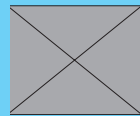


2018-01

# FRANCE'S ROLE IN DYNAMISING FRANCOPHONY



There are currently some 274 million French-speakers in the world, and the number could rise to 750 million by 2050 if enough effort is made to improve education in French-speaking countries. This will require full awareness of what resources need implementing in order to meet the major educational needs identified in French-speaking countries, especially in countries with extremely limited budgets in this field.

Globalisation has created more opportunities for individuals speaking several languages to exchange, travel and work in many different countries. French is one of the world's top-ranking vehicular languages. It is therefore an asset for citizens of French-speaking countries, as well as for anybody who wishes to speak it, whether as mother tongue, so-called "second" language in many African countries, or as a foreign language learned for cultural and professional interests. This is why the French language, far from lacking in attractiveness, remains so dynamic, even though there is no guarantee of seeing any increase in its teaching.

An educational and cultural issue, francophony must also meet major political and economic challenges. Francophony is a source of influence among peoples in a world that has become multipolar and where the traditional hierarchy of international powers is meeting fresh competition. La Francophonie's institutional

forum provides an opportunity for multilateral exchanges in which a specific vision of globalisation can be shared.

The francophone policy implemented by France, whose diplomacy these days is resolutely focused on the European Union (EU), cannot disregard this state of affairs or downplay a message that reconciles the values of universalism, international solidarity and cultural diversity and which resonates in our society, where there is a pressing need for social cohesion. For French-speaking States and civil societies, attachment to such values must not fall by the wayside if we wish to maintain interest in francophony in France itself and across the world. In this spirit, our Assembly presents 16 recommendations for a Francophone policy roadmap.



**Marie-Béatrice Levaux**

She is President of the Fédération des particuliers Employeurs de France (FEPEM – French Federation of Household Employers) and of the Fédération Européenne des Emplois de Famille (EFFE – European Federation for Family Employment). At the ESEC, she is a member of the Section for European and International Affairs and the Section for Labour and Employment, where she represents the group of qualified individuals.

## Contact:

marie-beatrice.levaux@lecese.fr  
+33 (0)1-44-43-62-32

Firstly, the ESEC recommends **increasing La Francophonie's political backing.**

- It asks the Francophonie Summit to provide the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) with a policy roadmap that takes account of the agenda set for major upcoming international negotiations, in order to carry more weight in future global negotiations;
- It asks France to provide La Francophonie with greater political backing at governmental level, justifying creation of a fully-fledged ministry and its representation at the OIF;
- It recommends clarification of La Francophonie's multilateral mission of advocacy and mobilisation by recentring it on SDG 4 relating to access to quality education for all, as the mission in question focuses on La Francophonie member States as it does on Public Development Aid;

- It would like to see the European Francophony project better defined by associating the EU's French-speaking countries more closely with European policy on public development aid, relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, and the EU's partnership with Africa; it recommends that special attention be paid to ensuring that the rule making French a working language in European institutions is implemented;

Secondly, **the ESEC would like to see transnational French-speaking civil society associated with governance of La Francophonie**. To this end, a series of events should be organised upstream of the NGO forum held every other year, on the eve of summits attended by Heads of State of French-speaking countries.

- The ESEC requests that, on such occasions, the ties between French-speaking civil societies be acknowledged and institutionalised, via the Union des conseils économiques et sociaux et institutions similaires francophones (UCESISF – Union of Economic Councils and Similar Francophone Institutions) and by creation of the honorary title of “Conseiller Civile de la Francophonie” (Civil Advisor on Francophony), to be awarded to members of civil society committed to the Francophone movement;
- It encourages mobilisation of actors in French-speaking civil societies recognised for their commitment to vocational education and training;
- It would like to see sports federations playing a key part in the Francophone Games again;
- It recommends promotion of initiatives in favour of sustainable development in the French-speaking community's economic networks;
- It recommends that support be provided to French-speaking professional and scientific networks through assessment of their needs and identification of resources they require;
- It would like to see services provided by French-speaking channels and France's external audiovisual networks become more prominent in the global media landscape, by ensuring editorial independence in creation of content and supporting promotion of subtitling and multilingualism;
- It would like to step up action underway in favour of French-language digital technology, underlining the need to provide French-speaking educational bodies and universities with the infrastructures required for networking, sharing of knowledge and distance learning;
- It recommends that national and decentralised public officials keep up with their funding of francophone creation;

Thirdly, **the ESEC would like to see actors in decentralised francophone cooperation more closely associated with La Francophonie's governance bodies**, in particular by recognising the International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF) and the International Association of Francophone Regions (AIRF) as Heads of States' interlocutors during La Francophonie Summits.

Fourthly, **the ESEC intends to encourage Francophony in France, including in its Overseas Territories**. To this end, it recommends:

- Stepping up support for Overseas international representations, which act as bridgeheads for French and Francophone presence in regions far from Metropolitan France, and supporting provision of French language classes delivered in French, intended for students and professionals from countries neighbouring these territories;
- arousing interest in francophony in France through organisation of events during International Francophonie Day (20 March). The Palais d'Iéna could receive all public and community actors who work in the field to develop social cohesion, in particular with regard to spreading the teaching of the French language;
- ensuring consistency between the visa policy and the policy encouraging mobility within the international French-speaking community, through enactment of a circular addressed to consular services and specifying methods to be used to examine visa requests, in particular with regard to mobility projects relating to cultural, sporting and economic events and francophone university colloquia.