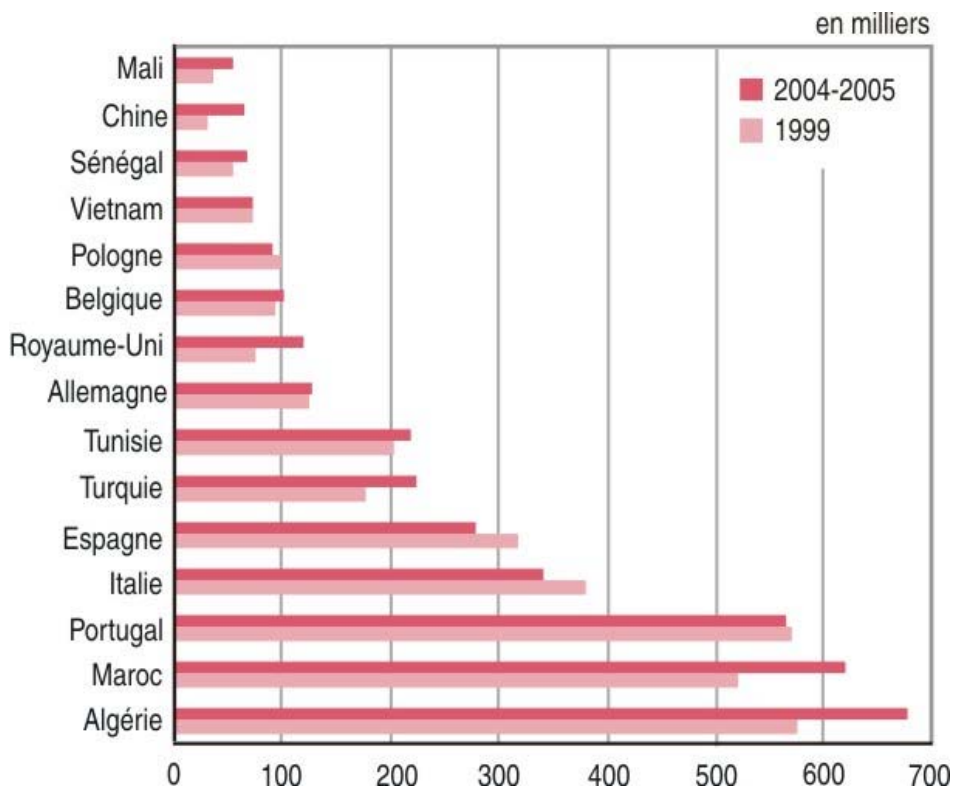
Graph 1: Foreigners and immigrants in 2004



Source : Insee, enquêtes annuelles de recensement de 2004 et 2005.

Algerian, Moroccan and Portuguese are amongst the main nationalities of immigrants in France.

Graph 2: Immigrants according to their countries of birth 1999 and 2004-2005

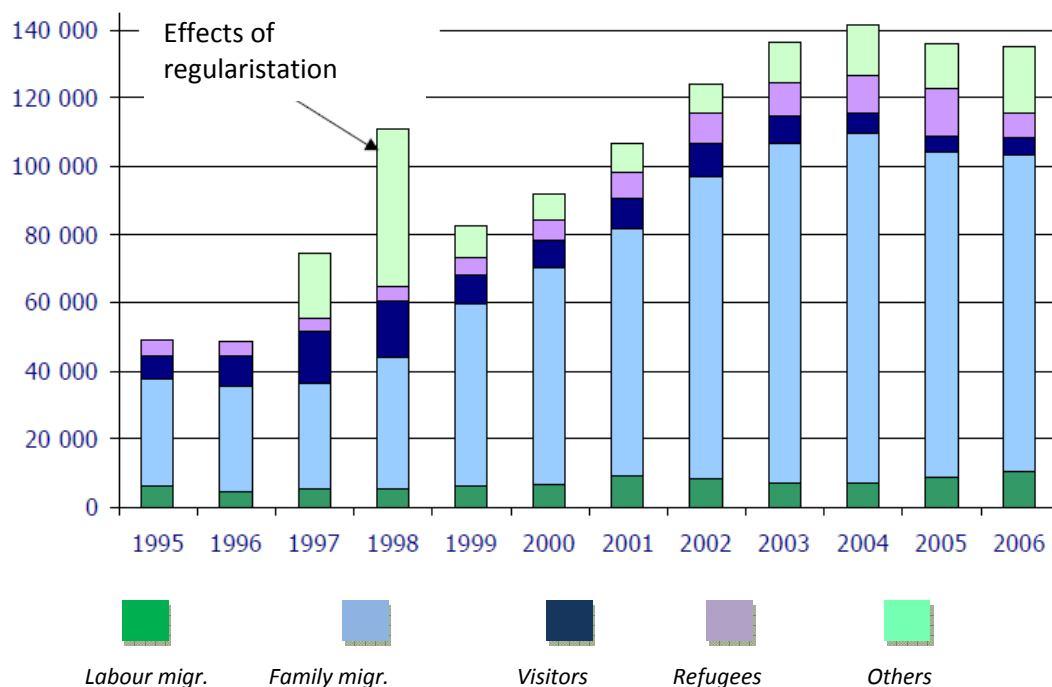


Source : Insee, enquêtes annuelles de recensement de 2004 et 2005.

Data emanating from the “Annual governmental report on immigration and foreign presence in France in 2005”ⁱⁱ shows that there has been a slight decrease in migration flows, or, more precisely in the numbers of immigrants given residence permits. Indeed this number went down from 141,561 in 2004 to 135,890 in 2005.ⁱⁱⁱ So has the number of foreigners having obtained French nationality, even if it is still comparatively high. In 2004, nearly 169,000 persons obtained the French nationality and in 2005 155,000^{iv}.

Graph 3: Permanent immigration 1995-2005 (preliminary data for 2006)

Number of
persons

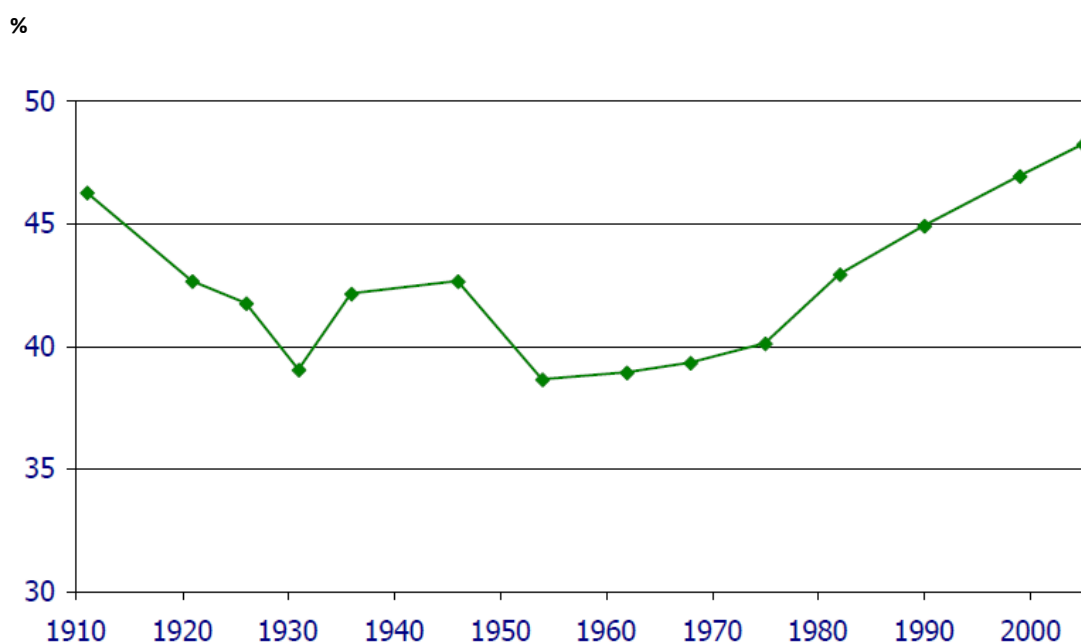


Source: Immigration et présence étrangère en France en 2006, Corinne Régnard - DPM Colloque bilatéral France-Autriche, Octobre 2007 - Diapo n°7

The percentage of female immigrants in France has always been important (see graph 2 below). Moreover, since the 1960s, the average proportion of women amongst migrants has constantly grown - also, but not only - caused by the government's new focus on family reunion.

Under the various categories of family migrations under private and family life permits (one year), there were 36,194 women out of 69,258 in 2005 (figure includes children). Foreigners with valid residence permit were 1,486,001 women out of 3,283,602 in 2005.

Graph 4: Proportion of women in the foreign population since 1910



Source: Immigration et présence étrangère en France en 2006, Corinne Régner - DPM Colloque bilatéral France-Autriche, Octobre 2007 - Diapo n°7

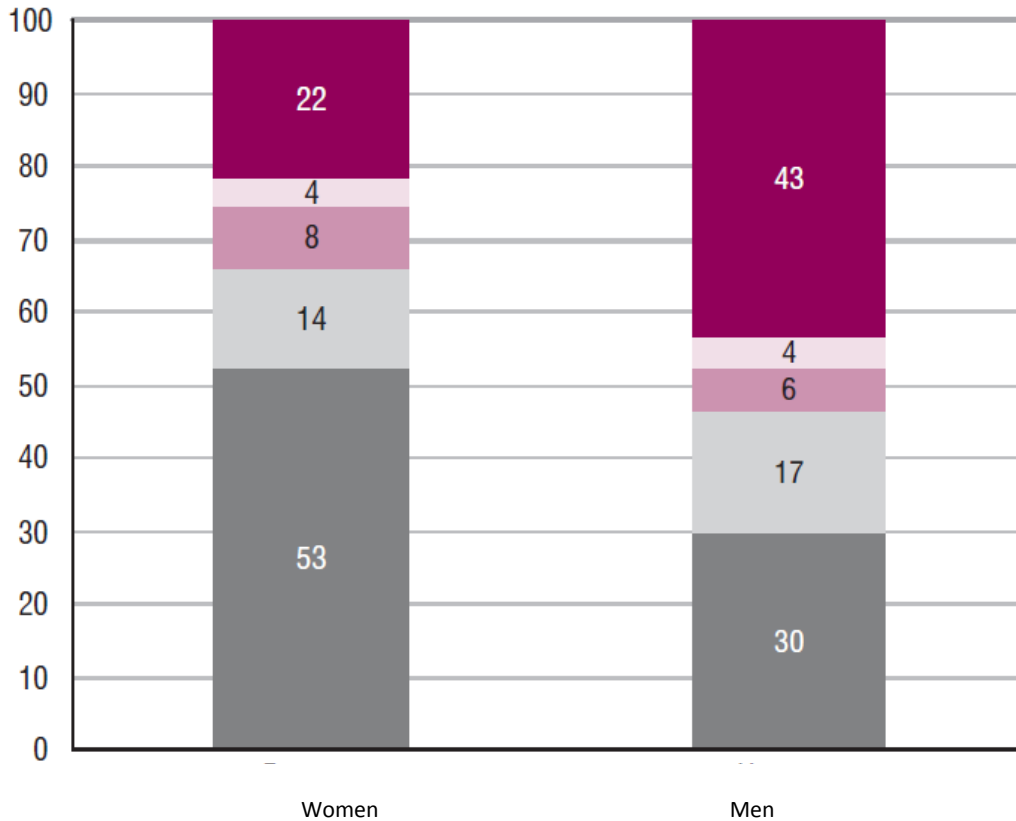
In recent years the visibility of female immigrants has increased; nevertheless, in some cases, gender disaggregated statistical data on migration has been established only recently. In other cases, the fact that an important part of immigrants has been female has been ignored. Finally, women who entered with a family unification visa are still only perceived as spouses although an important percentage of them work. In 2005 temporary work permits were granted to 3,866 women out of 10,405; long term work permits were delivered to 2,620 women out of 8,556.

Despite this fact, national priorities tend to consider implicitly or explicitly women as dependent from their family or as a disadvantaged part of the population that needs specific measures (education, information about domestic violence, spare time occupations etc.), without considering the diversity of immigrant women in terms of education level, activity rate and type of professional occupation, origin, financial resources or type of family unit (a growing number of women is in fact independent and women from certain countries have come alone as working immigrants already in the 1960s).

An INSEE survey shows that in 2006, 54% of new holders of a residence permit in France were women^v. According to this study, 78% of these had arrived for or with their husband or other family members and 22% had arrived alone or with friends. Regarding male migrants, twice as much (43%) had arrived alone or with friends.

Graph 5: Conditions of arrival in France according to sex

In %



- Alone or with friends
- With the family
- With husband
- To join the family
- To join a husband

Source : Algava/Bèque, « Nouveaux détenteurs et détentrices d’un titre de séjour : des trajectoires familiales et professionnelles contrastées »

Recent migration to France is more feminised than migration from the countries of emigration that belong to the former colonies (North-/West-Africa). Amongst migrants from South-East Asia and from Eastern Europe and CIS states women are particularly numerous (75% and 68% respectively); in the last group 24% are refugees. 60% of migrants from Central Africa and the Guinea coast are women. Amongst the early immigrant groups from European countries such as Italy, Spain and Poland, women also prevail due to ageing and men’s higher mortality rates.

Between 1995 and 2005, less than 28% of permanent workers who obtained a resident permit were women. This situation might slightly change with the new policy of “chosen immigration” implemented since 2007. Women represented about half of the persons without a residence permit and who have been regularised on a case-by-case basis between 1998 and 2006. The proportion of women amongst the persons placed in retention camps has grown from 5.8% in 2002 to 10.6% in 2005 (3236 women)^{vi}.

2. Current government priorities regarding gender and migration (2003-2008)

End of December 2007 six government agencies in the field of migration, gender equality, professional education and urbanism signed a framework agreement regarding immigrant women and women with an immigrant background^{vii}. It is the follow-up of a previous convention signed between three organisms in 2003 and of the findings of a working group set up by the former Ministry of Parity^{viii} in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice in March 2005. The agreement aims at promoting equality, fighting double discrimination and fostering integration^{ix} of immigrant women based on sex and origin. The agreement has the objective to strengthen cooperation between the partners and is intended to serve as a basis for an annual action plan to be implemented at the regional level, evaluated by a monitoring committee on an annual basis and accompanied by a steering committee that should meet twice a year. The evaluation should serve to feed a database on the subject.

Six fields of action are highlighted. Some measures specifically target recently arrived immigrant women (“primo-arrivantes”) or immigrant women in a precarious situation (divorced, old age or victims of trafficking). The stakeholders engage themselves to take action in the following areas:

- 1) Improving knowledge about the situation of immigrant women and women with immigrant background and sensitising the different associations and institutions through studies, trainings, awareness campaigns and stronger networking between stakeholders;
- 2) Promoting a positive image of immigrant women through better knowledge about initiatives by of immigrant women, their contribution to French history and immigrant women in positions of decision-making; dissemination of these through associations and the media;
- 3) Fostering integration of recently arrived women (“primo-arrivantes”) through stronger cooperation between the different stakeholders in the following fields: French language acquisition, access to culture, information about equality (targeting men and women), public services (especially health services) and rights (especially family law);
- 4) Implementing an active policy regarding access to rights in the public and private sphere, especially for women in precarious situations such as in case of divorce, old age and trafficking, with regard to access to housing and health services, and against violence (violence inside the couple, forced marriages, female genital mutilation, polygamy, prostitution, domestic slavery and sexist attitudes and behaviour);
- 5) Promoting success at school as well social and labour market inclusion through French language courses, support and orientation in school, further education and professional training and with regard to business start or take-over, especially in disadvantaged urban communities;
- 6) Strengthening participation in urban community life through measures strengthening mutual respect, equality, rights and obligations, active participation in the political and cultural field as well as sports;

3. Non-governmental organisations' priorities

Non-governmental organisations strongly focus on the problematic situation of different categories of women migrants such as victims of modern slavery, young adults without residence permit and others. As far as we know, there is no association that targets highly skilled women or female entrepreneurs etc. Amongst the best know and well-established associations working with (female) migrants are:

CIMADE: The organisation is aware of the necessity to integrate a gender perspective in its activities. It highlights the fact that female migration is traditionally perceived exclusively as family type migration. This is contrasted by the fact that many women leave their country due to personal reasons (work, access to fundamental rights etc.) or in order to escape from situations of violence. It highlights the need for a stronger awareness for the situation and specific problems foreign women may face. It stresses the particular vulnerability of women migrants, differences in the emigration processes (reasons, routes, periods etc.) and the threat of facing double discrimination in France or Europe and obstacles to effectively access their fundamental rights. The association offers a personal advice service for women migrants.

www.cimade.org

RAJFIRE (Réseau pour l'autonomie des femmes immigrées et réfugiées) struggles for the rights of immigrant women, against violence and for the right to asylum. It stresses the high level of dependence many immigrant women face with regard to their spouse. In addition, a special working group is dedicated to labour and immigrant women. The association offers a personal advice service for women migrants.

<http://rajfire.free.fr/>

ANAFE (Association nationale d'assistance aux frontières pour les étrangers) focuses on defending the rights of those migrants (men and women) who are not admitted or returned to the frontier.

www.anafe.org

4. List of Governmental Institutions and Non-governmental Organisations

4.1 GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS

The main Government Departments dealing with immigration issues and with whom the GEMMA project will seek collaboration for the **Policy dialogue and networking workshops (PDNWs)** are: the Ministry of Labour; the Ministry of the Interior; the Ministry of Justice.

- **Ministry of Labour, Social Relations, Family and Urban Solidarity - Ministère du Travail, des Relations Sociales, de la Famille, de la Solidarité et de la Ville**

<http://www.travail-solidarite.gouv.fr/espaces/femmes-egalite/navigation-bloc-1/dispositif-action/service-droits-femmes-egalite.html>

- ➔ **Service of Women's Rights - Service des droits des femmes et de l'égalité – SDFE**

<http://www.travail-solidarite.gouv.fr/espaces/femmes-egalite/>

- **Ministry of the Interior - Ministère de l'Intérieur**

<http://www.interieur.gouv.fr/>

- **Ministry of Justice - Ministère de la Justice**

<http://www.justice.gouv.fr/>

Other government departments :

- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (Service des étrangers en France)**

<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/>

- **Ministry of Integration and National Identity - Ministère de l'Immigration, de l'Intégration, de l'Identité Nationale et du développement solidaire**

<http://www.immigration.gouv.fr/>

- ➔ **Service « Etudes et Recherches statistiques » (Department of Studies and Statistic Research)**

Other institutions :

- **La HALDE (Haute Autorité de Lutte contre les Discriminations et pour l'Égalité) – High Authority for the Fight against Discrimination and for Equality**

www.halde.fr

This independent administrative authority created by the December 30, 2004 Law supports every person in identifying discriminatory practices and combating them. It provides advice in legal matters and contributes to providing proof of discrimination. It can take action itself as soon as it gets to know about any kind of discriminatory practice.

- **L'acsé (Agence nationale pour la cohésion sociale et l'égalité des chances) – National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Chances**

www.lacse.fr

Created in 2006 Acsé contributes to actions in favour of persons with difficulties regarding their social or professional integration. It intervenes principally in the fields of integration, the fight against discrimination and urban politics. The question of female immigrants and their daughters, regarding knowledge and research, access to rights, individual, social, professional and economic promotion and the fight against racial and sexist discrimination is one of the agency's central fields of intervention.

4.2 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

French Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working in the field of immigration and integration have existed for many years and are increasingly experienced. Some of the major CSOs dealing with Gender and Migration issues and with whom GEMMA will seek collaboration for the workshops are:

1) [NGOs with support programs for female migrants](#)

A) [On the national level](#)

- **Association nationale d'assistance aux frontières pour les étrangers (ANAFE) – National Association for the assistance to strangers at the frontiers**

www.anafe.org

ANAFE was created in 1989. It acts in the interest of foreign nationals who arrive in France and who are detained in the so-called “zones d'attente” or “waiting zones”. ANAFE carries out advocacy and lobbying work to defend the rights of immigrants in France. It watches over the respect of the rights of foreigners who arrive at the frontiers and who are detained in “waiting zones”; moreover it provides legal and humanitarian help.

- **Service œcuménique d'entraide (CIMADE) - Oecomenical mutual help service**

www.cimade.org

CIMADE was founded in 1939 to assist displaced persons living in camps in the south of France. CIMADE was active in the resistance during the Second World War and contributed a lot to the subsequent reconciliation process between France and Germany. Today CIMADE works in twelve different French regions assisting immigrants and their families to have legal, economic and social advice and support. The association has become aware of the necessity to integrate the gender dimension and the protection of the fundamental rights of women in its activities and actions and created an action pole on “foreign women”.

- **Groupe d'information et de soutien des immigrés (GISTI) – Group for information and support of immigrants**

www.gisti.org

This association is specialised in the rights of foreigners in France. Legal advisory centres provide free advice and support for migrants country-wide. The organisation also edits publications and texts about immigration and the freedom of circulation.

- **Le Comede (Comité Médical pour les Exilés – Medical Committee for Exiled Persons)**

<http://www.comede.org/>

Comede was created in 1979 by CIMADE, Amnesty International and the Group “Welcome and Solidarity” (Groupe accueil solidarité) to improve the health of exiled persons in France. The activities of Comede's health centre, the health and rights centre and the resource centre are closely linked to the association's objectives. Comede welcomes 90,000 refugees, asylum seekers,

isolated foreign minors and other migrants/foreigners in a precarious residential situation and provides specialized services in the field of prevention and care, health, access to care, medical-legal expertise and vocational training.

B) On the local level

- **Femmes de la Terre**

fdlt92.club.fr/index.html

This association created in 1992 offers support to migrant women and youth facing administrative and social difficulties in the Ile-de-France region. The organisation has a permanent legal service targeting women and their families. It intervenes in schools to inform youngsters about citizenship, nationality and residence and has a permanent service that provides assistance in editing of administrative documents.

- **Migrations et cultures de Turquie (ELELE)**

<http://www.elele.info/>

ELELE is an association that is present at regional level all over France to promote knowledge on the history of Turkish immigration and to assist the integration of Turkish migrants into French society. The ELELE legal advice centres offer information and advice on citizenship issues, rights and responsibilities, family reunification and work permits.

2) Lobbying Networks

- **Ligue des Droits de l'Homme - Human's Rights League**

<http://www.ldh-france.org/>

- **Amnesty International – France**

web.amnesty.org/actforwomen/index-fra

Communication campaigns about violence against women and for defending the rights of refugees and migrants

- **Réseau pour l'autonomie des femmes immigrées et réfugiées (RAJFIRE) – Network for the autonomy of female migrants and refugees**

<http://rajfire.free.fr/>

Created in 1998, this network struggles for the autonomy of women immigrants and refugees. RAJFIRE offers information and support to female migrants. It defends the right to asylum of persecuted women, the right to residence, the regularisation of female migrants without residence permit and fights against violence against women, injustice and inequalities women face. It also carries out social support activities and organises networking events for female migrants.

- **Atelier méditerranéen d'études sur le genre (AFMEG) – Mediterranean study working group about gender**

www.afmeg.info/

This anti-sexist association provides free online texts and publications that make reference to gender in the social relations and concern recent issue. AFMEG wants to disseminate research results in the human sciences.

- **Forum des Organisations de Solidarité Internationale issues des Migrations (FORIM) – Forum of International Solidarity Organisations regarding Migration**

www.forim.net/

Created in March 2002 with the support of the French public authorities, this gathering of associations promotes the integration of groups with a background of international migration, reinforces exchange between France and the home countries and contributes to the development of their home regions.

- **Le Comité d'action interassociatif "Droits des femmes, droit au séjour - Contre la double violence" – Interassociative action committee « Women's rights, residence rights – against double violence »**

<http://doubleviolence.free.fr/spip/>

Founded in 2003 to gather numerous examples for situations of double violence (sexual and State violence) that female foreigners are experiencing who have the right to reside in France due to their marriage with a French national or due to family reunion. The Committee has also found numerous situations of female migrants in vulnerable positions or experiencing violence who do not have the courage to bring their complaint to court as well as female asylum seekers fleeing from violence in their country.

- **Le Groupe Asile Femmes (GRAF) – Group Asylum and Women**

The group was created in 2004 to promote the right to asylum for women who are persecuted due to being a woman. It asks for a status for persecuted women refugees and publishes analyses to underline this demand and to inform the associations that support female asylum seekers. It concerns women who flee from persecution such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation, honour crimes, violence from their husband and the family and discriminatory laws and practices. These are not women fleeing from "traditional" persecution" who are in the same situation as men regarding the acknowledgement of the right to asylum.

- **Forum femmes Méditerranée _ Marseille – Forum of Mediterranean women**

www.femmes-med.org/

Founded in June 1993 in Marseille, it brings together female migrant associations in order to act against sexist discrimination and violence against women, to promote legal equality and equal chances and to reinforce the acknowledgement of women's capacities. It also aims at implementing co-development projects in the field of self-employed activities and responsible tourism.

- **Genre et Cultures**

<http://monsite.wanadoo.fr/genreetcultures/>

This organisation aims at preventing all forms of harmful traditional practices (such as female genital mutilation, forced marriage etc.) and its modern forms (forced sterilization, domestic slavery, sex tourism etc.). Its activities also consist of:

- Creating connections and exchange of good practices between NGOs and individuals, between local, national, regional and international networks;
- Providing information, advice and training to professionals concerned by violence against women;
- Running campaigns for the right to political asylum for persons suffering from violence and discrimination and persecution due to their sex or sexual orientation.
- **ASFAD (Association de Solidarité avec les Femmes Algériennes Démocrates – Association for Solidarity with the Democratic Algerian Women)**

<http://asfadinfo.free.fr/>

This association was set up in 1995 by French women, Algerian women fleeing from the war and Franco-Algerian women with an immigrant background who gathered to help Algerian women who came to find refuge in France in administrative issues, provide temporary shelter and a small financial support thanks to the donations received at this point in time. It has become a space for shelter, orientation and support for women in administrative and legal issues who often are facing problems such as violence, divorce, forced marriage etc.

- Oxfam France – Réseau Agir ici (Network Act here)

http://www.oxfamfrance.org/php/actions_camp_voir.php?IdCampagne=74

Campaign « Immigration. Who choses ? » (« Immigration. Qui choisit? »)

- Fédération IFAFE (Initiatives des Femmes Africaines de France et d'Europe – Initiative of French and European African Women)

http://www.forim.net/forim/membres/inter_pays/federation_des_initiatives_des_femmes_africaines_de_france_et_d_europe_federation_ifafe

This Platform of 23 associations founded in 1996 in Paris aims at helping foreigners and their families to integrate in France and Europe and to fight against all forms of discrimination, and above all against the negative image of African populations in general and women in particular.

5. National Research project on Gender and Migration

The national research project selected is conducted by Catherine Delcroix, Professor of Sociology at Marc Bloch University Strasbourg: “Les rôles et perspectives des femmes relais en France”.

The study focuses on the **role and activities of women working with migrants** in underprivileged areas in (mostly) French suburban cities and how they have come to mediate between migrants, but also underprivileged individuals in general and local authorities. The work of these ‘médiatrices interculturelles’ exemplifies in various ways the urban policy of French State whilst still maintaining the universalist profile that characterizes French interculturalism.

Website	www.gemmaproject.eu
Coordinator	Agency for the Promotion of European Research – APRE (Italy) No profit research organisation: www.apre.it
Partners	Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales – EHESS (France) Graduate school for social sciences: www.ehess.fr
	Social Policy Research Centre, Middlesex University – SPRC (United Kingdom) University recognized Centre in the Institute for Social and Health Research (ISHR) http://www.mdx.ac.uk/schools/hssc/research/centres/sprc/index.asp
	The Hungarian Science and Technology Foundation – Tetalap (Hungary) No profit public foundation: www.tetalap.hu
	Center for Social Innovation – ZSI (Austria) Independent scientific institution - www.zsi.at

ⁱ according to INSEE (the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies)

ⁱⁱ *Rapport annuel de la direction de la population et des migrations sur l'immigration et la présence étrangère en France en 2005*

ⁱⁱⁱ idem

^{iv} Communiqué de presse: *Rapport annuel de la direction de la population et des migrations sur l'immigration et la présence étrangère en France en 2005* http://www.social.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/rapport_immigration_2005_comprese.pdf

^v Algava/Bèque, « Nouveaux détenteurs et détentrices d'un titre de séjour : des trajectoires familiales et professionnelles contrastées »

^{vi} Reference: Lesselier, C., « Politique d'Immigration en France: Appréhender la dimension de genre »; in: CEDREF, Femmes, Genre, Migrations et Mondialisation, 2008.

^{vii} These are : the Department for population and migration (direction de la population et des migrations DPM), the Service for women's rights and equality (service des droits des femmes et de l'égalité SDFE), the general delegation for employment and professional training (délégation générale à l'emploi et à la formation professionnelle DGEFP), the inter-ministerial delegation for the city (délégation interministérielle à la ville DIV), the national agency for social cohesion and equal rights (agence nationale pour la cohésion sociale et l'égalité des chances ACSE) and the national agency for the reception of strangers and migration (agence nationale de l'accueil des étrangers et des migrations ANAEM).

^{viii} In the course of the restructuring of the French institutional landscape after the 2007 elections, the former Ministry of Parity was integrated into the new Ministry of Work, Social Relations and Solidarity.

^{ix} Definitions in the 2007 Framework Agreement: "Integration is perceived as a process beginning with the reception in France and leading to naturalisation. It is seen as a process through which one or several individuals from another society progressively take part in the establishment of the national identity of the society they joined voluntarily because this society pleases them. Integration is based on the implication of two partners: the immigrants who have to take a necessary effort of adapting in order to realise this ambition and the receiving country which has to help them." According to the French labour code, "discrimination takes place when a person is treated in a different way due to his/her origin, sex, habits, sexual orientation, age, family situation, genetic characteristics, belonging or non-belonging, real or supposed, to an ethnic group, a nation or a race, political opinions, trade union activism, religious convictions, physical appearance, a name, state of health or handicap." Following definition by the European Union, discrimination is differentiated into direct or indirect discrimination or resulting from the system. Labour market equality between men and women concerns employment, education, career, remuneration and working conditions. Gender mainstreaming is defined in line with the definition adopted by the Council of Europe. Equal chances refer to real equality through the implementation of temporary measures in favour of a disadvantaged group of persons due to their belonging to this group (positive action).