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# Giving a Voice

Report on the Language Support for Non-French Speaking Migrants in Geneva



Study by  
ICVolunteers

With the support of:







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## ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study is to sketch a portrait of the **language services** available to non-French speaking people in Geneva. As part of this objective, ICVolunteers: 1) has carried out approximately forty **interviews**, 2) has proceeded with carrying out a survey with the help of questionnaires, 3) has carried out a large number of **readings** in order to place our study in a **methodological and theoretical framework**, 4) has organised two **round table discussions** for exchange and reflection, involving experts and people working in the field. We also propose some recommendations as a conclusion to our survey.

Why carry out this study? **38.3%**<sup>1</sup> of the population living in the canton of Geneva is **foreign**. Many non-French speaking people reside there. Geneva is also the most cosmopolitan canton of Switzerland, with **184 nationalities** represented.<sup>2</sup> Besides the "Geneva International" aspect, with its international civil servants, there is a whole population of migrants of diverse statuses who often find themselves in difficult and precarious situations. This varied migrant population also involves a multitude of organizations which attempt to respond to questions relative to the welcome of foreign populations. But to what extent do the services proposed respond to the needs of migrants? What are the areas which are not or only partially covered? Who can call upon community interpreters and under what conditions?

We have sorted the information according to their source (migrants, community association representatives, institutional contact people, etc.), in the same way as we concentrated on three areas considered as priority: **healthcare, education and administration**. By way of conclusion, we have outlined a certain number of **findings** and **recommendations**.

The populations which are particularly in need in linguistic terms are the non-French speaking **African** populations, but also **Latin** Americans, who are considerable in number in Geneva, as well as some **Asian** communities, which are harder to access, but which are nonetheless concerned. Added to the linguistic difficulties per se are difficulties in understanding a system which is often very different to that of the society of origin.

Overall, it is noted that a certain number of efforts are made by officials to facilitate the welcome and integration of foreigners in Geneva. Interpreting services exist notably in the field of healthcare and education. Nevertheless, we observe that the services often cover the needs of the authorities better than those of the non-French speaking beneficiaries. There is typically an asymmetry in the interpreter-migrant-official authority trio, insofar as the officials are in a strong position. With regard to the beneficiaries, effectively they do not always feel supported in case of necessity. In this way, a number of representatives of migrant associations assert that it would be **useful** to have a **complementary language service**. ICVolunteers proposes to base it on a model of intercultural dialogue, an approach which should be accessible to migrants before responding to the needs of the authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> Office Cantonal de la Statistique (OCSTAT), <http://www.geneve.ch/statistique/publications/pdf/2008/resultats/dg-rs-2008-05.pdf>. It is worth noting that this number does not include people without legal status.

<sup>2</sup> Idem: <http://www.geneve.ch/statistique/publications/pdf/2006/analyses/an-ed-2006-37.pdf>



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## PREAMBLE

Founded over ten years ago, ICVolunteers (ICV) works in the field of **communication** (languages, information and communication technologies and non-profit conferences). We work with a **network** of **professionals, volunteers** and **employment seekers**. On the one hand, we favour opportunities for personal development and involvement on a social and professional level and, on the other hand, we accompany **structures, institutions, associations, communities** and **companies** in the development of **social and educational programmes** for projects compatible with our vision and our ethics.

On an international level, the organization manages a network of unpaid volunteers, originating from **189 countries** and speaking **155 languages**. In Geneva, where its headquarters is located, the ICVolunteers network includes approximately **1,500 people**.

**Languages** and linguistic diversity, as well as **communication** and **interpreting**, have historically been a vocation for the organization. Translators and interpreters intervene in the context of Geneva International social and humanitarian conferences and are also active in the domain of the integration of non-French speaking migrants. Furthermore, ICVolunteers accommodates the secretariat of the World Network for Linguistic Diversity (Maaya).<sup>3</sup>

Immigration has become one of the main subjects of international politics over the past years. According to the latest figures of the United Nations, more than 109 million people worldwide have left their country with the aim of founding a new home and starting a new life. They do it for a whole series of reasons, including notably poverty, political persecution, environmental threats, wars and conflicts, family and community reunification or the search for a better life, dignity and freedom. Numerous countries are beginning to recognize that immigration is an inescapable phenomenon. Furthermore, it is increasingly perceived as a necessity in countries affected by ageing populations and by workforce shortages in some economic sectors. Often, the issue of immigration is debated essentially in terms of the protection of borders, the control of migratory flows, human trafficking, etc. Regularly, it brings about discussions on immigration, which are rarely objective but often influenced by heated public debates over identity and more generally, over the fear of an “invasion” of the country by foreigners.

For approximately twenty years, the public powers have been speaking about integration policy. However, this notion is permanently challenged. There is fierce debate between those who reckon that integration must focus on assimilation; those who favour multiculturalism and those who think that both of these concepts are obsolete. The common basic principles for integration into the European Union notably define integration as a “dynamic, long-term, two way process of mutual accommodation between all migrants and residents of the host society” (European Commission, 2005). This approach may constitute a step in the right direction for settling this debate. It highlights that integration is a mutual and collective process and it is not the sole responsibility of immigrants.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.maaya.org](http://www.maaya.org)



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Upon request of the City of Geneva, our study presents the linguistic situation of migrants living in Geneva. It is the result of a series of collaborations and exchanges which ICVolunteers was able to have, through its network but also thanks to the active participation of numerous associations, administrations and institutions who agreed to participate in one way or another in the interviews and in the survey.

We would like to express particular thanks to **Loterie Romande**, the **City of Geneva** and its **Department of Social Cohesion, Youth and Sports** for their financial support. A big thanks also goes to the **Bureau de l'Intégration des Etrangers (BIE)**, as well as to the volunteers and collaborators who have contributed to the development of the present report, notably Christine Clerc, Pauline Cout, Giuseppe Fonte, Thomas Gaudé, Kate O' Dwyer, Yoanna, Raccimolo, Ylana Sttret and Maria Vila.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'V. Krebs'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'V' being particularly large and prominent.

Viola Krebs  
Executive Director of ICVolunteers



## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BIE</b>	Bureau de l'Intégration des Etrangers
<b>CSM</b>	Centre Santé Migrants
<b>DI</b>	Département des Institutions
<b>DIP</b>	Département de l'Instruction Publique
<b>ECOSOC</b>	United Nations Economic and Social Council
<b>FSEA</b>	Fédération pour la Formation continue (Swiss Federation for Adult Learning)
<b>GAPP</b>	Groupement cantonal genevois des associations de parents d'élèves des écoles primaires et enfantines
<b>HETS</b>	Haute Ecole de Travail Social
<b>HUG</b>	Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève
<b>LEtr</b>	Law on Foreigners
<b>LSEE</b>	New Law on Foreigners' Stay and Settlement (in force since 1st January 2008)
<b>OCSTAT</b>	Office Cantonal de la Statistique
<b>FOM</b>	Federal Office for Migration
<b>SFSO</b>	Swiss Federal Statistical Office
<b>FOPH</b>	Federal Office of Public Health
<b>IOM</b>	International Organization for Migration
<b>REP</b>	Réseau d'Enseignement Prioritaire
<b>UOG</b>	Université Ouvrière de Genève





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## DEFINITIONS

### **Allophone**

An allophone is a speaker whose mother tongue is a language other than the official language(s) spoken in a given territory and who usually resides in this territory. For example, in French-speaking Switzerland, an allophone is a person whose mother tongue is a language other than French.

### **Literacy education**

The term encompasses actions, policies and programmes aimed at eradicating or, at least, reducing the scale of the phenomenon of illiteracy.

### **Assimilation**

(Cultural) assimilation is the process through which a foreign individual (or group) goes in order to become part of a new social group. It is generally accompanied by language assimilation.

### **Asymmetry**

In the interpreter-migrant-official authority relationship, there is typically an imbalance insofar as the officials have the upper hand and the migrant is in a situation he/she does not control. Therefore, one speaks of an asymmetrical relationship.

### **Functional illiteracy**

The state of an individual who, having learned to read and write, is unable to understand the meaning of a simple text.

### **Immigrant**

According to the definition adopted by the *Haut Conseil à l'Intégration*<sup>4</sup>, an immigrant is a person born as a foreigner abroad and living in a country other than his/ her country of origin. Persons who are born Swiss abroad and live in Switzerland are therefore not counted. Conversely, some immigrants may have become Swiss. The immigrant status is permanent: an individual continues to belong to the immigrant population even if he/she acquires Swiss nationality. It is the country of birth, and not the nationality at birth, which defines the geographical origin of an immigrant.

### **Integration**

The integration process takes in all aspects of life of a society and involves as much the migrant as the host society. Current migration phenomena expose host societies to increasingly varied cultural influences. These influences may be addressed in a constructive manner while maintaining coherence and social unity. Integration measures generally aim to maintain or restore the harmonious functioning of society and enable people who need support to eventually participate in the economic, social and cultural life of the country.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr)



### Community Interpreting

By this term, we understand “the oral transmission of expressions formulated in a language other than the language used in the environment while taking into consideration the socio-cultural background of the speakers<sup>5</sup>”. For many allophones, assumptions are not the same as those of a resident.

The interpreter must therefore facilitate the communication by clarifying what is not said, that is to say socio-cultural aspects that are linked to codes and cultural practices which can often create comprehension difficulties. These difficulties do not only come down to language problems in the strictest sense of the term, but rather to an understanding of the context of the host country on the one hand and of the country of origin of the migrant on the other hand.

### Mother tongue

The mother tongue refers to the first language a child learns. In some cases, when the child is brought up by parents or people speaking different languages, he/she can acquire these languages simultaneously, each of which can be considered as a mother tongue. He/she will therefore be bilingual.

### Cultural mediation

Cultural mediators inform migrants and public service professionals, in terms which are understandable to them, about cultural differences, the operating rules of the Swiss political and social systems and various ways to behave. By informing them, the mediators build bridges between the migrants and educational and consulting establishments. For example, they contribute to the understanding between a doctor and his/her patient, between a teacher and parents. Cultural mediators work in the organisation and development of prevention projects, as well as information sessions for migrants in the field of cultural mediation. Unlike traditional mediators, cultural mediators are not specialised in mediation in the event of a conflict, they can prevent potential conflicts<sup>6</sup>.

Mediator vs. community interpreter:

- **Mediator:** a person who provides a link between the beneficiary and the interpreter;
- **Cultural mediator:** he/she has the responsibility of managing the content and interaction in a face-to-face situation; manages the interactions;
- **Community interpreter:** a person who works as an interpreter from one language to another and who, even if he/she may sometimes provide contextualisation, is there to transpose what has been said from one language to another.

### Translation

Translators are specialists of the language who translate written texts from one source language to one or several target languages. A translator may be specialised in various fields, such as the economy, healthcare, the courts, etc.

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<sup>5</sup> *Standards de formation pour les interprètes communautaires et les médiateurs culturels dans les domaines de la santé, du social et de la formation*, Bern 2002, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Definition taken from INTERPRET, [http://inter-pret.ch/contenus/pdf/Berufspolitik/Begriffe\\_2005-11-fr.pdf](http://inter-pret.ch/contenus/pdf/Berufspolitik/Begriffe_2005-11-fr.pdf)



## INTRODUCTION

### Origin of the thought

Does Geneva take enough pride in its openness to diversity? The Canton has put in place a series of policies to support a free and open society founded on equality, tolerance and the protection of individual rights. These policies also recognize the advantages that the new arrivals and Geneva society can gain from immigration. Nevertheless, the regulatory and legislative texts are still not enough to eliminate discriminatory practices in the access to work, social housing and certain cultural structures in particular.

French is not the main language of 25% of the population living in Geneva<sup>7</sup>. Among these 25%, there is a high proportion of people “at risk of exclusion”, who are non-French speaking, are low-skilled and have few social and professional contacts<sup>8</sup>. What are the resources of this population in order to become integrated into the social fabric of Geneva, to accompany the schooling of its children, to access healthcare, to understand laws and regulations, to find a job, etc.? And what is the impact of bad integration of migrants on the schooling of their children, on the quality of healthcare received, on the ability to lead an autonomous and dignified life, and on the image residents of Geneva have of the foreigners they mix with without necessarily knowing and understanding them well?

If the acquisition of French remains the key element to successful integration, the command of the language nonetheless depends on the involvement of the person in his/her host society. Yet, a number of migrants are incapable of finding work and therefore risk experiencing a decrease in their economic mobility from their arrival onwards. The reasons for the underuse of the skills and knowledge of the immigrants or refugees are due, among others, to the lack of command of French and to the lack of recognition of professional and school qualifications.

The vast majority of non-French speaking migrants or those with a low level of education follow French or literacy courses<sup>9</sup>. Nevertheless, some of them do not find a place to practise their new skills. Housewives, elderly people, recently arrived migrants, or those who have not benefitted from an adequate language course and the unemployed are in this way overlooked.

Some interpreting services, like those of the Geneva Red Cross, respond to some of the needs, such as institutions working in the domain of social work, healthcare or education<sup>10</sup>. Nevertheless, the needs of the institutions are not always clearly defined and the migrants themselves do not have direct access to this type of service and must “cope”. Furthermore, it is

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<sup>7</sup> *Portrait statistique des étrangers vivant à Genève. Résultats du recensement fédéral de la population et autres sources*, Office cantonal de la Statistique, Etudes et documents n° 37, Geneva, September 2005.

<sup>8</sup> *La politique cantonale de préformation des non-francophones à risque d'exclusion : Evaluation des mesures de soutien*, Commission externe d'évaluation des politiques publiques, Geneva, September 2005, page 15.

<sup>9</sup> Idem

<sup>10</sup> [www.croix-rouge-ge.ch](http://www.croix-rouge-ge.ch), Croix-Rouge Genevoise.



often the children who are schooled in French and who master the language who intervene as an interpreter: this lack of consideration for their immaturity has consequences and proves to be seriously inappropriate in certain cases (medical interviews, discussion with teachers).

**What works in terms of immigration?** Research carried out in France<sup>11</sup> demonstrates that some of the factors which contribute to the success of immigrants and refugees are the following:

- the command of the language;
- the adaptability of young immigrants and refugees, which seems to be greater than that of their older counterparts;
- previous knowledge of French society and a realistic point of view with regard to the opportunities on offer;
- the recognition of qualifications prior to arrival;
- a good network and partnership or mentoring activities once in the host country;
- private sponsorship

The issue at stake, for our society, consists in finding means of recognizing and giving a voice to the hidden and underused abilities of immigrants and refugees. Nevertheless, policies alone will not allow us to achieve our objectives.

## Objectives of the present study

**General objective:** To develop an inventory of the means of linguistic accompaniment for newly arrived immigrants or those who do not master French with a view to becoming integrated in Geneva. To determine the acquired knowledge and shortages existing in this domain.

**Specific objective 1:** To identify the services existing and their resources. To identify the involvement of the various administrations in this domain.

**Specific objective 2:** To obtain responses on behalf of the migrants themselves. To this effect, to establish a questionnaire and to present it to a group of migrants in the process of learning French. To proceed with interviews with resource people.

**Specific objective 3:** To analyse the impact of an interpreting service in the domain of integration.

The programmes and practices need to be focused on the development of the social capital of communities of immigrants and refugees. We must find and pool together models which will help them to develop their strengths, to take advantage of their capacity to help themselves, to use their skills and talents in a creative and appropriate way.

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<sup>11</sup> Rapport au Président de la République Française, Cour des Comptes, 2006.



**Our basic premise is therefore that linguistic accompaniment for migrants allows them not only to overcome reservations in investing certain areas of their social environment, but also to generate the desire and ability to act in the host society. Such a service allows for an increase in cohesion and stability in the community by promoting trust, conflict resolution and collegiality. Feelings of exclusion and isolation, whether real or perceived, are found to be reduced.**

Since the entry into force of the new Federal Law on Foreigners (LEtr), increased attention has been given to the acquisition of a national language. The renewal of permits may even be dependent on the success of language courses and integration. Article 4 of the new law sets out the principles of an integration policy by insisting on the familiarization with Swiss society and lifestyles and the learning of a national language. In parallel, the Confederation is planning to discontinue its support of community interpreting services by 2011 “as open-ended financing would **work against the targeted aims**”<sup>12</sup>. As the objective of this support is to provide institutions touching on the domains of healthcare, education or social work<sup>13</sup> with a facilitated access to professional community interpreters, the issue of evaluating on a cantonal level arises. On the one hand, the use the institutions make of them is questioned and, on the other hand, its adequacy for the needs of migrants.

Quite recently, the *Département de l'Instruction Publique* (DIP) of Geneva<sup>14</sup> published, in collaboration with the *Département des Institutions* (DI)<sup>15</sup>, a “Short Guide for Parents and Children”<sup>16</sup>, translated into four languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese and Albanian). This document summarises over four pages some “essential” laws and regulations. As a means of comparison, let us cite the Health Guide published by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH)<sup>17</sup>, the *Croix-Rouge* and Caritas, counting 74 pages and translated into 18 languages.

The issue of interpreting brings up the question of information and the choices to be made in terms of communication. For *Miges* (platform for information material on health written in the various languages of the migrant population) and the FOPH<sup>18</sup>, it is clear that the choice of translating documentation for health promotion and prevention campaigns comes under a strategy of “empowerment” and accountability. What are the priorities in Geneva with regard to these objectives? What are the needs expressed by the migrants? Such are the questions we have asked ourselves.

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<sup>12</sup> Promotion de l'intégration des étrangers. Programme des points forts pour les années 2008-2011. Bern, 2007. pp.5-6.

<sup>13</sup> [www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/](http://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/), Federal Office for Migration, Principaux points forts 2B, 2008-2011.

<sup>14</sup> [www.geneve.ch/dip/](http://www.geneve.ch/dip/)

<sup>15</sup> [www.geneve.ch/di/](http://www.geneve.ch/di/)

<sup>16</sup> [ftp://ftp.geneve.ch/dip/publications/memento\\_07/Memento\\_anglais.pdf](ftp://ftp.geneve.ch/dip/publications/memento_07/Memento_anglais.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> [www.bag.admin.ch](http://www.bag.admin.ch)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.bag.admin.ch/themen/gesundheitspolitik/00394/00395/index.html?lang=fr>



## METHODOLOGY

Geneva, as a multicultural city, has a very vast and varied fabric of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and institutions. Besides the "Geneva International" aspect, with its international civil servants, there is a whole population of migrants of diverse statuses who often find themselves in precarious and difficult situations. This varied migrant population also involves a multitude of organizations who attempt to respond to questions relative to the welcome of foreign populations.

### The study

With the aim of rendering an account of the situation of linguistic accompaniment in Geneva, we have carried out a field study at several levels:

#### 1) Questionnaire for migrants

Our study would not be complete without having taken into account the individual opinions of the migrants. We therefore met them in the setting of French classes given in language schools and organizations working in the area of integration. A questionnaire (see appendices 2 and 3) was distributed to approximately 350 migrants enrolled in the French courses of the *Université Ouvrière de Genève*<sup>19</sup>, of the school ASC House<sup>20</sup>, and of the school "*le français ma passion*" (LFMP)<sup>21</sup>, at "illiterate, beginner and intermediate" levels.

#### 2) Interviews with migrant associations

In order to identify the needs of these migrants and of their community, we judged it wise to contact community associations and resource persons of the various communities, migrant integration associations, consulates and embassies. We therefore met a certain number of representatives of these structures. We proceeded according to the semi-directive method during the interviews in order to allow the other speakers the possibility to develop their answers. The interviews were recorded and transcribed (see list in appendix 1).

#### 3) Interviews and questionnaires for the representatives of administrations

We have been in contact with several organizations active in the area of migrant welcoming, public or semi-public organizations, NGOs working directly with migrant populations as well as various services of the City and Canton of Geneva (see list in appendix 1 and questionnaire in appendix 4).

#### 4) Exchanges and round table discussions

Two round table discussions were organised with the participation of ICVolunteers staff and external speakers. Among the external speakers were several translators/interpreters of Migraf<sup>22</sup>, an African community association working in the field of languages, a community

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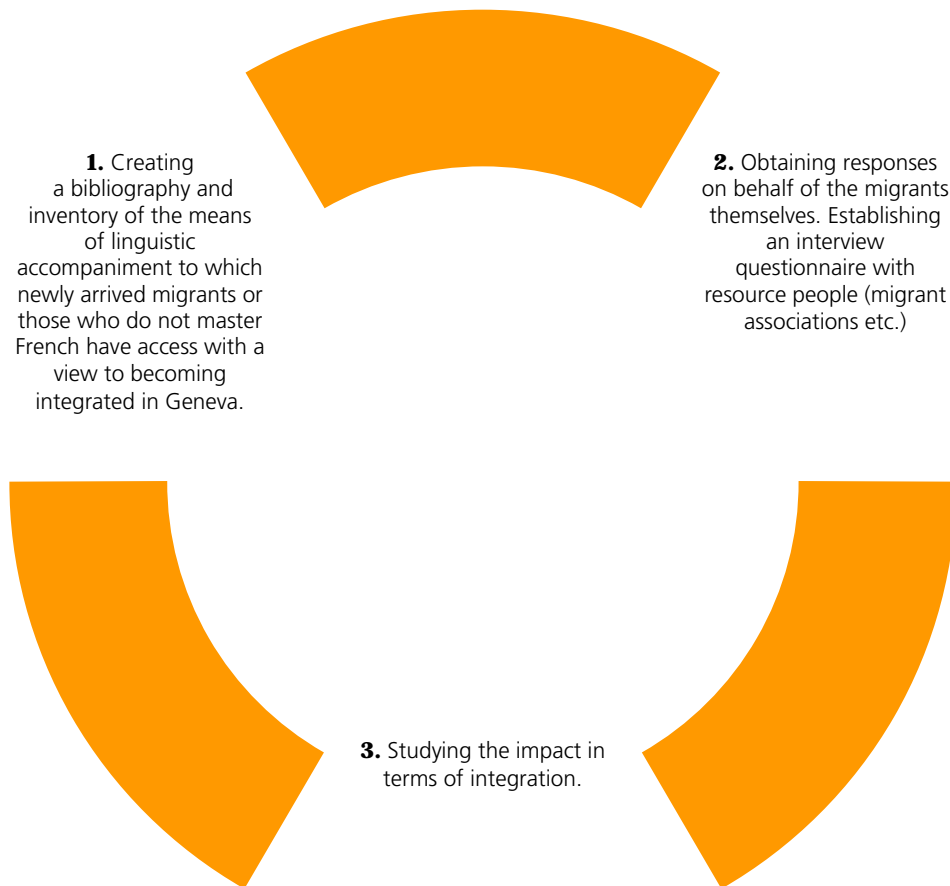
<sup>19</sup> [www.uog.ch](http://www.uog.ch)

<sup>20</sup> [www.asc-ih.ch](http://www.asc-ih.ch)

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.lfmp.net>

<sup>22</sup> [www.darksite.ch/migraf/](http://www.darksite.ch/migraf/)

Interpreter, a representative of the association *Appartenances Lausanne*<sup>23</sup>, and finally a specialist in the setting of American socio-medical interpreting. Among the internal speakers, collaborators and volunteers of our various ICVolunteers offices (Brazil, France, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland) who were in Geneva at the time were present. They took part in the discussions in order to share their experiences and thoughts with regard to the international ICV "Languages and migration" project. One of the objectives of these exchanges was the creation of a repertoire of good practices allowing for the project to be reproduced (see appendix 5).



**Figure 1:** our approach is structured in three stages: the basic inventory of existing documents, the field study and the analysis of data obtained

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<sup>23</sup> [www.appartenances.ch](http://www.appartenances.ch)



## Three priority areas

For our analysis, we make the distinction between three essential domains in terms of the language services destined for migrants, that is to say:

### ▪ **School**

The school is a place of teaching which welcomes children in order to provide them with teaching in a group. Good integration of children within the school system is essential as this will determine the child's future. In addition, the school simultaneously involves both parents and children, which makes it a particularly important place for the integration of foreigners.

### ▪ **Healthcare**

Medical errors can have terrible consequences for patients but also for the staff who treat them. In this way, good understanding between the patient and the doctor is essential. We have therefore sought to understand what system there is in place in order to accompany allophone patients.

### ▪ **Administration**

Administration includes services such as the *Office Cantonal de la Population*, the *Office Cantonal de l'Emploi*, the Police, or legal services and the courts, school services, and the *Hôtel des Finances* for taxes.





## HISTORY AND CONTEXT

### Swiss migration policy from 1970 onwards

A brief summary of Swiss migration policy from the 1970s onwards will serve us to understand in which general context the issue of languages and migration in Geneva fits.

Before the 1970s, the policy governing migrations could be qualified as “liberal” in the sense that it responded to the strong workforce needs of the economy. These provisions allowed a considerable number of foreigners to work and stay in a more or less stable way in Switzerland.

From the 1970s onwards, the authorities were subjected to constraints which did not differ greatly to those which they must face today. Effectively, the 1970s saw the advent of a series of “xenophobic initiatives against overpopulation by foreigners”. The most well-known and mediated was the Schwarzenbach Initiative asking for a substantial reduction in the presence of foreigners in Switzerland. It was refused by the Swiss by a small margin (54% no), but left behind a profound unease among the authorities, foreigners and people working in contact with them. This period saw the Swiss Government torn between two dynamics which were difficult to reconcile: on the one hand, the pressures on behalf of economic circles and, on the other hand, the weight of minority xenophobic groups whose action was reinforced by the mechanisms of direct Swiss democracy. The country was faced with “a logic which will determine *grosso modo* Swiss immigration policy up until today”<sup>24</sup>.

But the years 1972 to 1975 saw two great phenomena occur: a progressive decrease in the number of foreigners and the decline of the hold of the xenophobic movements which appeared to be heading towards “a dynamic of running out of steam and withdrawal”. From then on, the issue of ‘overpopulation by foreigners’ lost its appeal and meaning and no longer appeared to be a major political issue<sup>25</sup>. The significant decrease in the number of foreigners was mainly due to the fact that the effects of the first oil crisis of 1973 were only felt in Switzerland from the following year onwards with, as a direct consequence, a large number of job losses in the sectors mainly occupied by foreign workers, such as industry. It is estimated that 67% of foreigners lost their jobs at this moment in history<sup>26</sup>.

### The end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s

This period corresponds to another important turning point for the issue of migration in Switzerland. Effectively, foreign workers who had been present for a long time began to benefit from residence permits. The nature of immigration itself changed: it was no longer linked to the simple question of work, but also concerned the reunification of families. The foreigners present in Switzerland began to settle down on a long-term basis and could no longer be subjected to the non-renewal of their work permit. Moreover, the foreign population in Switzerland changed, with a decrease in the Italian and Spanish populations and an increase in the number of migrants of ex-Yugoslavian or Portuguese origin.

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<sup>24</sup> *La politique Suisse d'immigration de 1948 à 1998: évolution et effets*, MAHNIG, Hans et al., p. 76 in Hans-Rudolf WICKER et al., *Les migrations et la Suisse*. Ed. Seismo, sciences sociales et problèmes de société. Zurich, 2003.

<sup>25</sup> Giuseppe Fonte, *L'intégration des immigrés italiens à Lausanne, le cas des immigrés italiens à Lausanne, un modèle de réussite ?*, Degree Thesis, Faculté de Sciences sociales et politiques, Lausanne. 2007, p. 40.

<sup>26</sup> Idem note 13.



The first foundations for the total revision of the Law on Foreigners (LEE), applied on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008, were laid down in the 1999-2003 legislative programme. The need for revision came from the fact that the LEE of 1931 seemed to be henceforth obsolete. The main courses of action of the future policy were defined in order to respond to the problem posed by asylum seekers. Moreover, it was the reason why it was decided to promote two distinct laws concerning immigration (LEtr) and asylum (LAsi). The immediate response was to make the prospect of asylum seeking in Switzerland less attractive and to improve the conditions of “assisted return”.

The immigration of EU member country nationals was regulated in the agreement on the free movement of persons. The law also set out, which is also something new, “the principles and objectives of the integration of foreigners”<sup>27</sup>. This law is the concrete expression of the trend which seemed to have started from 1991 onwards which gave preference to EU and EFTA member country nationals. With regard to “third country” nationals, they are admitted for a limited period, in favour of their qualifications, taking as a source of inspiration Anglo-Saxon migration models. Moreover, it was foreseen that “legal foreign immigrants living permanently in Switzerland saw their situation improve”<sup>28</sup> thanks to provisions taken to improve their integration and allowing them family reunification and professional mobility. It will also be possible for foreigners demonstrating a real “effort of integration” in Swiss society to benefit from a permanent residence permit after five years of residency.

## **Integration policies for foreigners in Switzerland 1995-2006**

The bases of integration policy at a federal level appeared in the 1995-1999 legislative programme, notably with the entry into force, on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1999, of Article 25a in the Law on Foreigners’ Stay and Settlement (LSEE). This article rules that the Confederation may pay subsidies to projects linked with integration by following the indications of the recent “Consultative commission on issues linked with foreigners”. In the “Ordinance on the Integration of Foreigners” of 13 September 2000, the Federal Council conceived integration as a series of provisions taken at several decision-making levels (federal, cantonal, communal and local) in collaboration with foreigner associations. This demonstrates a shift in perception, in which immigrant associations have become recognised social partners. Therefore, there is no longer a feeling of “distrust” towards these associations as there could have been a few years previously when the fear was also linked with “political” issues.

### **Introduction of an integration policy**

The introduction of integration policies must allow for the accomplishment of four objectives:

- to work on reciprocal understanding between immigrant populations and the Swiss;
- to facilitate the living together of these two communities;
- to make foreigners aware of the way in which the political system and Swiss society are organised;
- to work towards equal opportunities between the Swiss and immigrants and their participation in society.

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.ejpd.admin.ch/ejpd/fr/home/themen/migration/auslaendergesetz.html>

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.ejpd.admin.ch/ejpd/fr/home/themen/migration/auslaendergesetz/was\\_bringt\\_die\\_n\\_eue.html](http://www.ejpd.admin.ch/ejpd/fr/home/themen/migration/auslaendergesetz/was_bringt_die_n_eue.html)



We are going by the basic premise that there is not only a will to become integrated on behalf of the migrants, but also sufficient openness on the part of the host society. An important point and one which represents a departure from prior perceptions concerns the active participation of the State in the setting up of an integration process. As we have previously seen, the State had always stood aside from policies concerning integration, declining this role to civil society. Even in the LSEE, with the addition of Art. 25a, the role of the state authority was that of the fund provider, whose behaviour was meant to “guarantee” integration without necessarily “promoting” it actively. Moreover, this new integration policy emphasises the issue of “equal opportunities”, a condition of successful integration.

### **Integration and languages policy**

Following the vote on the new Law on Foreigners (LEtr), new integration agreements have been applied. Languages policy has an important place in them, given that a migrant admitted into the Swiss territory on a temporary basis may from now on request an advanced permanent residence permit (after five years), following the **participation in a language and integration course**. Processed case by case, the requests are evaluated according to: the command of a national language; knowledge of Swiss society, values and standards, as well as the Swiss legal system.<sup>29</sup>

These new agreements are essentially aimed at third country nationals who have arrived in Switzerland for the purpose of family reunification; at migrants already settled in Switzerland whose behaviour risks having as a consequence the extension of their residence permit being refused; as well as at people working as an assistant or teacher in Switzerland.<sup>30</sup>

From an economic point of view, integration must help migrants to find their place on the job market as, thanks to training and specialization, they would no longer be subjected to market uncertainties, a phenomenon which mainly concerns foreigners with a low level of training. Having foreign workers in employment also means less dependence on social assistance, something which seems to be of close concern to the authorities.

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<sup>29</sup>[http://www.bfm.admin.ch/etc/medialib/data/migration/integration/empfehlungen\\_integrationsvereinbarung.Par.0002.File.tmp/Empfehlungen\\_Integrationsvereinbarung-f.pdf](http://www.bfm.admin.ch/etc/medialib/data/migration/integration/empfehlungen_integrationsvereinbarung.Par.0002.File.tmp/Empfehlungen_Integrationsvereinbarung-f.pdf) .

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*



## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

### Welcome and information

The first welcome constitutes one of the key elements of the integration of the immigrant. The most recent report on the integration of immigrants in Geneva<sup>31</sup> notes a break-up of the structures put in place by the various public and private stakeholders. Generally speaking, the first welcome of the new arrivals is insufficient for the populations concerned by integration. Moreover, this first welcome should be backed up by the “interactive and proactive” provision of information. These two aspects “welcome and information” in the report mentioned above are some of the weak points of the integration policy of Geneva: “The structures and documentary material are clearly insufficient; information which is adequate and suitable for the diversity of the new arrivals is not assured.”<sup>32</sup> It is worth noting that the *Bureau de l'Intégration* (BIE)<sup>33</sup> is currently working on the development of an “integration course”.

### Equal treatment

Still according to the same report, the administration must continue its efforts: “Even if most of those in charge in public (cantonal and communal) administration are aware of it and that efforts have been carried out in several sectors, considerable gaps subsist in areas where nevertheless the civil servants are in direct contact with the concerned populations and where services need to be provided (translation, interpreting, relationship with users)<sup>34</sup>”.

### Community interpreting

Community interpreting is not strictly speaking a linguistic job, where it would be a matter of translating word-for-word. As the representative of the Migraf association explains, “*in many cases, [the authorities] do not realise that some Africans with a low level of education have difficulty in expressing certain feelings verbally. They have difficulty in putting words to problems. [...] African migrants, whatever the official language of their country of origin, often [...] need linguistic accompaniment, insofar as they do not master the local codes. Information brochures are often too complex and are not enough to fill this need for information.*”

The representatives of the *Hospice Général*<sup>35</sup> who we met, emphasise the importance of community interpreting: “*the recourse to a ‘neutral’ professional may be favoured as much by the service that uses him/her as by the migrant him/herself in cases of internal difficulties in the community. The problem with a family member is that there is a double game and there can be an effect of censorship. For example, the interpreter does not want to translate everything or does not dare to translate everything.*” The same words are formulated in the hospital setting: “*Migrants also have the possibility of being accompanied by a parent or a close family member,*

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<sup>31</sup> Metin Türker Ismail, *Intégration des étrangers à Genève, un inventaire raisonné*, pp. 46-49, Geneva 2007.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p.78.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.ge.ch/integration/>

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, p 79.

<sup>35</sup> [www.hg-ge.ch](http://www.hg-ge.ch)



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*but this can create problems, notably of confidentiality, therefore the solution of a professional interpreter is always preferable.*<sup>36</sup>

### **Another significant finding: “resourcefulness”**

Most of the time, people “cope” according to the expression encountered most frequently during the interviews. According to the representative of the *Hospice Général*, a person who speaks elementary level French will be able to express him/herself in a more complete and precise way if accompanied by an interpreter. *“The communication will be much better, more effective but also more respectful”.*

Resourcefulness considers the recourse to family members or friends and acquaintances, the exercise of the practice of improbable French or the abandonment of steps. According to a community association representative: *“furthermore, considering their skills in French, people are often reluctant to recognise that they don’t understand within their community or their circle of friends.”*

The greatest difficulty encountered when parents call upon their own children to carry out translations/interpreting is that the latter must take charge of all the administrative tasks as they are the only ones who speak French.

### **Training courses for community interpreters**

The training of community interpreters is significantly different to training for conference interpreters. Intercultural aspects are essential for a quality service in this context.

Notably, there are the training courses<sup>37</sup> proposed by the Lausanne structure **Appartenances**,<sup>38</sup> which has been working for a number of years with community interpreters.

**INTERPRET**<sup>39</sup> is the Swiss Association for Community Interpreting and Cultural Mediation. This association, supported by the Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH)<sup>40</sup> has created a Swiss Certificate for Community Interpreters<sup>41</sup> in collaboration with the *Fédération Suisse pour la formation continue* (FSEA). INTERPRET has defined criteria concerning the objectives, form and content of the training so that the curricula of the various trainers may be comparable throughout Switzerland. In Geneva, only a small proportion (7%) of community interpreters are in possession of an INTERPRET certificate and there is no other offer of training. Moreover, no organization in Geneva offers a training course allowing for the achievement of this qualification. Community interpreters who would wish to obtain certification through a qualifying training course can contact Appartenances Lausanne which offers this type of training

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<sup>36</sup> HUG

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.appartenances.ch/formations.html>

<sup>38</sup> [www.appartenances.ch](http://www.appartenances.ch)

<sup>39</sup> [www.inter-pret.ch](http://www.inter-pret.ch)

<sup>40</sup> [www.bag.admin.ch](http://www.bag.admin.ch)

<sup>41</sup> <http://inter-pret.ch/contenus/pdf/newsletters/qs/Newsletter-QS-mars04-fr.pdf> / <http://inter-pret.ch/contenus/shtml/qs-fr.shtml>



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(CHF 1,400 for two modules). The **Croix-Rouge Genevoise**<sup>42</sup>, a recognized competence centre in terms of community interpreting promotes the recognition of acquired knowledge (interview with the service coordinator).

The professionalization and training of community interpreters therefore still requires a lot of efforts, despite the precariousness of their status (ad hoc employment).

### **Skills development for representatives of migrant associations**

We have also noted that migrant associations have a very important role to play. Nevertheless, they are not always in a position to fully assume their function insofar as they have very low means, which leads, in some cases, to management problems.

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<sup>42</sup> [www.croix-rouge-ge.ch](http://www.croix-rouge-ge.ch)



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## MIGRANTS AND THEIR SPOKESPEOPLE

The following nationalities are largely represented in Geneva: **Africa** (Angola, Cameroon, Congo DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Senegal, Somalia), **North Africa** (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia), **Latin America** (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Dominican Republic), **Asia** (China, India, Japan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam), **Europe** (Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic), **Eastern Europe** (Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Russia, Serbia-Bosnia/Ex-Yugoslavia, Turkey, the Gypsy community, Ukraine), **East** (Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, the Kurdish community, Pakistan).

We have established this list by referring to the enumeration of foreigners living in Geneva established by the *Office Cantonal de la Statistique* (OCSTAT) in 2004 (table 1) which shows that Geneva is the Swiss canton with the most significant proportion of foreigners among the resident population (38.1% in 2004). It is also the most cosmopolitan canton: 184 nationalities live together in Geneva out of the possible 194 nationalities. In 2007, this population represented 38.3%<sup>43</sup>.

**It is worth noting that the figures of OCTSTAT and the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO) do not include people without legal status or irregular migrants. The number of these residents could be quite high depending on the nationalities. Table 1 therefore does not necessarily give a complete overview.** According to the estimates of the *Collectif du Soutien aux Sans-Papiers*, between 9,000 and 12,000 people without legal status could live in the shadows in Geneva. With regard to the communities mentioned in our list above, they are quite significant in numbers (minimum 300 people) and are non-French speaking. In some countries, French is taught as a second language, which does not necessarily mean that all of the population is educated and masters French<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>43</sup> <http://www.geneve.ch/statistique/publications/pdf/2008/resultats/dg-rs-2008-05.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> See figures in Appendix 10

**Table 1:** resident population according to nationality, in 2004, source *Office Cantonal de la Statistique*<sup>45</sup>

Situation en fin d'année			Canton de Genève		
Canton	Effectif	Continent / Pays	Effectif	Continent / Pays	Effectif
<b>Suisses</b>	<b>268 594</b>	Dix nouveaux pays membres de l'UE	1 848	<b>Afrique</b>	<b>16 035</b>
Genevois	145 227	Chypre	33	Algérie	1 178
Confédérés	123 367	Estonie	73	Angola	833
Appenzell Rhodes-Extérieures	708	Hongrie	386	Cameroun	871
Appenzell Rhodes-Intérieures	165	Lettonie	55	Côte d'Ivoire	434
Argovie	3 916	Lituanie	58	Egypte	683
Bâle-Campagne	1 002	Malte	28	Ethiopie	650
Bâle-Ville	1 925	Pologne	679	Guinée	419
Berne	19 542	République Slovaque	213	Maroc	1 836
Fribourg	17 705	République Tchèque	255	Sénégal	693
Glaris	431	Slovénie	68	Somalie	975
Grisons	1 741			Rép. démocratique du Congo	1 218
Jura	5 568	Association européenne de libre-échange (AELE)	420	Tunisie	1 307
Lucerne	2 753	Islande	46	Autres pays	4 938
Neuchâtel	8 178	Liechtenstein	41		
Nidwald	289	Norvège	333	<b>Asie</b>	<b>12 966</b>
Obwald	221			Chine	1 563
Saint-Gall	2 931	Autres pays	16 751	Inde	1 429
Schaffhouse	775	Albanie	272	Irak	497
Schwytz	768	Andorre	9	Iran	615
Soleure	2 022	Bélarus	147	Japon	1 119
Tessin	4 911	Bosnie-Herzégovine	1 442	Pakistan	457
Thurgovie	1 429	Bulgarie	465	Philippines	1 551
Uri	304	Croatie	407	Sri Lanka	807
Valais	14 279	Macédoine	787	Thaïlande	481
Vaud	25 647	Moldova	90	Vietnam	447
Zoug	306	Monaco	8	Autres pays	4 000
Zurich	5 851	Roumanie	619		
		Russie	2 863	<b>Océanie</b>	<b>719</b>
		Saint-Marin	9	Australie	536
		Serbie et Monténégro	7 311	Fidji	9
		Turquie	1 879	Nouvelle-Zélande	170
		Ukraine	421	Autres pays	4
		Vatican	3		
<b>Etrangers</b>	<b>169 889</b>	Ex-Tchécoslovaquie (1)	10	Apatrides	14
<b>Europe</b>	<b>125 971</b>	Ex-Union soviétique (1)	9	Nationalité inconnue	113
Union européenne (UE) à 25 pays	108 800				
Union européenne (UE) à 15 pays	106 952				
Allemagne	4 542	<b>Amériques</b>	<b>14 071</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>438 483</b>
Autriche	809	Argentine	458		
Belgique	1 956	Brésil	2 039		
Danemark	399	Canada	1 441		
Espagne	15 786	Chili	682		
Finlande	364	Colombie	1 036		
France	19 941	Etats-Unis	4 227		
Grèce	656	Pérou	1 261		
Irlande (Eire)	470	Autres pays	2 927		
Italie	21 550				
Luxembourg	131				
Pays-Bas	1 520				
Portugal	32 000				
Royaume-Uni	5 925				
Suède	903				

(1) Ressortissants de l'Ex-Tchécoslovaquie et de l'Ex-Union soviétique dont la nouvelle nationalité n'est pas connue.

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.geneve.ch/statistique/publications/pdf/2006/analyses/an-ed-2006-37.pdf>



## Questionnaire for migrants

Of the 350 questionnaires distributed, 278 were filled out by migrant persons taking French courses for non-French speakers at the *Université Ouvrière de Genève* (UOG), at ASC House and at the "*le français ma passion*" (LFMP)<sup>46</sup> school.

The aim of our questionnaires is to give a voice to non-French speaking migrants concerning their integration and their needs in terms of language. Our approach allowed us to reach a varied migrant population with more or less similar needs. The latter are representative of the general situation. Furthermore, our contacts at the level of the French classes permitted us to:

- Address people who from now on have some bases of the French language and who can show a certain hindsight regarding their own experience;
- Establish a dialogue with people who directly experience situations of need in terms of linguistic accompaniment and who speak from their direct experience.

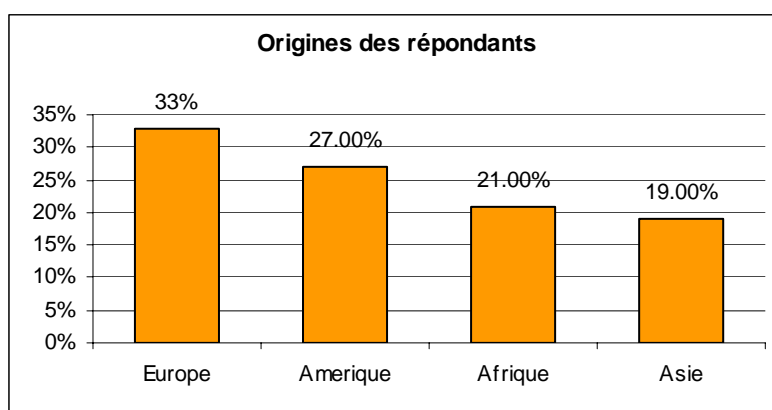
However, there are limits to this type of approach in the sense that migrants who have taken the step of taking language courses are being addressed. Unfortunately, we have not been able to gather the points of view of people without the means (on a material or information level) or the will to take French courses.

### Origins, languages spoken and duration of stay

From the data collected, we have taken a certain number of indicators to describe the population studied. Among these indicators are the country of origin, the languages spoken and the duration of stay in Geneva.

#### Origins

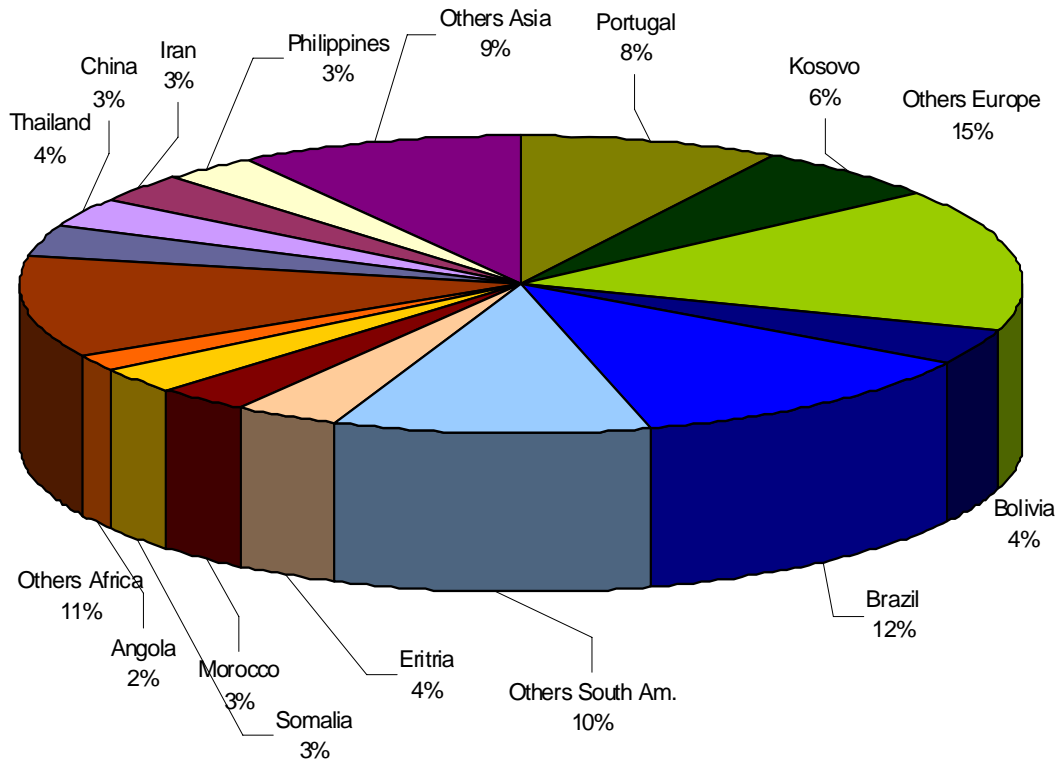
33% of the people who responded to our questionnaire are of European origin, 27% are from America (essentially from South America), 21% are from Africa and 19% are from Asia (figure 2).



**Figure 2:** Origins of non-French speaking migrants having responded to the questionnaire

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.lfmp.net>

As far as Europe is concerned, **Portuguese** nationals (28%, that is 8% of all those questioned) and **Kosovars** (20%, that is 6% of all of those questioned) are the best represented in the classes visited. These two nationalities present two very different cases. The Portuguese migrants have mainly come to Geneva for economic reasons. They often learn French in their workplace. With regard to the Kosovar migrants, they often find themselves in Geneva as asylum seekers and can take French courses, either with the aim of finding work or because they have been induced to do it.



**Figure 3:** Origins of non-French speaking migrants having responded to the questionnaire

With regard to **South America**, we have been able to note a strong presence of **Brazilians** (46% of the South Americans questioned, that is 12% of all respondents), followed by **Bolivians** (15%, that is 4% of all respondents). Both of these migrant populations take courses with a view to finding work in Geneva.

As far as the **African populations** are concerned, several nationalities are represented in a considerable way: **Eritreans** (16% of the Africans questioned, that is 4% of the overall respondents), **Moroccans** (14%, that is 3% of the overall respondents), **Somalians** (12%, that is 3% of the overall respondents) and **Angolians** (8%, that is 2% of the overall respondents). Here, the number of people seeking or having received asylum is more considerable than that of the other continents. Effectively, of the four most represented countries, three are currently in a crisis situation.

Various nationalities of **Asia** are also present: **Thai people** constitute the most represented group in the courses (16% of the Asians questioned, that is 4% of the overall respondents), followed by **Chinese, Iranians and Filipinos** (14% each, that is 3% of the overall respondents).

Among the people who returned the questionnaire, we find 40% men and 60% women, which is explained by the fact that women take language classes more easily.

30% of the people questioned are aged between 18 and 30 years, 50% from 30 to 50 years and 20% are over 50 years (figure 4).

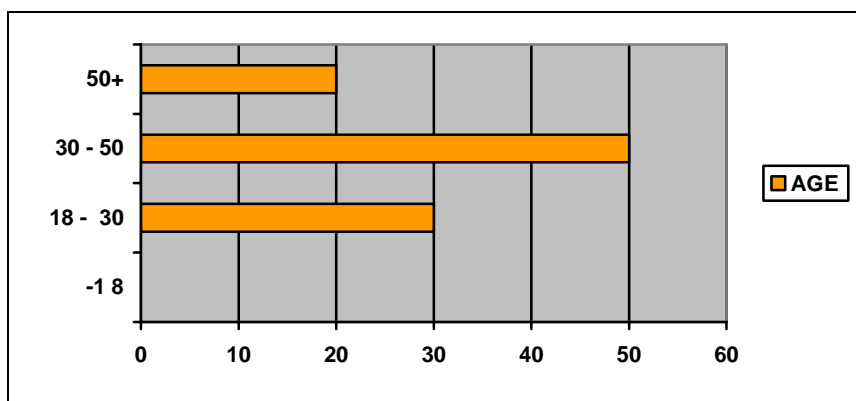


Figure 4: Ages of the migrant persons having participated in the survey

#### **Duration of stay in Geneva of people who participated in the survey**

32% of the people questioned have been living in Geneva for less than a year, 47% between 1 and 5 years, and 20% have been living there for more than five years (figure 5).

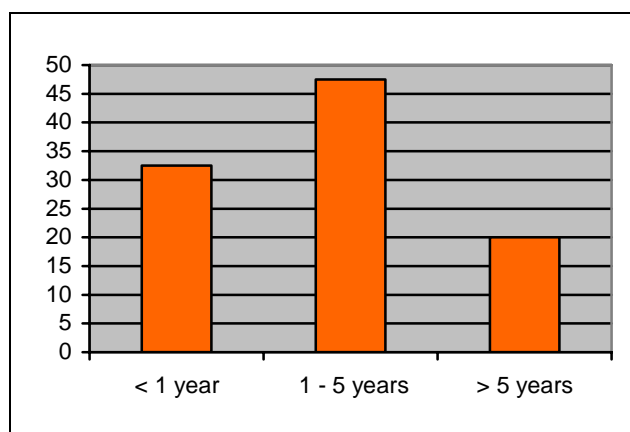
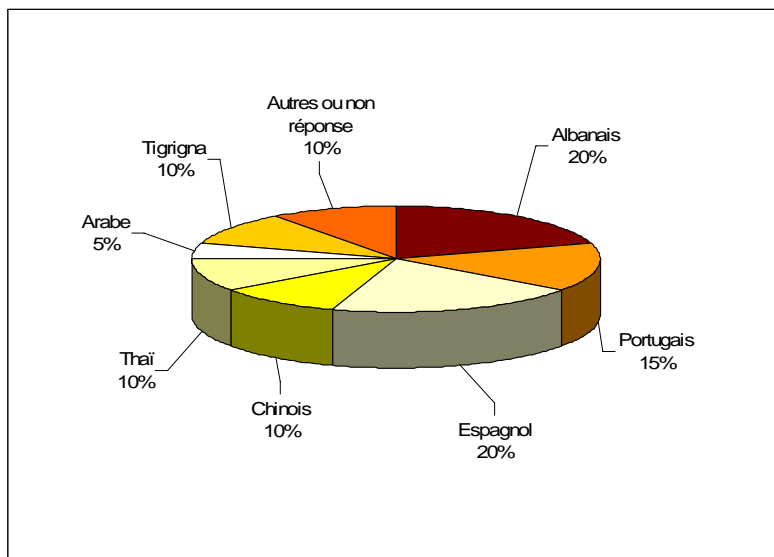


Figure 5: Duration of stay of people having participated in the survey

### **Mother tongues of the migrants**

Among the mother tongues, the following languages stand out in particular: **Albanian** (20%), **Spanish** (20%), **Portuguese** (15%), **Tigrinya** (10%), **Thai** (10%), **Chinese** (10%), **Arabic** (5%) (figure 6).



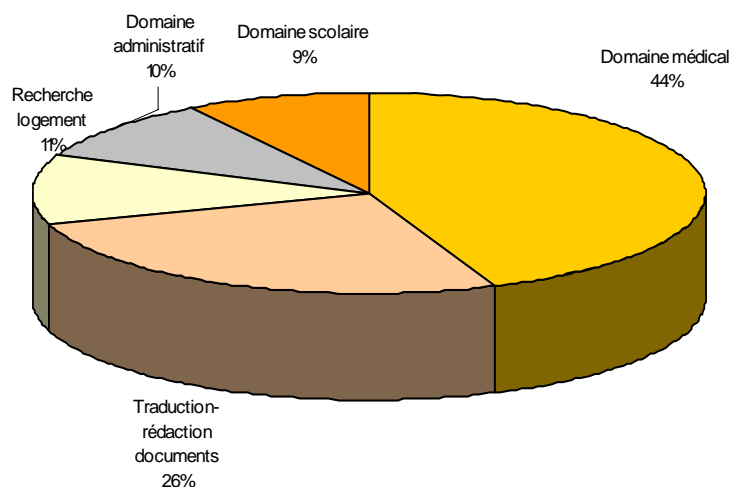
**Figure 6:** Mother languages of people having participated in the survey.

### **Level of French of the informants**

Of the 235 people who responded to this question:

- 18%, that is 43 people, are at advanced level;
- 49%, that is 116 people, are at intermediate level;
- 30%, that is 71 people, are at beginners' level;
- 2%, that is 5 people, are at elementary level.

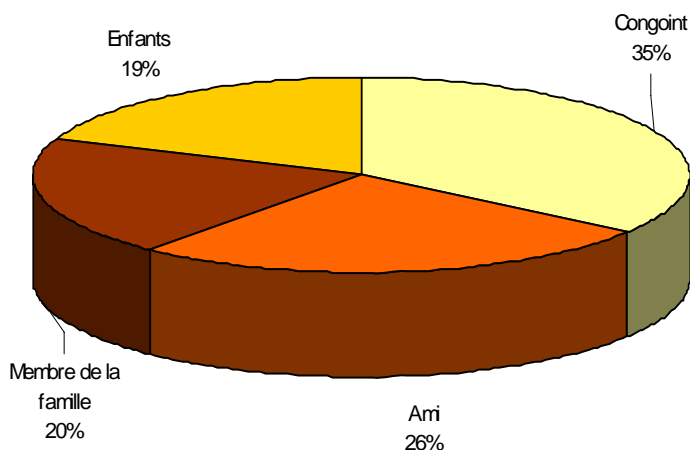
• **Sectors in which linguistic assistance would be welcome:**



**Figure 7:** Sectors in which linguistic assistance would be welcome

- 60%, that is 78 people, would wish for assistance in the medical domain;
- 36%, that is 47 people, in the translation/writing of documents;
- 15%, that is 19 people, for the search for accommodation;
- 14%, that is 18 people, in the administration domain;
- 12%, that is 15 people, in education.

**Who takes care of assisting newly arrived migrants in their daily tasks:**



**Figure 8:** The present table shows who, according to the migrants themselves, accompanies them in their daily tasks.

Of the 196 people who responded to this question:

- 35%, that is 69 people, are assisted by their spouse;
- 26%, that is 50 people, are assisted by a friend;
- 20%, that is 40 people, are assisted by another member of the family;
- 19%, that is 37 people, are assisted by their child(ren)



## Summary concerning requested services

It is difficult to make clear a general observation from the questionnaires filled out by the migrants, as the field of needs to be covered is very vast. Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish certain trends according to the status of the people who participated in our study. We note that:

- **Young people** who arrive in Switzerland **alone** have more need for language support in the domain of administration, the search for employment, accommodation, the translation of documents and healthcare.
- **Migrants with a family** have needs, which essentially concern accommodation, education and healthcare

**It is surprising to note that 60% of the migrants who responded to our questionnaire feel a need for linguistic accompaniment in the medical service when it is, in fact, the only sector benefitting from an interpreting service.**

These sectors are, nonetheless, of equal importance to each other. They are all indispensable to life in Geneva and are hardly suited to the demand and situation of migrants.

*Who is currently assisting non-French speaking persons?*

One of the questions asked in our questionnaire concerns the assistance provided in terms of languages: *“When you arrived in Switzerland, was someone able to assist you with the use of French in everyday life?”* The responses to this question clearly show that migrants rely above all on their family network. In the case of family reunification, family members and friends generally know what the first steps to undertake are. They end up playing the role of interpreter or accompanying person, which is often the case with children.

In cases of difficulty, they generally turn towards their **community of origin** in order to be assisted during problems linked to the use of French. Depending on the origins, the **community networks** are quite well-structured and information is transmitted to the new arrivals. If the community networks can be the **role-players of the first welcome of the migrant**, we have been able to realise that these widespread practices have visible limits:

- Sometimes inter-community relationships are not always easy. Conflicts and tensions can be exported to the country of exile and be an obstacle to solidarity.
- The people who accompany can also have gaps on the language level or do not manage to juggle family life, work and linguistic accompaniment easily. Furthermore, there can sometimes be embarrassment about bringing up certain points in the company of acquaintances or family members.

Finally, the fact of relying on close **family members** in order to be assisted in various domains poses another problem which concerns the fact that this help is generally requested of **children** who often have better knowledge of the language than their parents. But this type of help has its limits, as the children do not always have shoulders strong enough to carry such a burden. In the same way, besides the issue of the complexity of the steps and tasks, the migration experience and the changes linked to this experience can profoundly put into question some evident habits in the country of origin, notably with regard to family balances. All of the familial hierarchy can find itself disrupted by the fact that the children are from now on in charge of heavy responsibilities.



## Community Associations

We contacted a set of representatives of community associations<sup>47</sup>. Those who agreed to receive us responded to various questions (questionnaire in appendix 5): the situation of their community in Geneva, language difficulties, the need for linguistic accompaniment in various sectors of daily life.

These encounters were very enriching. It is worth noting that, in some cases, we were confronted with the difficulty of knowing if the representatives were speaking on their own behalf or on behalf of the community. In spite of everything, we were able to make a certain number of interesting documented elements stand out in the interview extracts below.

No community has linguistic accompaniment for non-French speakers strictly speaking. Nevertheless, many associations organise themselves internally in order to provide assistance to freshly arrived compatriots. Of the 17 associations encountered, a third provides this type of service. In particular, it is populations with large numbers and which are well organised, such as the **Albanian community**, with the *Université Populaire Albanaise* (UPA)<sup>48</sup>, the **African communities**, the **Portuguese-speaking, Kurdish and Bolivian communities**. Some migrant associations propose services of translation and writing of administrative documents and an accompaniment in the hospital setting.

**The majority of people we spoke with responded that it would be very useful to systematise the services of linguistic accompaniment.**

### Summary

These interviews allowed us to realise that :

- The level of education and literacy is a very important factor for this analysis, insofar as the teaching of the language is not carried out in the same way according to the basic level of education of a person. The same goes for the socio-cultural context and the fact of whether a person is working or not;
- Generally, the family represents the most important pillar of support;
- When it is not possible to rely on one's family, either because they are not there or nobody in the family circle speaks enough French, people in need return towards friends or associative assistance services.

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<sup>47</sup> See complete list in Appendix 11

<sup>48</sup> [www.upa.ch](http://www.upa.ch)



### Additional support: what service?

ICVolunteers has given thought to the provision of its network of polyglot volunteers and interpreters with the aim of offering an additional language service.

We have therefore wanted to find out to what extent such an offer would be welcome and how to structure it in order that it responds realistically to the identified needs.

*What percentage of your community would need additional language support and in what domain?* We asked this question to the community association representatives we met.

A number of them consider that an additional languages service would be very useful. We have tried to estimate these numbers according to the number of nationals per community (table 2, p. 56) while knowing that the quantification remains an approximation based on the opinion of those we were able to interview.

**Table 2:** An overview of the needs in terms of linguistic accompaniment

Name of the community	% and number of people for which the accompaniment would be useful	Area(s) where linguistic accompaniment would be necessary
<b>Non-French speaking Africans</b>	approx. 30%	Everyday life ; Translation and assistance in the understanding of documents ; School
<b>North Africans</b>	approx. 10%	Everyday life, translation of official documents
<b>Latin Americans</b>	approx. 80%	Administration Medical and legal, knowledge of rights ; School
<b>Portuguese speakers</b>	approx. 80%	translation of legal documents ; administration, Police
<b>Middle Easterners (Kurds)</b>	approx. 40 %	Health ; Writing and translation of documents
<b>Asia (Philippines)</b>	approx. 20 %	Administration, search for accommodation
<b>Central and Eastern European countries (Albanians)</b>	approx. 10%	Legal cases and explanation of rights

- **The associations :** *Forum des Tunisiens et du Droit pour tous, Association marocaine de solidarité et d'intégration en Suisse, Eglise Catholique Lusophone, « Raizes », « Migraf », « Acoge »* associations and *Association pour l'intégration des Equatoriens*. Latin American bookshop « *Albatros* » and *Terra Incognita*.





## Summary

The term of immigration is often cited in the singular, whereas for many researchers, it should be in the plural: we must speak about a history of immigrations. As the series of interviews we carried out shows us, the paths and destinies are different. For example, immigrations from the Maghreb, Portugal and China cannot be placed in the same historicity. It is therefore essential, when we think about it, to analyse the specificity of the periods and the collective imaginations. - Immigration does not take place in a "neutral place". One arrives in a country which already has its own history and culture.

The integration of migrants is based on several elements including the ability to communicate in daily life in the language of the host country. In this context, the level of education and literacy is an important factor. The tangible difficulties encountered impose the revisiting of the three dimensions of language (**operational, intercultural** and **critical**) and to enter into thought about the **linguistic accompaniment**. for these three levels of concern. It is necessary to stop considering languages as barriers. Languages are not simply instruments of communication. They have social functions. They contribute to ensuring the balance, and even the existence, of individuals.

**In light of our exchanges with those in charge in the communities, the demand for linguistic accompaniment is considerable. When it is not self-withdrawal which dictates the rule, children assume a responsibility which is much too great for them.**

**School, access to healthcare, administrative procedures and the translation of documents are the four priority areas that are necessary to be covered for migrant families.**



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## SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS/UNIONS)

Organizations such as NGOs and public and semi-public institutions exist in great numbers on the territory of Geneva. Whether they address a migrant population in particular or whether they provide general assistance to vulnerable populations, the offer is very rich, but does not manage to fill all of the demand.

### Welcome and social assistance organizations

A number of organizations (AGORA<sup>49</sup>, OSEO<sup>50</sup>, CAMARADA<sup>51</sup>) propose basic **French courses**. These allow migrants to have a first approach with the language of their host country.

Among these organizations, some, such as CAMARADA and OSEO, also propose “integration workshops”, that is to say courses in which the learners familiarize themselves with the rules of living in Geneva and Switzerland.

Furthermore, the following associations offer **literacy courses**: *Université Populaire*, *Université Ouvrière*, *Association Lire et Ecrire*<sup>52</sup>, CAMARADA. The courses are mainly assured by volunteer teachers.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Geneva chaplaincy for asylum seekers:

[http://www.protestant.ch/enpg/enpg\\_web.nsf/0/22549a746bf70089c12569170076ba64?OpenDocument](http://www.protestant.ch/enpg/enpg_web.nsf/0/22549a746bf70089c12569170076ba64?OpenDocument)

<sup>50</sup> Œuvre Suisse d'Entraide Ouvrière: <http://www.oseo-ge.ch>

<sup>51</sup> Welcome and training centre for migrant women: [www.camarada.ch](http://www.camarada.ch)

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.lire-et-ecrire.ch>

<sup>53</sup> Krebs Viola, « Etre illettré ou analphabète dans le monde et en Suisse », travail de licence ès Lettres, Université de Genève, 1999.



## INSTITUTIONS

### School

#### General context

The study of the interviews points out the fact that the linguistic accompaniment for non-French speaking migrants in the school setting represents a key element for the smooth running of the child's education. Small children are particularly affected by these measures, as the beginning of the school year goes better if the parents are in a position to understand the procedures of the school of the host country. In some cases, there are significant cultural and social differences which can be a problem for the child and his/her parents.

Furthermore, non-French speaking parents may stop participating in parent-teacher meetings for fear of not being able to follow what the teachers say. Nevertheless, it is important that parents can closely follow the schooling of their children. This may figure as a first step, a first sign of integration into the host society.

In general, migrants who do not master the language rely on the cooperation of their children in order to understand what is being asked of them. In the school domain, the child is a stakeholder and exposed in the first place. It is not suitable to give this task to the child who sees him/herself carry heavy responsibilities. This contributes to denaturing the School-Parents-Children relationship.

The *Département de l'Instruction Publique* (DIP)<sup>54</sup> provides a certain number of practical tips on its website. It offers a certain number of welcome classes for non-French speaking migrant children aged from 12 to 15 years. For parents, there are free French classes, either in the afternoon or the evening.

In addition, the DPI has put a system of interpreters/community mediators in place. They are numbered at 43 and are paid by the *Département*. In 2007, these interpreters carried out more than 400 interventions upon the request of teachers. From the beginning of the 2009 school year onwards, the community interpreters of the DIP will be coordinated by the services of the *Croix-Rouge Genevoise*.

On the other hand, there is no system at the level of parent-teacher associations.

The **Groupement Genevois des Associations de Parents d'Elèves du Primaire** (GAPP)<sup>55</sup> heads the various Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) of the Canton of Geneva. It represents a favourable network for strengthening linguistic support in the school domain.

Furthermore, the DIP created a **Réseau d'Enseignement Prioritaire** (REP)<sup>56</sup> in 2006 in order to promote the quality of schools in working-class areas.

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<sup>54</sup> <http://www.geneve.ch/dip/arriver.asp>

<sup>55</sup> [www.gapp.ch](http://www.gapp.ch)

<sup>56</sup> [http://www.geneve.ch/enseignement\\_primaire/rep/](http://www.geneve.ch/enseignement_primaire/rep/)



In this way, a pilot project was launched at the primary school of Les Tattes/Gros-Chêne in Onex. During the beginning of the 2008 school year, **fourteen schools** will have integrated the REP.

There are two decisive criteria in order that a school may become part of the REP:

- More than 55% of the pupils' parents must come from disadvantaged socio-professional categories (unskilled professions, unemployed persons...);
- The entire teaching team is involved in the project for a duration of three years.

In these two schools, on average 60% of the pupils are allophones. Linguistic support should be compulsory there.

Studies previously carried out on the issue of "how to put a law on integration in place?" pointed out the fact that "particular attention must be given to the integration of children in the school system through the mastery of the language of the host country, through the valorisation of the culture of origin, through the creation of "bridges" between the different cultures and through the raising of awareness among parents of the school life of the children."<sup>57</sup> Good integration is essential for a better schooling of migrant children. "As far as public education is concerned, the number of foreign students decreases from secondary education onwards. Moreover, they are more numerous than Swiss children in special needs classes. They are clearly under-represented in universities and higher education institutions. Nevertheless, we notice differences in relation with diverse factors: the moment of arrival in Switzerland, the socio-economic level of the parents, the community of origin, the knowledge and mastery of the French language etc."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Rapport final concernant un concept cantonal d'accueil et d'intégration des étrangers, pour la Commission d'experts extraparlamentaire chargée de définir un concept cantonal d'accueil et d'intégration des étrangers.* FÖLLMI, Dominique, PARINI, Lorena, GARCIA ROUX, Asunción. Geneva 2000.

<sup>58</sup> *Idem*, p. 15



## Healthcare System

### General context

Every patient has a right to healthcare. There are a number of references to this right, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Recommendations given by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)<sup>59</sup>, as well as Art. 41b of the Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation, which stipulates that “every person should benefit from the necessary care for his/her health”.

Having access to healthcare presupposes that the **patient** is in a position to **understand the information** which is presented to him/her in relation to his/her state of health. The respect of this principle also implies the **equal treatment** of the patient regardless of his/her origin and language.

The task is particularly arduous in the healthcare domain. A lack of understanding can have serious consequences for the patient and the doctor. The language barrier alters the relationship which may be initiated between the patient and the practitioner and important questions and answers may not be clearly formulated. The report of the FOPH<sup>60</sup> on the *Diversity and equality of opportunities, Fundamentals for effective action in the microcosm of the health institution*<sup>61</sup> offers quite a clear portrait of the difficulties with which doctors are confronted in terms of languages and communication<sup>62</sup>:

- **Difficulties at the level of the clinical examination:** During consultations, patients speaking a foreign language express themselves with a lot more difficulty when speaking about their state of health.
- **Difficulties concerning the taking of treatment:** Patients speaking a foreign language may present less compliance<sup>63</sup> with regard to the regular taking of prescribed medication.
- **Difficulties linked to a suitable follow-up of treatment:** Patients speaking a foreign language are less often convened to follow-up consultations and return less frequently to their institution of reference.

Finally, as Slim Slama, a doctor at the HUG and coordinator of the scientific programme of the Geneva Health Forum<sup>64</sup>, explains “the notion of *health literacy* is important for a fair access to healthcare”. This notion incorporates the capacity of any person to make beneficial decisions

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<sup>59</sup> General observations, points 14 to 20 on the right to healthcare.

<sup>60</sup> Federal Office of Public Health : <http://www.bag.admin.ch>

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.bag.admin.ch/shop/00038/00209/index.html?lang=fr>

<sup>62</sup> Alexander Bischoff et al., «A-Care»: Gesundheitsversorgung und –kosten von Asylsuchenden in Basel. Forschungsbericht zuhanden des Bundesamtes für Migration. Institute of Nursing Science et Hôpital universitaire de Bâle, 2005.

<sup>63</sup> “Compliance” is understood here as the good follow-up on the recommendations of the doctor on the patient’s behalf (respect of the dosage of medicines, indications etc.)

<sup>64</sup> <http://www.ghf08.org>



regarding his/her own health. This starts with hygiene and nutrition to go as far as the good use of the healthcare system. Essentially, we distinguish three points: 1) relational differences; 2) the capacity to understand and to use the healthcare system; 3) the language and information also in connection with the patient's level of education.

An effective translation service can therefore prove to be decisive for the patient's healing. As for the interpreter, he/she can have several origins. He/she may be a member of the patient's family, a doctor speaking the patient's language or an external member, professional or not.

### **Federal measures and strategies**

From the point of view of cantonal and federal policies in favour of migrants, the healthcare domain is a priority objective. It is in this perspective that the Federal Office of Public Health has put in place, in cooperation with the Federal Office for Migration and the Federal Commission for Foreigners, the "Migration and Health 2002-2006<sup>65</sup>" strategy, then "Migration and Health 2008-2013". The vision of the strategy is: "A fair chance is given to any person living in Switzerland to fully reach his/her health potential, without any avoidable factor preventing it." The strategy puts its efforts to the service of the migrant population but also to the service of disadvantaged persons of Swiss origin. The measures are applied in four fields of action:

- Health promotion and prevention
- Training and continuous education in the health care domain
- Healthcare
- Research and knowledge management

The aim of such a strategy is to adapt the health system to a "society modified by migrations and the specific needs of the various user groups" (Saladin, 2006, p. 18). The implementation of this strategy presupposes the cooperation of several stakeholders at all levels: Federal offices, cantons, communes, associations, non-governmental organizations, research organizations.

The *Migrant-Friendly Hospitals*<sup>66</sup> project targets the creation of a network of institutions active in the healthcare domain and distinguishes itself through a management directed at migrant populations. The network constituted in this way allows for the exchange of information, publications and recommendations of healthcare professionals concerning the issue of transculturality and the establishment of concrete measures within the concerned institutions.

In order to adapt themselves to an omnipresent diversity in this setting, Healthcare institutions have the opportunity and the necessity to take measures which must be "different" and unconventional. Nevertheless, this approach can only take place if the institution itself puts the framework in place in order to welcome and manage diversity. In the domain of linguistic accompaniment, this results in an awareness of the challenges and the means to be implemented in order to face them.

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<sup>65</sup> <http://www.bag.admin.ch/themen/gesundheitspolitik/00394/00395/00396/index.html?lang=fr>

<sup>66</sup> This project benefits from a budget of 605,879 francs to be invested in fifteen different projects.



## The costs on the Swiss national level

According to the *Rapport sur le financement des prestations d'interprétariat dans les institutions Suisses de santé pour les personnes qui ne maîtrisent pas la langue officielle locale*, written by a group of experts on a mandate from the *Migrant Friendly Hospitals* (MFH)<sup>67</sup> project, the FOPH estimates that the cost of interpreting services could currently amount to approximately 5 million francs. These services are financed by various sources (the hospitals' own resources, private funds, charging to the operating deficit, canton etc.). Considering the financial pressure which hospitals are undergoing, it must not be expected that the latter will voluntarily increase their resources in this area, even more so as the legal bases are incomplete.

## System in place for the healthcare system

In the *Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève* (HUG)<sup>68</sup>, in 2005, 51% of the patients were of foreign nationality with a total of 188 countries represented. The ten most common countries (approximately 56% of the foreign patients) are the following: Portugal, Italy, Spain, Serbia and Montenegro, Brazil, United Kingdom, Germany, Bolivia, United States and Morocco.

Since 1998, the HUG have an almost exclusive agreement with the **Croix Rouge Genevoise**<sup>69</sup> for community interpreting services. The *Croix-Rouge* takes charge of training its interpreters with the participation of the HUG.

Numerous services call upon interpreters. Nevertheless, it is the **Centre Santé Migrants (CSM)**<sup>70</sup> which uses this type of services most often. According to our survey, **70%** of the consultations at the CSM require the intervention of an interpreter. For this unit alone, the budget dedicated to interpreting is 500,000 francs per year. It is estimated that the CSM monopolises almost **55%** of the interventions carried out at the HUG by interpreters of the *Croix-Rouge*. In 2006, the HUG required 9,504 hours of interpretation.

The Department of Community Medicine used **53.8%** of these 9,504 hours (of which 20% concern psychiatry).

The interpreting service of the university hospitals above all provides interpreters to three services: community medicine, *Centre Santé Migrants* and the community healthcare mobile unit. When a doctor considers that interpreting is necessary, he/she has the right to request an interpreter. He/she therefore uses the listing provided by the *Croix-Rouge* and calls the various interpreters proposed in the requested language in order to find one who is available. Some doctors speak various languages and if this agrees with the patient, all the better, but this is not often the case.

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<sup>67</sup> [www.mfh-eu.net](http://www.mfh-eu.net)

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.hug-ge.ch>

<sup>69</sup> [www.croix-rouge-ge.ch](http://www.croix-rouge-ge.ch)

<sup>70</sup> [http://migrantcare.hug-ge.ch/soins\\_migrants/CSM\\_activites.html](http://migrantcare.hug-ge.ch/soins_migrants/CSM_activites.html)



### Possible modalities for interpreting services

Studies carried out in the United States put forward various possibilities of interpreting services in the healthcare domain<sup>71</sup>. Each of these possibilities is suitable according to the **volume of interpreting**, the **languages** and **origins of the beneficiaries**, **their level of education** as well as the **degree of complexity** of the interpreting. It is also necessary to know who controls the fact of calling upon an interpreter or not.

**Table 3:** Type of linguistic support possible in the healthcare sector  
Source: *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*, <http://www.ncihc.org> , 2002

Role	Description
<b>Bilingual clinical staff member of reference</b>	Exchanges with the patient during treatment are carried out in the mother tongue of the latter. The clinical staff member may be a native speaker of the target language or indeed have studied it. In this formula, the fees are based on the preparation and the training of (future) clinical staff.
<b>Bilingual patient</b>	The patients' French language skills are sustained, which limits the recourse to communication assistance. The fees are based on the development of FLE (français langue étrangère) programmes.
<b>Ad hoc interpreter: Bilingual clinical support staff</b>	The bilingual support staff member (nurses, social assistants, technicians, doctors etc.) provides an interpreting service to a patient in place of the clinical staff member of reference. The fees for this formula are expressed by the time spent by the interpreter to the detriment of his/her normal activities.
<b>Ad hoc interpreter: bilingual non-clinical staff</b>	Bilingual non-clinical staff are typically solicited each time the need is felt within the establishment which, most of the time, goes unnoticed. Some establishments grant a supplement for these services.
<b>Ad hoc interpreter</b>	Community services organisation: Community services organisations take charge of providing interpreters free of charge (in general, a bilingual employee or a person in charge of cases) in order to accompany their clients to the place of healthcare. The expenses involved are covered by the community services organisation.
<b>Ad hoc interpreter: family and friends</b>	Interpretation carried out by a family member of the patient or a friend. It may be a matter of a direct request expressed by the patient. This formula does not involve any fees for the establishment.
<b>Professional interpreter</b>	Professional interpreters are hired by the establishment for their language skills, their training in interpreting and their qualifications (if possible). The fees incurred by the establishment may include recruitment, selection (screening), training, evaluation, development of timetables (scheduling) and supervision.
<b>Contract interpreters</b>	The bilingual support staff member (nurses, social assistants, technicians, doctors etc.) provides an interpreting service to a patient in place of the clinical staff member of reference. The fees for this formula are expressed by the time spent by the interpreter to the detriment of his/her normal activities. Nevertheless, it is often thought that interpreting does not incur additional fees for the establishment. In spite of everything, some of them propose additional remuneration for this work.

<sup>71</sup> See table 4 or complete analysis in Appendix 9, source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, <http://www.ncihc.org> , 2002.





## Public Administration Authorities

### General context

In 2005, several publications emanating from the specialised services of the Confederation dealt with the opening of institutions<sup>72</sup>. In this way, the Federal Commission for Foreigners<sup>73</sup> recommended embedding the terms of appointment of cultural mediators within the services of the Confederation, the cantons and service providers mandated by the State<sup>74</sup> into ordinances and directives. In parallel, the staff of the concerned services were supposed to benefit from training raising their awareness of cultural diversity. A report of the *Service de Lutte contre le Racisme* laid the foundations of the training courses to be put in place for civil service agents<sup>75</sup>.

As we have indicated above, for the years 2008-2011, the Confederation foresees disengagement with regard to the financing of centers of competence for community interpreting. Currently, only the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)<sup>76</sup> seems to attach importance to the issue by considering “**the decisive role of language and intercultural skills in the recruitment criteria for personnel advisers**”. With a view to facilitating the integration of foreigners, to optimise the communication between personnel advisers and foreign job seekers and to develop the intercultural skills of ORP advisers through training, the SECO recommends “the targeted recruitment of personnel advisers, migration specialists”<sup>77</sup>.

The Bern directives are applied to Geneva: “Any civil servant who receives a foreigner is a mediator between two worlds.”<sup>78</sup> This principle should govern the relations between public administration and its allophone users. In more concrete terms, the **Bureau de l’Intégration des Etrangers (BIE)** provides a certain number of **training courses** to some administrations, including the training of aspiring police officers, security agents and prison wardens, the training of concierges and of administrative civil servants on interculturality and integration<sup>79</sup>.

In January 2007, the *Groupe Intermigra*<sup>80</sup> of the *Haute Ecole de Travail Social* (HETS) received a mission to develop a training concept intended for administration employees.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> CFE, Terra Cognita, Service lutte contre le racisme

<sup>73</sup> [www.eka-cfe.ch/f/index.asp](http://www.eka-cfe.ch/f/index.asp)

<sup>74</sup> Ouverture des Institutions : Recommandations de la Commission fédérale des étrangers, Bern, 2005.

<sup>75</sup> Agents de la fonction publique en prise avec la diversité culturelle : quelle formation en matière de prévention des discriminations. Service de lutte contre le racisme, Bern, 2005.

<sup>76</sup> [www.seco.admin.ch](http://www.seco.admin.ch)

<sup>77</sup> Recommandations, pp.9-10

<sup>78</sup> Les Cahiers du BIE, n°3 « Pourquoi les fonctionnaires n’ont pas la tâches facile... et une mission capitale », 2003

<sup>79</sup> « Vers une politique cantonale d’intégration ou une nouvelle ambition pour Genève », Projet de Paul-Olivier Valloton, Délégué à l’intégration, Département des Institutions, Bureau de l’intégration, Genève, juin 2007, pp 55-56.

<sup>80</sup> Group coordinated by Prof. Bolzman Claudio, Dr in Sociology, teacher and researcher at the HET



We met stakeholders of the *Hospice Général* and we have looked closely at the situation in the Champ-Dollon Prison with regard to the linguistic accompaniment of prisoners.

The *Hospice Général* is a service which supports the *Loi sur l'Assistance Publique*<sup>82</sup> and which pays benefits to people residing in the Canton. By definition, migrants who come to the « **Questions sur l'Action Sociale** » (**ASOC**) service are in social and financial need. It is compulsory for these people of foreign nationality to be in possession of a permit. Another department takes care of asylum seekers: **Aide aux Requérants d'Asile (ARA)**. A special unit takes care of persons without legal status who have made a residence permit request and who are awaiting a response. The *Hospice Général* is mandated by the State to pay what is called social welfare. At the ASOC, 52% of the people who are helped do not have Swiss nationality.

The *Hospice* does not offer French classes but may direct people towards various structures. It is the duty of the social assistant to see if the person has recourse other than the *Hospice* for taking French classes (subsidiarity). The representatives of the *Hospice* highlight that “*If a non-French speaking person can obtain French classes from the **Office Cantonal de l'Emploi (OCE)**<sup>83</sup>, we will do what is necessary so that they obtain them, if the person can benefit from these measures*”. For non-integrated persons in the process of looking for work, other courses are better suited. Benefiting from assistance of up to 1,750 francs per year for training, they can contact structures such as Camarada, the UPA, and the UPGA.

According to the mandate of the *Conseil d'Etat*, the **ARA Department** welcomes **asylum seekers** throughout this procedure. Accommodation and financial services, minimum health cover as well as “language course” training are offered there. Following these courses, they can improve their skills in other schools.

The people we met from the *Hospice Général*<sup>84</sup> indicate that they would be very interested in complementary interpreting services, which would allow for the cutting down of the workload of the collaborators.

Many of the social assistants of the *Hospice*, belonging to the second, third and fourth generation, master English, Portuguese or Spanish. In this way, they are able to communicate with a large number of the non-French speaking migrants.

At the ARA, the portrait of the social assistant is more multicultural. Languages such as Albanian, Turkish, Arabic, Russian or various African languages are covered, which is very useful for social support in homes.

## Responses to the questionnaires

We also addressed a questionnaire to the heads of service of 25 administrations (see list in appendix 1) in order to evaluate their practices in terms of linguistic accompaniment.

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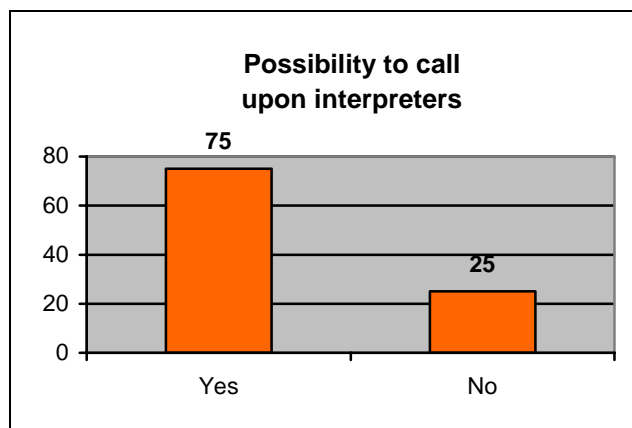
<sup>81</sup> *ibid.*, p.27

<sup>82</sup> [www.ge.ch/grandconseil/data/texte/PL09907.pdf](http://www.ge.ch/grandconseil/data/texte/PL09907.pdf)

<sup>83</sup> [www.geneve.ch/emploi/](http://www.geneve.ch/emploi/)

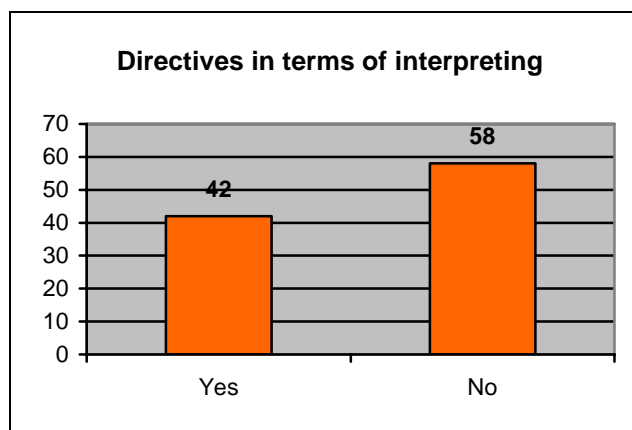
<sup>84</sup> [www.hg-ge.ch](http://www.hg-ge.ch)

Thirteen services replied to us.



**Figure 9:** possibility of institutions to be able to call upon community interpreters.

**75%** of the services contacted indicate to us that they resort to the use of professional interpreters (figure 9). Of this total, **50%** of the administrations use the language skills of their own employees. All of the services which replied to us consider that the means made available are sufficient. **Nevertheless, some of the services working directly with non-French speaking migrants do not use interpreters. Therefore, on the field, a lack in this area is noted, precisely in relations with administration.**



**Figure 10:** of the institutions which responded to our questionnaire, 42% have access to directives in terms of interpreting, 58% do not

More than half of the administrations contacted have not developed directives relating to the intervention of interpreters.

The existing directives are limited to defining the type of translators. Therefore, in principle, they reflect the exclusivity agreements concluded with the interpreting service of the *Centre Migrants* as well as the price agreements (figure 10). The *Direction Générale du Post-Obligatoire* has nevertheless developed its own specifications intended for interpreters. With regard to the cantonal police, it relies on the Criminal Procedure Code in order to guarantee the "right to be heard" to people.

In view of the responses provided, **it appears that the intervention of an interpreter depends on the sole evaluation of the situation by the civil servant, outside of any regulatory framework.**



### **Office Cantonal de la Population**

The *Office Cantonal de la Population* (OCP) proposes interpreting services uniquely for asylum hearings, in which it is compulsory to have an official sworn interpreter. Outside of assemblies and hearings, it is up to the applicant migrant to manage with his/her network. The institution "Elisa", a dependant of AGORA, can assist them in certain cases, but often finds itself confronted with a problem of availability. Therefore, the institution will be present for the official assemblies and will ensure the good respect of Human Rights, but will not be able to provide translation and linguistic accompaniment services.

### **Community interpreting, an urgent and indispensable service at the Champ-Dollon prison**

For more than twenty years now, public debate surrounding "insecurity" has been omnipresent. The supposed relationship between delinquency and immigration is the favourite refrain of xenophobic and ultranationalistic policies. On the one hand, this relationship targets foreigners strictly speaking, more particularly those who are staying illegally on the territory, and on the other hand "young people who are immigrants or the children of immigrants", young Kosovars and Africans. For a long time, this relationship has been dealt with in an essentially ideological and moralising way. A development of the discourses would be successful if it opened up to an intellectual debate, if it allowed for argumentation and the contextualizing demonstration of taking precedence over emotion and common sense.

**Table 4:** Champ-Dollon: population 2006 by nationality/region

<b>Region</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Switzerland	352	12.4
Eastern Europe / Russia / Balkans	576	<b>20.3</b>
Other Europe	568	<b>20.0</b>
North Africa	436	<b>15.4</b>
Other Africa	587	<b>20.7</b>
Middle East	167	<b>5.9</b>
America	99	<b>3.5</b>
Asia and Oceania	52	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2837</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A lawyer who is well aware of the situation gives us a few explanations concerning infringements of the LSEE (Law on Foreigners' Stay and Settlement): *"Some offences can only be committed by foreigners. This is notably the case for illegal residence. It is an offence which can be repeated easily, above all when one is clandestine or the victim of non-admission. Despite the fact that, in this type of situation, there isn't an injured party, committing a subsequent offence drives numerous people to serve prison sentences."*

Culturalist explanations constitute a reductionism from which the social sciences have aimed to distance themselves for a long time. At the time of speaking about young people from immigration backgrounds, it is common to put forward their "double culture". This is presented as if it inevitably constituted a source of contradictions and conflicts, psychological disturbances and deviances. Generally, this idea is false, on the one hand because it is based on an opposite model of perfect cultural homogeneity which does not have sense in a country of immigration like Switzerland, on the other hand because it reduces the building of the social personality to the cultural problem, in this way ignoring that of socio-economic integration.

"Suffering from 'latent racism' in Switzerland, before assuming the cultural and psychological shock linked with exile, some Kosovar teenagers are driven to delinquency in reaction to the



stigma they are widely subject to in our country”, concludes the researcher Rachel Zehnder<sup>85</sup> in a degree thesis of the *Institut d'études sociales* in Geneva. She attempts to shed light on what locks Kosovars into the stereotypes of delinquency. Through certain criminal acts, she wishes to point out the identity-based strategy adopted in reaction to the racism and the stigma of which they are victims in Switzerland. This strategy is also interpreted as a “means of illegal integration” with the aim of achieving the materialistic and consumer values specific to the host society. All of the contradictions linked to the “double culture”, which are claimed to be insurmountable, can boil down to a central problem: stigma management, the discrediting of identity which the latter provokes since childhood, and, inseparably, defensive reactions and self-revaluation strategies which it more or less induces.

It appears that this stigma management is mainly linked to three elements: **firstly the success, or not, of socio-economic integration, of which the crucial phase is the schooling of the young person; secondly, family determinants, which are the family history (including the nature of the migration project and what is said about it), the professional success of the parents, the attitude of the latter towards school and more widely, the values of the host country; thirdly, elements of the immediate living conditions, in particular the more or less stigmatizing effects of the habitat, the more or less precocious and intense experiences of racism and influences exerted by peer groups.**

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<sup>85</sup> Rachad Armanios, « Kosovars: délinquance contre xénophobie? », Le Courrier, 22 August 2001. <http://www.lecourrier.ch/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=806>



## EXCHANGE WORKSHOPS

We organised two round table discussions, to which we invited people who are members of ICVolunteers as well as external panellists. Among the external panellists there were: several translators/interpreters from Migraf<sup>86</sup>, an African association working in the field of languages, a community interpreter and a representative of the association *Appartenances Lausanne*<sup>87</sup>, and a specialist in interpreting in the American socio-medical field. On an internal level, several teams from our various offices (South Africa, Brazil, Spain, France, Switzerland) took part in the discussions concerning ICVolunteers' international "Languages and Migration" project.

### Objectives

These two occasions for exchange had the objective of:

- Consolidating theoretical notions with field practices;
- Identifying the precise needs in terms of training;
- Developing a reflection on necessary tools for community interpreting;
- Establishing a network of resource people, notably as far as the training courses destined for the various stakeholders involved in our languages and migration project are concerned.

### Summaries

The important points we retain from these workshops in the context of the present study are:

#### Approach

- **Appropriate choice of type of follow-up:** It is important to choose the right formula of interpreting services according to the context, the number of people requiring assistance, the level of intervention (request made by an official institution, the migrant him/herself etc.). Various possibilities are given, such as they are mentioned in appendix 9 of the present document, for the healthcare sector (ad hoc interpreter, friend, doctor or hospital staff member, teacher, etc.);
- **Necessity to redefine linguistic accompaniment:** The interpreter does not only translate a message word-for-word, but must give explanations allowing for the understanding of the message. The interpreter must adopt a certain neutral attitude, while facilitating the integration process. It is not a question of needs / offer of services, but of assistance to migrants so that they may become autonomous (i.e. "empowerment"). The message is not only a question of vocabulary (word-for-word), but a meaning in a context as well as a cultural message which must imperatively get across;

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<sup>86</sup> [www.darksite.ch/migraf/](http://www.darksite.ch/migraf/)

<sup>87</sup> [www.appartenances.ch](http://www.appartenances.ch)



- **Importance of the role of the interpreter:** It is necessary to give attention not only to the language knowledge but also to the role of the interpreter. It is necessary to understand the responsibilities and ethics of interpreting, to get to know the way to manage cultural issues, etc. The interpreter must translate what an authority indicates word-for-word. The wishes of the migrants and thoughts are not relevant at this precise time;
- **Solidarity network within the community:** The fact of creating a solidarity network within the community is generally beneficial. But there are obstacles in some cases: nationals of countries at war may, for example, come from opposite camps (case among Colombians), which creates great mistrust within the community;
- **Asymmetry:** In the interpreter-migrant-official authority relationship, there is typically an asymmetry which is often a problem;
- **Open-mindedness in order to learn from successful experiences:** It is, for example, very interesting to be inspired by the experience had in the United States, where interpreting services have been developed for a longer time than in Switzerland. An important notion which crops up in this context is that of equality of treatment, a law passed in the United States;
- **Choice of approach:** The approach must be chosen according to the country, its history, the official language(s) spoken, the relationship between the host community and immigrants, the legal status of the national (legal or not).

### Definitions

- **Attention to confusions of terminology!** Example: Commonly, the word “translation” is used in order to designate the transposition of written texts from one language to another, as opposed to interpreting which is oral. And yet, “*Appartenances*” speaks about ‘translation’ in order to designate a procedure where information is not contextualized: the community interpreter proceeds with a language change while staying very close to the text.

### Survey methodology

- **Questionnaire:** Various questionnaires in various domains : healthcare, legal, school, context given to interpreters not only for information, but also the setting ;

### Work conditions

- **Specific characteristics of volunteer interpreters :** As for any management of volunteers, that of volunteer interpreters and translators requires a special follow-up ;
- **Allowances:** In order to ensure a quality service, it is desirable to be able to foresee at least a compensation;
- **Training:** It is important that training be given.



### **Quality of the service**

- **Skills required of a community interpreter :**
  - Being objective;
  - Being in a position to control one's emotions regardless of what is in the process of being translated during meetings;
  - Having access to tools for reflection allowing to analyse and evaluate the works carried out at regular intervals.
- **Professional ethics:**
  - Mastering issues of ethics and professional codes ;
  - Behaving like trained professionals, masters of the situation, and behaving oneself according to an ethical code;
  - It is necessary not to forget that interpreters are not machines. During these "face-to-face" interactions, it is sometimes difficult to hide one's feelings. The situations are not always easy to manage.
- **Possibilities to serve as a cultural bridge and mediator to the services beneficiary:**
  - Being capable of understanding and explaining the link between the Swiss structures and those of the migrants, by using their own experience of migration;
  - Being capable of interpreting the linguistic content as well as the socio-cultural context. Perfectly understanding the various interests which enter into play;
  - Being capable of perceiving intercultural conflicts, the structures or institutions and capable of distinguishing personal differences;
  - Being capable of getting out of difficult situations and reacting in an adequate way;
  - Knowledge of interpreting;
  - Having good knowledge of the vocabulary of domains linked to the work (for example, medical vocabulary) and being in a position to translate confidently, in an understandable and coherent way;
  - Having good knowledge of Swiss politics in terms of immigration policy and, in particular, of the rights and obligations of migrants.

For this, the interpreters call upon their double knowledge of the languages and cultures, as well as of their own migration experience.

By giving the necessary explanations during the session, their intervention allows to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts (which can arise within the framework of "trialogue" interviews (3 dialogues between the parties – the patients, the service providers and the community organizations). The interpreters are qualified to carry out their role, in particular to respect the ethical principles of their profession.

### **Recognition of the function of a community interpreter**

- **Importance of the recognition of the interpreter:**
  - Obtaining one's certificate from the Swiss community of interpreters
  - Recognising the role of interpreters

### **Methodological tools**

- **Glossaries:** There is no point establishing simple glossaries without taking into account the context as community interpreting is much more than simple word-for-word translation, but rather a linguistic accompaniment which often presupposes a contextualisation. Glossaries composed of words are not very useful. If there are glossaries, it is necessary for them to be targeted in relation to acronyms, a framework and codes which are used; the practical side of the matter is essential;
- **Guides of good practices:** These manuals seem useful as they provide contextual indications. They can therefore serve as a reference tool, as much for the beneficiaries as for the interpreters;





- **Web:** Online resources may offer excellent work tools;
- **Online services:** If the accompaniment and direct contact are very important, especially when an interpreter and his/her beneficiary do not know each other, a certain amount of work may be carried out at a distance before, which may be interesting in terms of follow-up.

### **Recruitment**

- **Importance of recruitment:** During the selection of community interpreters, it is not enough to only evaluate technical qualities. Many other factors need to be taken into consideration, including notably their social skills, sense of contact, intercultural understanding, their exact origin (very important for interventions in communities which are experiencing war-torn situations);
- **How to choose the right interpreter?** It is necessary to have good knowledge of the administrative and cultural situation in which the interpreter will intervene, qualitative references in order to be demanding in this work.

### **Training**

- **Length:** a good community interpreter training goes from 40 to 200 hours of classes;
- **Topics covered:** The training of community interpreters goes through not only language modules, but above all modules linked to the behaviour and attitude which the interpreter must have, the particular sensitivities according to the domain, the terminology etc.;
- **Target audience:** The training is not limited to the interpreter him/herself, but also to those who use the services of an interpreter, whether it be official authorities, community associations or even the beneficiary migrant;
- **Panellists:** It is advisable to call upon professionals of the line of work, as they can provide knowledge of the skills they master (interpreting specialist, social insurances, doctors etc.)
- **Continuous training:** Initial certification is not enough to pursue continuous training of interpreters and evaluations:
  - Interpreting techniques;
  - Tools and techniques which provide means of correcting the translation adapted to the situation;
  - Distinguishing the various interpreting techniques used in the concerned domains and knowing how to use them correctly.
- **Online training courses:** Some training courses may be given online: methodology such as the legal domain, healthcare, procedures etc.

### **Socio-cultural differences and their impact**

- **Presentation of the message:** In Swiss society, questions are dealt with in quite a direct way. In the African community, for example, it is different as the message is preceded by a preliminary discussion. In this way, in the healthcare domain, the social context differs from the therapeutic context, which has an impact on the way in which the message must be transmitted and presented. In this way, the cultural component is a very important value and generates the concept of "dual identity".
- **Role of the mediator:** ICVolunteers in Barcelona notes the importance of the mediator and has created this function within the languages services programme. The mediator serves as an intermediary between migrants (beneficiaries) and the interpreters (volunteers).



- **Parameters to take into consideration:** We have noted (in Barcelona notably) that it is necessary to give particular attention to the following factors when it is a matter of establishing a connection between a community interpreter and a beneficiary:
  - ❖ Gender
  - ❖ Age
  - ❖ Nationality
  - ❖ Religion
  - ❖ Intercultural context
  
- **Accessibility of the communities:** According to the cultures, it is difficult to have access to the nationals. This is the case for the Chinese, for example, who mix very little with the rest of the population and are difficult to approach. We have noted this same phenomenon in Geneva and in Barcelona.

The project will include three types of volunteers:

- **Interpreters or migrants** with mediation training who provide interpreting services;
- **International volunteers** financed by the European Voluntary Service (EVS) who will coordinate the contacts (institutions etc.), will keep the database of interpreters up-to-date, will manage the administration;
- **Local volunteers:** migrants or Catalans who will help in the routine tasks, for example, the mail, the visibility of the project.



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

If we cross the conclusions of our field survey with the information drawn from various documents of analysis and reports linked to immigration, it is possible to outline a certain number of findings and recommendations.

Firstly, we can affirm that a number of efforts are made on the behalf of the officials in order to facilitate the welcome and integration of foreigners in Geneva. Interpreting services exist in the domain of healthcare and school notably. In Geneva, there is only one official stakeholder who acts as a service provider in terms of interpreting: the *Croix-Rouge Genevoise*.

In their work, the interpreters follow a rather descriptive method. It does not take into account mediation and follows more principles of strict interpreting which leave little place for contextualisation, which is very important for the good understanding of certain topics. Judging by the testimonials, this method does not always respond to the needs of the migrants. In the interpreter-migrant-official authority trio, there is typically an asymmetry, insofar as the officials are in a strong position. The weight is placed on the side of the authority, already because the migrant does not have other choices but to call upon official interpreting services, but also because the methods applied follow a model which is often not "neutral". Therefore, the migrant turns towards his/her family network, often involving children, in order to address community associations which, for lack of infrastructure, do not always have the possibility to assist nationals in terms of languages.

We also note that the level of training of community interpreters in Geneva is poor: only 7% of all interpreters in Geneva are in possession of the *Certificat Suisse pour les Interprètes Communautaires*<sup>88</sup>. This percentage is low compared to that obtained in other regions of Switzerland. It is not enough to have carried out training as a conference interpreter. Further training in community interpreting is indispensable, insofar as issues of interculturality and transculturality are absolutely essential.

In this way, a number of representatives of migrant associations affirm that it would be useful to have another complementary language service.

Ms. Ursula Dubois of *Sociolution*<sup>89</sup> and of [www.migraweb.ch](http://www.migraweb.ch), the project of a Swiss Internet portal, shares her experience with various types of interpreters: "We have noted that there is an advantage to working with volunteers, insofar as this approach allows the development of networking and mutual assistance among migrants, rather than a client-consumer approach."

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<sup>88</sup> [www.inter-pret.ch](http://www.inter-pret.ch)

<sup>89</sup> [www.sociolution.ch](http://www.sociolution.ch)



## Specific observations by sector

It is possible to make a certain number of observations by sector:

### School

In the field of education, we note that non-French speaking parents do not participate as actively in activities (parent-teacher meetings, school festivities) as they feel incapable of understanding the content of the sessions. With regard to the teachers, they are not always aware of this need and do not necessarily call upon interpreters. Often, the child is induced to take on the role of intermediary, a role which is not suitable in any way as the case may be.

- **A good follow-up of parents in order to avoid academic failure:** The presence of an interpreter consolidates the role of each person in the family and re-establishes the degree of control of the parents. This type of intervention allows acting in order to attempt to avoid school problems and academic failure. Linguistic accompaniment has therefore a preventative purpose to combat the exclusion of persons of foreign origin, both children and parents. The pupils will be able to easily increase their chances of success if they are followed up by their parents during their school education.
- **Integration through school:** It is possible to face up to the challenge of integration by focusing on the school domain. One of the objectives and interests of linguistic accompaniment in the school setting resides in the fact of promoting the right to equality and equal opportunities.
- **Role of the GAPP:** More efforts should be made in order to help parents of pupils, for example through the GAPP<sup>90</sup> (*Groupe ment Genevois des Associations de Parents d'Elèves du Primaire*) and other systems in place in the Canton of Geneva. It is worth noting that, according to the targeted populations, it is necessary to also work with structures, such as the GAPP, which are directly in contact with the families.
- **Importance of the REP:** One must give particular attention to the REP (*Réseau d'Enseignement Prioritaire*<sup>91</sup>) insofar as they welcome children from immigration backgrounds and whose language is often not French.

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<sup>90</sup> <http://www.gapp.ch>

<sup>91</sup> [http://www.ge.ch/enseignement\\_primaire/rep/](http://www.ge.ch/enseignement_primaire/rep/)



Photos: second "Languages and Migration" workshop organised in March 2008

## Healthcare

Of the three domains analysed, the healthcare sector is by far the one which covers the issue of linguistic plurality best. The HUG regularly use community interpreters. The **doctor** him/herself **requests it**. Those in charge (clinical staff) say they are quite satisfied with the existing services but affirm that the **management of interpreters** is **problematic**. Effectively, the doctors have a list of interpreters, but it does not mean that these are effectively available at the necessary time.

Among the most significant elements concerning community interpreting work in the healthcare domain, the representative of the interpreting unit of the HUG mentions the following points:

- the punctuality of the interpreter
- the quality of the interpretation and the knowledge of medical vocabulary
- the availability of the interpreter

It is interesting to remark however that the **migrants questioned** in our survey see the **healthcare** domain as that where the **needs** are **the most considerable**, and this despite the fact that the interpreting services are the best structured in this domain.

The issue therefore is to know how the existing services could be completed by a **service more accessible to sick people and families**. The interpreter must be able to fulfil his/her role fully, not only by respecting the information exchanged, but by being able, if need be, to make it more understandable for the patient.

The interpreting model applied in Geneva, in the healthcare domain, wishes to be impartial but tends to take an asymmetrical turn. It would therefore be interesting to take inspiration from the various interpreting methods proposed by the "National Council on Interpreting in Health Care" in the United States. This analysis provides a complete table of the possibilities of intervention in terms of language services within the healthcare system<sup>92</sup>. It would be more appropriate to explore which situation is suitable in which context in order to complete the offer proposed in Geneva and in Switzerland in a more general way.

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<sup>92</sup> See Appendix 9 for complete table



- Bilingual clinical staff member of reference
- Bilingual patient
- Ad hoc interpreter: bilingual clinical support staff
- Ad hoc interpreter: bilingual non-clinical staff
- Ad hoc interpreter
- Ad hoc interpreter: family and friends
- Professional interpreters
- Contract interpreters

Each of these possibilities is suitable according to the volume of interpreting, the languages and other factors. It is also necessary to know who controls the fact of calling upon an interpreter or not. In this choice, it is important to ensure that the approach put in place does not only respond to the needs of the institutions but also and especially all migrants who are hospitalized or those requiring medical follow-up. Again, it is necessary to **minimise** the **asymmetry phenomena** where the migrant finds him/herself in a weak position.

In terms of linguistic accompaniment in the medical service, it is important to take into account certain aspects such as **trust** or **listening**. Patients must be in a position to be able to express themselves freely, in the same way as they must be certain of being understood properly. If it is not possible to transpose a system which is successful in one country to another country without major adjustment, it is nevertheless worth **taking inspiration from the good practices of here and elsewhere** in order to develop the best services possible.

## Administration

The present study has revealed a **great demand for linguistic accompaniment** in the **administrative sector**. A large number of migrant communities are not used to having to deal with the administration which currently governs our society. We are a "civilization of papers" according to the terms of Mr. Thiam, forms, letters and diverse procedures form a language which is completely incomprehensible for certain cultures.

The diverse administrative tasks that each individual must assume, even if they are scary, if they are off-putting, are nevertheless important. A migrant can lose out on opportunities which are favourable to his/her integration.

In most cases, the social assistant takes charge of all of the administrative steps instead of the migrant. But this solution has numerous limits:

- Faced with an impressive quantity of work, the social assistant will not be able to resolve all of the administrative problems of the migrants;
- Understanding and accepting this administration is taking a big step into the integration of a country. It means assimilating little by little its functioning. If the social assistant sorts out the administrative tasks of migrants each time, the latter will never learn to act by themselves

Other services are made available to the migrants, such as Manpower, the service of interpreters used by the *Hospice* or the "public letter-writers" or "scribes" at the *Université Ouvrière de Genève*, or indeed the legal service of Caritas.

However, these services do not propose regular linguistic accompaniment. The interpreters of the *Hospice* only act during interviews, and the scribes and other public letter-writers only take charge of writing letters or filling out forms.



A service of linguistic accompaniment for administrative steps in administrative tasks would therefore be necessary so that the migrant becomes familiarised with these diverse procedures. The interpreters will therefore need to not only take charge of translating and writing instead of the migrant but will need to be in a position to make him/her understand, through common expressions, the importance of these steps for his/her own integration.

A very sensitive domain where community interpreting is lacking is prison. In theory, these services would be available, notably in the healthcare domain. In practice, we note that there are situations where fellow prisoners find themselves as interpreters, a situation which is in all evidence not satisfactory.

Some administrations use community interpreters in a generalised but little reinforced way. If the University Hospitals have put in place training courses intended for their staff in order to strengthen their capacities to manage triologue interviews, the rest of the administrations have by far not followed this approach. Moreover, a large proportion of administrations are not in possession of directives on the subject or do not evaluate their application. Therefore, the civil servants remain the only ones to judge the necessity to have an interpreter intervene outside of any regulatory framework.

## Recommendations

- Overall, we see that classes and information sessions for the various language communities could be complementary in relation to the current system;
- The web is a precious information tool which could be exploited more in order to help migrants;
- It is necessary to avoid situations of asymmetry in the authority-interpreter-migrant relationship, it is preferable to encourage an accompaniment and capacity-building approach rather than an assistance which may generate power imbalances;
- Given the low percentage of community interpreters who are holders of the Swiss certificate of INTERPRET (7% only), it seems necessary to reinforce the training possibilities for community interpreters in Geneva. These training courses should be given by a neutral organ;
- It seems necessary to reinforce the management capacities of triologue interviews of administrative staff. If some administrations use community interpreters in a generalised but little reinforced way, it is by far not the case for all. Therefore, the civil servants remain the only ones to judge the necessity to have an interpreter intervene outside of any regulatory framework.



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## USEFUL INTERNET LINKS

- Appartenances Lausanne  
<http://www.appartenances.ch/formations.html>
- Bureau de l'Intégration de Genève  
<http://www.ge.ch/integration/>
- Centre Santé Migrants des Hôpitaux Cantonaux de Genève  
[http://migrantcare.hug-ge.ch/soins\\_migrants/CSM\\_activites.html](http://migrantcare.hug-ge.ch/soins_migrants/CSM_activites.html)
- Geneva Health Forum  
<http://www.genevahealthforum.org>
- Interpret  
<http://inter-pret.ch/contenus/shtml/qs-fr.shtml>
- A Short Guide for Parents and Children  
<http://www.ge.ch/dip/GestionContenu/detail.asp?mod=actualite.html&id=614>
- Migrant Friendly Hospitals (MFH)  
[www.mfh-eu.net](http://www.mfh-eu.net)
- Federal Office of Migration  
<http://www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/fr/home/dokumentation/gesetzgebung/auslaendergesetz.html>
- Office Cantonal de la Statistique  
[www.ge.ch/statistique/](http://www.ge.ch/statistique/)
- Réseau d'enseignement prioritaire  
[http://www.ge.ch/enseignement\\_primaire/rep/welcome.asp](http://www.ge.ch/enseignement_primaire/rep/welcome.asp)
- Service Communautaire de la Planchette, links for migrants  
[http://www.planchette.ch/pages/page\\_lien.html](http://www.planchette.ch/pages/page_lien.html)
- State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)  
[www.seco.admin.ch](http://www.seco.admin.ch)



## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Lists of organizations and persons contacted

#### Community associations (who responded to our call)

##### **Asociación Acoge**

M. Luis Miguel Castaño  
Tel.: 076 592 90 90

##### **Asociación Boliviana de Ginebra**

13, rue Versonnex, 1207 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 786 47 17  
E-mail : [abg@llajta.ch](mailto:abg@llajta.ch)  
Web: [www.llajta.ch/abg/index.htm](http://www.llajta.ch/abg/index.htm)

##### **Association Genève-Asie**

63 rue de Lausanne, 1201 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 908 58 20  
Web: [www.genasia.ch](http://www.genasia.ch)

##### **Association marocaine de solidarité et d'intégration en Suisse**

11, rue de Cornavin, 1201 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 900 02 38  
E-mail: [marocaine.amsis@kultura.ch](mailto:marocaine.amsis@kultura.ch)

##### **Association pour l'intégration des Equatoriens de Genève**

97, bd Carl-Vogt, 1205 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 340 71 70  
E-mail : [rodrigomovi@bluewin.ch](mailto:rodrigomovi@bluewin.ch)

##### **Association Suisse-Cambodge**

##### **Centre Kurde des Droits de l'Homme – KURD-CHR**

Maison des Associations, 15, rue des Savoises, 1205 Geneva  
Tel : 022 328 19 84  
Fax : 022 328 19 83  
E-mail : [kurd-chr@bluewin.ch](mailto:kurd-chr@bluewin.ch)  
Web : [www.kurd-chr.ch](http://www.kurd-chr.ch)

##### **Communauté catholique de langue portugaise**

14bis, av. Ste-Clotilde, 1205 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 708 01 90  
E-mail: [communaute-lusophone@cath-ge.ch](mailto:communaute-lusophone@cath-ge.ch)  
Web: <http://www.cath-ge.ch/index.php?p=paroisses&view=265&cat=7>



**Communauté hellénique de Genève**

43, av Petit-Senn, 1225 Chêne-Bourg  
Tel.: +41 22 349 79 79  
E-mail: [info@communaute-hellenique-geneve.ch](mailto:info@communaute-hellenique-geneve.ch)  
Web: <http://www.communaute-hellenique-geneve.ch>

**Cosunam**

Comité Suisse-Vietnam  
PO Box 353, 1211 Geneva 17  
Email : [info@cosunam.ch](mailto:info@cosunam.ch)  
Web : [www.cosunam.ch](http://www.cosunam.ch)

**Forum des Tunisiens et du droit pour tous**

Maison des Associations, Rue des Savoises 15, CH-1205 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 321 12 55  
E-mail: [anouar.gharbi@droitpourtous.ch](mailto:anouar.gharbi@droitpourtous.ch)  
Web : [www.droitpourtous.ch](http://www.droitpourtous.ch)

**Ligue Suisse des Droits de l'Homme**

17, boulevard des Philosophes, 1205 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 800 03 45  
Fax: 022 800 03 40  
Web: <http://www.avocats-geneve.ch>

**Migraf** (Association de la migration africaine)

4, rue de la Puiserande, 1205 Geneva  
Te.: 022 329 51 09  
Web: [www.migraf.com](http://www.migraf.com)

**Raizes**

Maison des Associations  
15, rue des Savoises, 1205 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 321 00 40  
E-mail: [mrula@hotmail.com](mailto:mrula@hotmail.com)  
Web: [www.raizes.ch](http://www.raizes.ch)

**Tierra Incognita**

6, Rue Charles-Humbert, 1205 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 321 59 81  
E-mail: [info@tierra-incognita.ch](mailto:info@tierra-incognita.ch)  
Web: [www.tierra-incognita.ch](http://www.tierra-incognita.ch)



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**Université Populaire Albanaise (UPA)**

112, rue de Lyon, 1203 Geneva  
Tel.: 022/340 25 77  
E-mail: [upsh@upa.ch](mailto:upsh@upa.ch)  
Web: [www.upa.ch](http://www.upa.ch)

**Community associations (which we were not able to meet)**

**Association des hongrois de Genève**

21, ch. De Terroux, 1218 Grand Saconnex  
Tel.: 022 348 03 78

**Associ. Culturelle bosniaque**

Rue Jean Simonet 14-16, 1219 Chatelaine  
Tel.: 022 797 02 07  
E-mail : [husanovic70@hotmail.com](mailto:husanovic70@hotmail.com)

**Association CENTEURO**

15, Rue des Savoises, 1205 Geneva

**Eglise Orthodoxe Roumaine de Suisse**

PO Box, 1211 Geneva 6  
Tel.: +41 22/ 700 49 18  
Fax: +41 22 / 700 25 86  
E-mail: [adiaconu@span.ch](mailto:adiaconu@span.ch)

**Eglise Orthodoxe Russe de Genève**

18, rue de Beaumont, 1206 Geneva  
Tel.: +41 22/ 346 47 09

**Ass. Maison Populaire de Genève – ASSMP**

Tel.: 022 328 92 82  
Fax: 022 328 92 83  
E-mail: [assmp@bluewin.ch](mailto:assmp@bluewin.ch)  
Web: [www.stdk.anatoli.com](http://www.stdk.anatoli.com)

**AMEGI (Association des Mexicains de Genève)**

16, rue de Candolle, 1205 Geneva  
Tel.: +41 22 733 40 36  
E-mail : [amegi@amegi.ch](mailto:amegi@amegi.ch)

**Association péruvienne**

5, rue Lissignol, 1201 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 731 31 92  
E-mail: [lasazondemirtha@yahoo.com](mailto:lasazondemirtha@yahoo.com)

**Indian Association Geneva**

E-mail : [contact@india-geneva.com](mailto:contact@india-geneva.com)  
Web: [www.india-geneva.com/newweb/iag-home.html](http://www.india-geneva.com/newweb/iag-home.html)

**Turkey - Ass. Maison Populaire de Genève – ASSMP**

Maison des associations

Tel.: 022 328 92 82

Fax: 022 328 92 83

E-mail: [assmp@bluewin.ch](mailto:assmp@bluewin.ch)

Web: [www.stdk.anatoli.com](http://www.stdk.anatoli.com)

**Bagtasan, Association pour l'intégration des Philippins**

50, rue de Vermont, 1202 Geneva

Tel.: 078 878 45 45

E-mail : [bagtasan@gmail.com](mailto:bagtasan@gmail.com)

**Communauté Chinoise de Genève**

Tel.: 022 781 48 00

E-mail: [info@ccge.ch](mailto:info@ccge.ch)

Web: [www.ccge.ch](http://www.ccge.ch)

**Association Rede Social Brasil (maison Kultura)**

25, rue du Nant, 1207 Geneva

Tel.: 078 683 26 21

E-mail: [redesocialbrasil@kultura.ch](mailto:redesocialbrasil@kultura.ch)

Web: [www.redesocialbrasil.org](http://www.redesocialbrasil.org)

**Consulates and Embassies****Angola (Republic of) (Consulate)**

Rue de Lausanne 45-47

1201 Geneva

Tel.: +41 22 / 732 30 60

Fax: +41 22 / 732 30 72

E-mail: [ambmission.angola@bluewin.ch](mailto:ambmission.angola@bluewin.ch)

Web: [www.courrier-ambang.ch](http://www.courrier-ambang.ch)

**Algeria (People's Democratic Republic of) (Consulate)**

Route de Lausanne 308 bis

1293 Bellevue, GE

Tel.: +41 22 / 774 19 19 / 09

Fax: +41 22 / 774 19 06

Web: [www.consulat-algerie.ch](http://www.consulat-algerie.ch)

**Afghanistan (Islamic Republic of) (Consulate)**

Rue de Lausanne 63, 1202 Geneva

Tel.: +41 22 / 731 14 49

Fax: +41 22 / 731 45 10

**General Consulate of Brazil**

Rue de Lausanne 54  
3rd floor  
1202 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 906 94 20  
E-mail: [brasil@consulado.ch](mailto:brasil@consulado.ch)  
Web: [www.consulado.ch](http://www.consulado.ch)

**Bulgaria (Republic of) (Consulate)**

Rue Sénebier 20, PO Box 66, 1211 Geneva 12  
Tel.: +41 22 / 818 08 08  
Fax: +41 22 / 818 08 18  
E-mail: [gabriel.benezra@budin.ch](mailto:gabriel.benezra@budin.ch)

**Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China**

Bellariastrasse 20  
8002 Zurich  
Tel.: +41 1 201 10 05  
Fax: +41 1 201 07 71

**Croatia (Republic of) (Consulate)**

Thunstrasse 45, 3005 Bern  
Tel.: +41 31 / 352 50 80  
Fax: +41 31 / 352 80 59  
E-mail: [croemb.bern@mvp.hr](mailto:croemb.bern@mvp.hr)

**Egypt (Arab Republic of) (Consulate general)**

Route de Florissant 47 ter  
1206 Geneva  
Tel: 022 347 63 79 / 022 347 62 55

**Ethiopia (Federal Democratic Republic of)**

Rue de Moillebeau 56, PO Box 338, 1211 Geneva 19  
Tel.: +41 22 / 919 70 10  
Fax: +41 22 / 919 70 29  
E-mail: [mission.ethiopia@ties.itu.int](mailto:mission.ethiopia@ties.itu.int)  
Web: [www.ethiopianmission.ch](http://www.ethiopianmission.ch)

**Macedonia (Consulate)**

Chemin Ami-Argand 68  
1290 Versoix, Geneva  
Tel.: +41 22 / 755 21 68  
Fax: +41 22 / 755 14 96



**Peru**

17, rue des Pierres-du-Niton, 1207 Geneva  
Tel.: 022/707 49 17  
E-mail: [conperginebra@bluewin.ch](mailto:conperginebra@bluewin.ch)  
Web: [www.conperginebra.ch](http://www.conperginebra.ch)

**Philippines**

Consulat général, 47 avenue Blanc, 1201 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 716 19 30

**Serbia (Consulate)**

Seminarstrasse 5, 3006 Bern  
Tel.: +41 31 352 63 53 / 54 / 55  
Fax: +41 31 / 351 44 74  
E-mail: [info@yuamb.ch](mailto:info@yuamb.ch)  
Web: [www.yuamb.ch](http://www.yuamb.ch)

**Sri Lanka (Democratic Socialist Republic of) (Consulate)**

Rue de Moillebeau 56, 1209 Geneva  
Tel.: +41 22 / 919 12 50 (visas) 788 24 41 (passports)  
Fax: +41 22 / 734 90 84 - 788 31 92  
E-mail: [consulate.sri-lanka@ties.itu.int](mailto:consulate.sri-lanka@ties.itu.int)

**Thailand (Kingdom of) (Consulate)**

16, cours des Bastions  
PO Box 289, 1211 Geneva 12  
Tel.: +41 22 / 311 07 23  
Fax: +41 22 / 311 00 49

**Turkey (Republic of) (Consulate)**

Route de Pré-Bois 20  
PO Box 1901, 1215 Geneva 15 (Airport)  
Tel.: +41 22 / 710 93 60

**Ukraine (Consulate)**

Chemin de Conches 4  
PO Box 5, 1231 Conches  
Tel.: +41 22 / 890 04 38  
Fax: +41 22 / 890 04 39

**Ukraine (Permanent Mission to the United Nations)**

14, rue de l'Orangerie, 1202 Geneva  
Tel: 022 740 32 70  
E-mail : [mission.ukraine@ties.itu.int](mailto:mission.ukraine@ties.itu.int)

**Vietnam (Socialist Republic of) (Consulate)**

Chemin des Corbillettes 30, 1218 Le Grand Saconnex  
Tel.: +41 22 / 798 24 85





## **Associations of support for integration**

### **AGORA**

Maison de la Croisette  
158, rte de Vernier, 1214 Vernier  
Tel.: 022 930 00 89  
Web: [www.agoralacroisette.ch](http://www.agoralacroisette.ch)

### **Asloca, Association for the defence of tenants**

12 rue du Lac, 1207 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 716 18 00  
E-mail: [asloca.geneve@asloca.ch](mailto:asloca.geneve@asloca.ch)  
Web: [www.asloca.ch](http://www.asloca.ch)

### **Caritas, L'Accueil, legal and social services**

Passage 51-53 rue de Carouge, 1205 Geneva  
Tel. : +41 22 / 708 04 44  
Web: [www.caritas-geneve.ch](http://www.caritas-geneve.ch)

### **Centre d'accueil CAMARADA**

19, ch. de Villars, 1203 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 344 03 39  
Web: [www.camarada.ch](http://www.camarada.ch)

### **Centre de Contact Suisses-Immigrés**

25, route des Acacias, 1227 Acacias  
Tel.: 022 304.48.60  
Web: [www.ccsi.ch](http://www.ccsi.ch)

### **Collectif de soutien aux sans-papiers**

25 rte des Acacias, 1227 Acacias  
Tel.: 022 301 63 33  
E-mail: [collectifsanspapiers@ccsi.ch](mailto:collectifsanspapiers@ccsi.ch)  
Web: [www.sans-papiers.ch/geneve](http://www.sans-papiers.ch/geneve)

### **Croix-Rouge Genevoise**

9, rte des Acacias, PO Box 288, 1211 Geneva 4  
Tel.: 022 304 04 91  
Web: [www.croix-rouge-ge.ch](http://www.croix-rouge-ge.ch)

### **ELISA**

Case postale 110, 1211 Geneva 7  
Tel.: 022 733.37.57

### **Groupement Association Parents-Elèves (GAPP)**

Post: PO Box 708 - 1211 Geneva 13  
Address: 12, Rue Saint-Jean - 1203 Geneva  
Office opening hours: Tuesdays 9.30 – 11.30 a.m.  
Tel./Fax: 022 344 22 55



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**OSEO Genève**

34 bis, rue du Môle, 1201 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 716 59 00  
Web: [www.oseo-ge.ch](http://www.oseo-ge.ch)

**REFLETS**

11, rue Jean Violette, CP 75, 1211 Geneva 4  
Web: [www.caritas-geneve.ch/reflets](http://www.caritas-geneve.ch/reflets) Dialogue  
Ms. Doris Gorgé, Présidente  
11, Avenue de la Forêt, 1202 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 340 64 80

**Syndicat SIT**

16, rue des Chaudronniers  
PO Box 3287, 1211 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 818 03 00  
Web: [www.sit-syndicat.ch](http://www.sit-syndicat.ch)

**Syndicat UNIA Genève**

5, Ch. de Surinam, CP 288, 1211 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 949 12 00  
Web: [www.geneve.unia.ch](http://www.geneve.unia.ch)

**Public and semi-public services**

**Bureau de l'intégration des étrangers (BIE)**

12, quai du Rhône, 1205 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 327 84 99  
Web: [www.ge.ch/integration](http://www.ge.ch/integration)

**Hôpitaux universitaires genevois**

Département de Médecine Communautaire et de Premier Recours  
Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève, 24, Rue Micheli-du-Crest, 1211 Geneva 14  
Tel.: 022 372 96 69  
Web: [www.hug-ge.ch](http://www.hug-ge.ch)



### **Hospice Général**

12, Cours de Rive, CP 3360, 1211 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 420 59 87  
Web: [www.hg-ge.ch](http://www.hg-ge.ch)

### **Centre LAVI Genève**

72 Boulevard Saint-Georges  
1205 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 320 01 02  
Web: [www.centrelavi-ge.ch](http://www.centrelavi-ge.ch)

### **Churches**

#### **Communauté catholique de langue portugaise**

Portugal (Republic of) (Consulate)  
Route de Ferney 220  
1218 Grand-Saconnex, Geneva  
Tel.: 022 791 76 36  
Fax: 022 791 76 38  
E-mail: [mail@cggen.dgaccp.pt](mailto:mail@cggen.dgaccp.pt)

### **Language schools**

#### **Université Populaire du Canton de Genève (UPCG)**

23 rue du Vuache, 1201 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 339 05 00  
E-mail: [info@upcge.ch](mailto:info@upcge.ch)  
Web: [www.upcge.ch](http://www.upcge.ch)

#### **Université Populaire Albanaise**

112 rue de Lyon, 1201 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 340 25 77  
E-mail: [upa-upsh@upa.ch](mailto:upa-upsh@upa.ch)  
Web: [www.upa.ch](http://www.upa.ch)

#### **Université Ouvrière de Genève (UOG)**

3 Place des Grottes, 1201 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 733 50 60  
E-mail: [info@uog.ch](mailto:info@uog.ch)  
Web: [www.uog.ch](http://www.uog.ch)

#### **ASC International House**

72 rue de Lausanne, 1202 Geneva  
Tel.: 022 731 85 20  
Web: [www.asc-ih.ch](http://www.asc-ih.ch)



## Appendix 2: Questionnaire (Beneficiaries) beginners' level

### Personal information:

Year of birth: ..... Sex: Male  Female

Nationality: ..... Profession: .....

When did you arrive in Geneva? .....

What is your status? Diplomat  Migrant worker  Refugee  Other  .....

### Your languages

Mother tongue: .....

Do you speak other languages? Yes  No  If yes, which one do you master best?  
.....

### Accompaniment

Do you receive assistance with French in everyday life? Yes  No

If yes, from whom?

Spouse  Child(ren)  Other family member  Friend  Other (specify) .....

Would you need someone to assist you in everyday life with French (the services we propose are free of charge)? If yes, in which domain?

Doctor/hospital  ..... Accommodation  .....

Administration  ..... School  .....

Social service  ..... Work  .....

Letter writing  ..... Translation of docs.  .....

Other  .....

Comments: .....

.....

.....

How frequently?

Occasionally  Each month  1 to 2 times per month

Once a week  Other .....

Who will benefit from these services?

Only me  My family  Other (please specify) .....



## Appendix 3: Questionnaire (Beneficiaries) intermediate level

### Personal information

Year of birth: ..... Sex: Male  Female

Nationality: ..... Profession: .....

When did you arrive in Geneva? .....

What is your status? Diplomat  Migrant worker  Refugee  Other  .....

Do you have a job at the moment? Yes  No  .....

Level of education:

Primary  Secondary  High school  Apprenticeship  University

### Your languages

Mother tongue: .....

Do you speak other languages? Yes  No  If yes, which one do you master best? .....

Level of French (written): advanced  intermediate  beginner

(oral): advanced  intermediate  beginner

### Accompaniment

When you arrived in Switzerland, was someone able to assist you with French in everyday life?

Yes  No  If no, how did you manage? .....

.....

Does it happen to you that you are accompanied by someone who masters French better than you in order to assist you? If yes, who is it?

Spouse  Child(ren)  Other family member  Friend  Other (specify) .....

If yes, what were the last 2-3 occasions during this year (approximate date) and in which domain?

Doctor/hospital  ..... Accommodation  .....

Administration  ..... School  .....

Social service  ..... Work  .....

Letter-writing  ..... Doc. translation  .....

Others .....



Comments : .....

Would you need someone to assist you in everyday life with French (The services we propose are free of charge)? If yes, in which domain?

Doctor/hospital  ..... Accommodation  .....

Administration  ..... School  .....

Social service  ..... Work  .....

Letter-writing  ..... Doc. translation .....

Other  .....

Comments: .....

.....

.....

How frequently?

Occasionally  Each month  1 to 2 times per month

Once a week  Other .....

Who will benefit from these services?

Only you  My family  Other (please specify) .....

**Thank you for your participation!**

**Please do not hesitate to contact us if the subject interests you**



## **Appendix 4: Questionnaire for public institutions**

Name of the Department or of the Office:

Address, telephone, e-mail and function of the contact person:

Can you estimate the percentage of non-French speaking migrants who present themselves in your service?

Can your employees call upon the services of an interpreter?

### **IF YES**

Do directives on this subject exist?

Specify which ones:

Has their application been evaluated?

Specify:

Do you consider the available means to be sufficient?

Through which intermediary are the translators recruited?

What is their training?

Which languages are the most requested?

### **IF NO**

Why do your services not use interpreters?

Would your service have a need to use interpreters?

Can you estimate the volume of work this represents?

Comments:

WE THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING TO THIS QUESTIONNAIRE AND REMAIN AT YOUR DISPOSAL



## Appendix 5: Models for language services in the context of healthcare

Summary of Downing, B and Roat, C. Models for the Provision of Language Access in Health Care Settings; National Council on Interpreting for Health Care under contract to the Hablamos Juntos program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2002, <http://www.ncihc.org>

**Table 1**

<b>Formula</b>	<b>Description of the formula</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Bilingual clinical staff member of reference	Exchanges with the patient during treatment are carried out in the mother tongue of the latter. The clinical staff member of reference may be a native speaker of the target language or indeed have studied it. In this formula, the fees are based on the preparation and the training of the (future) clinical staff members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No interpreting fees</li> <li>• Approximate services provided to non-English speaking patients by English-speaking clinical staff members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better quality of service if few target languages.</li> <li>• Necessity to evaluate the skills of the clinical staff member often neglected.</li> </ul>
Bilingual patient	Supporting the skills of the patients in English, which limits the recourse to communication assistance. The fees are based on the development of ESL (English as a Second Language) programs.	Excellent strategy in the long-term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length of language learning among adults.</li> <li>• ESL programs usually put emphasis on practical communication necessary for survival and work.</li> </ul>
Ad hoc interpreter: Bilingual clinical support staff	The bilingual clinical support staff member (nurses, social assistants, technicians, doctors etc.) provide an interpreting service to a patient instead of the clinical staff member of reference. The fees for this formula are expressed in the time spent by the interpreter to the detriment of his/her normal activities. Nevertheless, it is often thought that the interpreting does not incur additional expenses for the establishment. In spite of everything, some of them propose a remuneration supplement for this work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediate availability of the interpreter</li> <li>• In addition to the service itself, knowledge of the interpreter in health care and medical terminology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ad hoc interpreters are rarely trained in interpreting techniques and ethics.</li> <li>• The patients may have difficulty in distinguishing between the moments when the clinical staff members are carrying out their normal activities and those when they are taking on the role of interpreters.</li> <li>• Loss of productivity of the clinical staff members in their normal activities.</li> <li>• High rates of compensation of working hours for the bilingual staff.</li> </ul>





**Table 2**

<b>Formula</b>	<b>Description/ application</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Ad hoc interpreter: bilingual non-clinical support	Bilingual non-clinical staff members are usually solicited each time the need is felt within the establishment, which goes unnoticed most of the time. Some establishments grant a supplement for these services.	Quick access to people who are able to interpret.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ad hoc interpreters are rarely trained in interpreting techniques and ethics.</li> </ul>
Ad hoc interpreter: community services organizations	Community services organizations take charge of providing interpreters (in general a bilingual employee or person in charge of files) free of charge to accompany their clients to the place of treatment. The expenses incurred are covered by the community services organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No effort or fees for the establishment.</li> <li>Most of the time, the patient knows the person in charge of the files and therefore trusts him/her.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ad hoc interpreters are rarely trained in interpreting techniques and ethics.</li> <li>Unequal access between « registered » English-speaking and non-English speaking patients.</li> </ul>
Ad hoc interpreter: family and friends	Interpreting carried out by a member of the patient's family or a friend. It can be a matter of a direct request expressed by the patient. This formula does not incur fees for the establishment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The link existing between the interpreter and the patient may be beneficial for the latter.</li> <li>Some patients do not wish to divulge their state of health to people outside of the family circle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This formula is advised against by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).</li> <li>It is possible that a family member or a friend may conceal certain information from the patient or take precedence over the clinical staff member in the discussion.</li> <li>The patient may feel embarrassed about revealing certain information in the presence of people close to them.</li> </ul>
Professional interpreters	Professional interpreters are hired by the establishment for their language skills, their training in interpreting and their qualifications (if possible). The fees undertaken by the establishment may include recruitment, selection (screening), training, development of timetables (scheduling) and supervision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recourse to professional interpreters constitutes the opportunity to get to know the patients and their needs, the service providers and resources.</li> <li>These interpreters are likely to be in possession of interpreting skills and ethics.</li> </ul>	This formula is not profitable if the demand is not considerable.



**Table 3**

Formula	Description/ application	Advantages	Disadvantages
Contract interpreters	The interpreters have a direct contract with the establishment. The fees undertaken by the establishment include recruitment, selection and development of timetables.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility of rigorous selection of interpreters according to criteria of language skills.</li> <li>• Is suitable when the demand is lower or for rare languages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depends on the availability of qualified interpreters wishing to work under contract.</li> <li>• Depends on the number of other healthcare establishments (or other places of treatment) which have enough work to propose to the interpreter so that he/she stays there.</li> </ul>
Agency interpreters	The establishment signs a contract with the agencies providing language services which, in turn, recruit, hire and distribute interpreters according to demand. The fees are invoiced by the agency in the form of an hourly fee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agencies may fill the absence of a department specifically attached to interpreting within the establishment and take charge of the recruitment, selection and follow-up of the interpreters.</li> <li>• Large agencies are likely to have access to a wide network of contacts. They can therefore provide work to their interpreters and contact others, which will expand the network and the range of languages proposed even more.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency interpreters may be solicited by numerous establishments, so much so that they never have the opportunity to become familiarized with one of them in particular.</li> <li>• This formula is traditionally the most costly.</li> </ul>
Volunteer interpreters	They are not compensated for their work. They may be immigrants, students, their spouses or other people wishing to give their assistance. The only fees incurred are the program management fees.	Is best suited in places where there are numerous bilingual and qualified people without a professional activity, for example in university cities, places where there are numerous diplomats or foreign businessmen/-women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few volunteers have the necessary knowledge for effective interpreting in a healthcare establishment. It is difficult to demand these skills of them.</li> <li>• The turnover rate is high and requires considerable recruitment efforts.</li> <li>• Volunteering is perceived differently according to the cultures, which complicates the recruitment of speakers of certain languages.</li> </ul>

**Table 4**

<b>Formula</b>	<b>Description/ application</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
Distance interpreters (by video or telephone)	The clinical staff member of reference puts a patient in contact with an interpreter by means of video or telephone. The use of technologies here can go from the alternate use of a simple telephone handset by the clinical staff member and the patient to the installation of a camera in the examination room. The fees can vary considerably according to the technology used and the origin of the service (internal or external to the establishment).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids waiting and uses the interpreter in a more productive way.</li> <li>• Role of the interpreter clearly defined.</li> <li>• Distance interpreters can work from anywhere and offer their services to a wider public.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone interpreting does not allow for non-verbal communication, therefore important information may be left aside.</li> <li>• Certain additional advantages of direct interpreting may be lost (interface between cultures, accompaniment of the patient in the premises, support).</li> </ul>



## Volunteers linking knowledge with needs



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