

A brief outlook of the French cultural diplomacy

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I) General Characteristics of the French Cultural Diplomacy

The organisation of the cultural policy in France is determined by the law of 27 July 2010.

The cultural cooperation actions have as main objectives to enhance the french culture and to contribute to the promotion of cultural diversity as defined by the UNESCO Convention on "the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions "on 20 October 2005. These two objectives are broken down by cultural services, institutes and cultural centers, French alliances and specialised offices.

Thus, the french cultural network abroad: (i) promotes dialogue and high-level artistic exchanges and contemporary creation in both the visual arts, the performing arts as well as in music; (ii) ensures the animation and the coordination of the french cultural network abroad (iii) diffuse french audiovisual production and supports the specialised operators, (iv) promotes french cinema by acting with universities and cultural institutions, (v) promotes french participation in the global debate of ideas.

Beyond these "traditional" cultural diplomacy actions, there are now missions related to the emergence of new challenges throughout the world: (i) the promotion and sale of the french cultural and artistic expertise (heritage, architecture, museology, cultural activities for the public, archives, libraries, etc..), (ii) strengthening the presence of the french cultural industries in countries with dynamic markets and in emerging markets, which now goes by digital platforms and numerical servers.

Two projects were launched in 2010: (1) the commitment of the french cultural network in the digital route, (2) the training of all expatriate staff and local staff (book, cultural engineering, with a important digital component, new french scene performing arts, audiovisual, etc..). These efforts were continued in 2011 by the French Institute, with the aim of: (i) maintaining the effort in favor of positions called "influencers" 15 countries of the European Union, United States, China, Japan, Gulf countries, Brazil, Mexico, India, South Africa, (ii) encourage the cultural network to strengthen its partnership and sponsorship (mécénat)¹, (iii) continue the modernisation of the cultural network and the training of its staff, so that it can respond to changes in the global cultural landscape increasingly turned to new technologies.

Regarding specifically the Francophonie, the french policy is organised around the following priorities: strengthen the status of the French language as an international language, to value French as a development tool in southern francophone countries, support the teaching of French in foreign education systems and finally participate in the training of academic elites and foreign professional.

.Within the French Institute, the Department of French thus implements and supports programs to strengthen the position of the French language in the world. It pursues the promotion, dissemination and teaching of the French language in the cultural network (French institutes, alliances Françaises) as well as in local educational systems (schools and universities) taken so far by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It also supports the introduction of a second language during compulsory school abroad. On 15 June 2011, the Minister of Foreign Affairs presented to the Council of ministers a development plan of French teaching abroad which creates a label "FrancEducation", aimed at foreign institutions offering programs in Francophone content of high quality and inspired by the French educational model.

The Strengthening of the use of french also involves its learning by non-francophone officials of the Member States that serve in Brussels and those from neighborhood countries of the European Union. The pedagogical educational fund implemented in the 185 program for countries is complementary for countries that are not members of the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (IOF). As part of the preparation of the Council Presidencies of the European Union, training courses are also organised with the French National School of Administration (ENA). The promotion of French is also achieved through educational exchanges.

Finally, expertise and pedagogical training of teachers is essential to ensure the quality of the teaching of French and therefore its diffusion. The training of French teachers of local educational systems are organised in the vast majority by Cultural Affairs and Cooperation Services (SCAC). Regional training also help to develop synergies and exchange of experiences among teachers of the same geographical area. Operation "Teachers in France" is thus a tool of the cooperation with French local education authorities at the time where the promotion and dissemination of French necessary rely on professional French teachers around the world.

Finally, we should add the events in the Francophonie, which are structured around recurring initiatives in one hand, by the IOF for the International Day of the Francophonie March 20, and, on the other hand by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, the Delegation of the French language and the languages of France (DGLFLF), and since 1 January 2011, by the French Institute for the Week of the French language, whose 16th edition in 2011 saw 2300 events. French alliances, French cultural centers, French institutes, schools, universities and associations have been involved to publicise and promote the French language and culture abroad.

II) The network association of French Alliances

French Alliance Foundation is a partner in the implementation of the foreign cultural policy whose action is essential to the french cultural system abroad. The operating mode of the French Alliance Foundation, which includes the network of around 1000 French alliances, is completely decentralised. The majority of French "conventionnées" alliances are focusing on french courses, but many have the full range of activities of a cultural center (language, cultural programming, library, art gallery), especially in Latin America, Russia and India. French Alliances are alongside cultural centers and French institutes, part of the French cultural network abroad. Furthermore, the French alliances can respond to calls from CulturesFrance (performing arts, visual arts).

This associative network is doing really well, according to the French Alliance Foundation. In 2011, It provided french lessons to 446,600 students worldwide. This figure only includes conventionnées Alliances with SCAC, compared to 210,200 people who follow the courses offered by the network of public cultural institutions that have financial independence. If one includes courses in other subjects (culture, gastronomy, for example), there are almost 542,500 people who follow the course of a French alliance. There is a continuous increase in numbers, in the order of 2 to 4% per year during the last ten years.

The network of French alliances has also a unique real estate park, which has often been acquired with the participation of the French State. The establishment of French alliances is historically very strong in Latin America, with 145,000 students. The location is outstanding in Brasil, Colombia and Peru in particular. But since the 1990s, geographic reorientation occurs in the direction of Europe and Asia: the number of students studying in Europe is 80 000 Asia 90 000 (for comparison they are 68,000 in Africa). India is a special case because of the existence of former and quality network, which has developed in the absence of a cultural institute. This is an interesting example because it is one of the countries selected for testing the attachment of the French Institute. This means that there is now in India a "French Institute", which actually covers only an administrative Embassy, next to the French Alliance.

Finally, it should be recalled that, locally, some alliances are subsidised by the embassies or by the provision of expatriate staff (usually their manager) and are related to posts through annual conventions of goals and means. Moreover, in countries where the network of alliances is important, general delegates, made available by the MAEE but under the mandate of the Foundation, provide a coordinating role and animation.

Outside the French Alliance Foundation in Paris, the French alliance in 2010 had human and financial resources: (i) 234 expatriates and 106 international volunteers

placed at their disposal by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ii) approximately 8500 volunteer administrators, (iii) about 9000 teachers recruited locally (iv) approximately € 100 million of total revenues coming from their activities (v) approximately € 6 million in subventions and private funding.

A three-year joint plan between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the French Alliance Foundation on network evolution, evidenced by the three-year agreement (2011-2013) was signed on 1 October 2010. It includes a schedule detailing the Foundation's missions and indicators to assess the results. A tripartite agreement has also been signed between the French Alliance Foundation, the French Institute and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It will strengthen the cohesion of what is presented as "a unique network with different status." The Ministry reviews in this context the mapping of the French alliances benefiting from its support - through a grant or provision of expatriate staff - in conjunction with the French Alliance Foundation and based on strategic directions and axes defined redeployment common.

France is not the only country to promote its language. Many countries are trying to develop also their language abroad. For example, United Kingdom with the British Council, Germany through the Goethe Institute present in 78 countries through 143 institutes. Other European countries do the same thing with the Cervantes Institute (Spain), the Dante Alighieri Society (Italy), the Camoes Institute (Portugal) and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute (Poland). This leads us to hope beyond EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) for a European foreign cultural diplomacy.