

# France

[RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE]

## **CIVIL SERVICE PLACEMENT IN PARIS ON BEHALF OF SPES**

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**COUNTRY FACT SHEET**

- **Population** 60,561,000 inhabitants
- **Area** 543,965 sq. km.
- **Population density** 111 inhabitants per sq. km.

■ **Present form of government** Presidential republic

■ **System of government**

France is divided into 22 regions and subdivided into 96 departments; separate overseas departments and overseas territorial collectivities.

■ **European elections**  
**10-13 June 2004** 78 European parliamentarians

■ **Social security and welfare system**

The standing expenses for social security were 30.6% of the GDP for the year 2002. The general form of social security, based on a system of mandatory insurance, covers all kinds of risks that could be incurred on behalf of covered beneficiaries (maternity leave, disability, death, work related accidents, etc.). In addition, there is social assistance and intervention provided to both those who do not have a right to social security services, and those who have specific social problems. With regard to the first case, certain services are provided to underprivileged children, the elderly, and the handicapped. These are organised and financed primarily by the respective departments and, in part, by the State. Social intervention, on the other hand, is composed of the facultative activities carried out through public education, associations and foundations, whose objective is to assist, in a specific manner, persons or groups in situations of extreme difficulty.

■ **Public health system**

It is a mixed system based on *sécurité sociale*, which is a social security system that insures citizens against various risks, including

health care that covers 96% of the population at present. From an organisational point of view, the French public health system is of the centralist type, with the State assuming the most widespread programming and regulatory powers. About 75% of the costs are covered by the *Sécurité Sociale*, and the remaining 25% by families that are able to sign up with private insurance agencies or friendly societies, which are presently increasing in number. In 2003, several innovative decentralisation aspects were introduced (such as the concept of benefits and taxation autonomy to local collectivities), even though cautious and limited, in what is considered the most centralist European State.

■ **Level of education**

Percentage of young adults (aged 20-24) who have completed secondary schooling (2004): 79.8%  
 Percentage of the adult population (aged 25-64) who have completed the highest level of secondary schooling (2002): 64.1%

■ **Immigration rate** 1% of the population (Eurostat - 2004)

■ **Growth rate**  
 (report of annual births/deaths per 100 persons): 0.35%

■ **Employment rate (2003)**  
 Population between the ages of 15-64: 63.2%  
 57.2% female  
 and 69.4% male  
 Population between the ages of 55-64: 32.9% female  
 and 40.9% male

■ **Unemployment rate (2003)**  
 Population between the ages of 15-64: 9.6%  
 10.7% female  
 and 6.7% male

# FCSF

## Fédération des centres sociaux e socioculturels de France

The *FCSF* is a coordinating body which creates and encourages ties between social and socio-cultural centres and society, whilst ensuring appropriate social exchange between local and international levels of society.

### The objectives

The *FCSF* has four priority objectives aimed at engendering changes in current practices and which attempt to contribute to “a better way of living together”:

- The reinforcement of active citizenship through the development of civil society a changing: participation (citizens, civil society, not for profit organisations and their future); equality (men, women); education (the state of public education, educational plans); the development of public spirit and the fight against extremism.
- The development of human resources, support to volunteering, experimentation with new methods of protecting employment.
- Economic development and support of social and socio-cultural centres: funding and management of the centres.
- Communication: political communication within and outside of the Federation in order to stimulate reflection on society’s problems starting at the local level and spreading up to the European and international level to create a movement.

Together with its 1,200 social centre members and local coordination bodies, the *FCSF* has various functions:

- Policy and future prospects for social and socio-cultural centres.
- Establishing, gathering and exchanging good practices, supporting the network of local federation member centres.
- Communication with public authorities, partners, local authorities and the public at large, regarding plans for participation and the value of the network in all its diversity.
- Development of the network of organisations and members (support for the creation of centres, action-groups).
- Ongoing training and qualification of network members.

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**PARTNER CENTRE FACT SHEET**

**FCSF**

■ Population served

72 million

■ Geographic area

40 regions of France

■ Organisations members

10 members from national umbrella

■ Organisations served

1400 social and cultural centres

■ People employed

full-time

7000

part-time

5600

<p>■ <b>Number of volunteers</b></p>	<p>on the Board and in controlling organs in services and activities</p>	<p>FCSF: 25 Regional federation: 800 Local centres : 5000</p>
<p>■ <b>Annual budget year 2004</b></p>	<p>3,000,000 Euro 45% public funding 30% membership fees 15% European funding 10% other</p>	
<p>■ <b>Agencies</b></p>	<p>40 regional federations 1,400 social and cultural centres Agora Europe: European branch of the FCSF</p>	
<p>■ <b>Services offered</b></p>	<p>Training Advice Information Practical resources Representation European - International networking <i>other</i> Communication: Newsletter, Publications</p>	<p>X X X X X X</p>

## INDEX - France

OVERVIEW OF THE SECTOR	p. 45	<b>5. Representation and coordination of the third sector</b>	46
<b>1. Historical background</b>	45	5.1 <i>CPCA</i>	46
		5.2 <i>CNVA</i>	46
		5.3 <i>FONJEP</i>	46
<b>2. Importance of the third sector and extent from a statistical viewpoint</b>	46	<b>6. Organisations and provisions to support and qualify volunteering</b>	46
2.1 The economic importance of the third sector	46	6.1 Organisations promoted by public institutions	46
2.2 The social economy by sector	46	6.2 <i>Maison des Associations</i>	46
2.3 The economic importance of voluntary organisations and volunteering	46	6.3 <i>MAIA</i>	46
2.4 Funding, resources and areas of activity of the third sector	46	6.4 <i>FNDVA</i>	46
<b>3. Who are the <i>bénévoles</i>? Volunteering in France</b>	46	<b>7. Principal national federations and coordination organisations</b>	46
3.1 Definitions	46	7.1 The role of national federations	46
3.2 A framework proposal: the Bénévole Charter	46	7.2 <i>CNAJEP</i>	46
3.3 The profile of the bénévoles	46	7.3 <i>CRAJEP or ARDEVA</i>	46
3.4 Outlook of society on the role of volunteering	46	7.4 <i>ANIMA'FAC</i>	46
		7.5 <i>LFEEP</i>	46
		7.6 <i>UNIOPSS</i>	46
<b>4. Juridical framework of the third sector</b>	46	<b>8. The future of volunteering: problems and prospects</b>	46
4.1 1 July 1901 Law on Associations in France	46		
4.2 Principal types of organisations	46		
4.3 The case of Alsace-Moselle	46		
4.4 Cooperatives	46		
4.5 Mutuels	46		
4.6 Fiscal aspects	46	<b>SUPPORT BODIES</b>	46

1. Volunteer service centres in France	46	6.3 <i>CICOS</i>	46
		6.4 <i>Fonda</i>	46
2. <i>France Bénévolat</i>	46	6.5 <i>Fonda Rhone Alpes</i>	46
3. <i>Passerelles et Compétences</i>	46		
4. <i>Point d'appui</i>	46	<b>ABOUT VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS</b>	46
5. <i>FCSF - Fédération des centres sociaux e socioculturels de France</i>	46	1. <b>Legal status, organisational structure and financial resources</b>	46
5.1 History of the <i>FCSF</i>	46	2. <b>Territorial range, human resources and relationships with other bodies</b>	46
5.2 What are social and socio-cultural centres?	46	3. <b>Areas of activity, goals and typology of beneficiaries</b>	46
5.3 <i>FCSF</i> social centres: how they operate	46		
5.4 <i>FCSF</i> at present	46	<i>Organisations</i>	46
5.5 The tasks of the Federation	46		
5.6 Relations with other bodies	46	<i>Bibliography and Internet resources</i>	46
6. <b>Other support bodies</b>	46		
6.1 <i>IRIV</i>	46		
6.2 <i>FFBA</i>	46		

# Overview of the sector

## VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

### 1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

*"The State must assure all citizens with means of subsistence, sustenance, clothing and a way of life which is not detrimental to health."* (Montesquieu). The French Republic is based on the representative system, on public, non-denominational and compulsory schooling, and also on the welfare system. One French characteristic is to consider the State responsible for issues which in other European countries are left to free negotiation among the social partners. If on the one hand, therefore, the State constitutes a benchmark, on the other, it is also the actor to be measured against for the protection of rights and well-being.

In order to study the French situation, we need to go back to the French Revolution which, on establishing the rights of citizens, questioned the intermediary authoritative bodies which were medieval in nature. Despite attempts to eradicate them, mutual benefit societies continued to organise themselves clandestinely, whilst the Church for its part, re-established a close network of institutions, which had been more or less destroyed in the wake of the Revolution. Organisations which were not money driven and at first opposed, were gradually absorbed into the public administration through a vast network of offices, which were decentralised into the larger communes. The outcome of this regulatory process was the law promulgated in 1901 which established the right of every citizen to become a member of an association without prior authorisation.

Through a process which was not without contrast, the right to free association was finally established, on the basis of which organisations in France have never had a role that contrasted that of the State<sup>1</sup>.

The French post-war welfare model was characterised by the great fragmentation of sectors regarding pensions and health care, which did not treat the whole of the population in the same manner, according to the Scandinavian egalitarian model. The 1960s and 1970s were years of active collective enthusiasm which saw a gradual recovery from the antiquated state of the third sector in France. Then in 1982, the implementation of administrative decentralisation mobilised human resources, technical skills and financial backing for collective interests, making the general public equally responsible for the implementation of public policies within the wide associative networks.

The 1980s marked an unprecedented growth in civil society initiatives, which in addition to progressing demands and pursuing projects for political change, began to directly organise certain economic activities, from the establishment of services of collective interest to social entrepreneurship. The incidence of decentralisation helps to increase the visibility of associations, highlighting their approach of preventing exclusion, proposing innovative and effective solutions in the event of emergencies, by means of:

<sup>1</sup>The Constitution of 1793 clearly declares the responsibilities of the State: "Public assistance is a sacred obligation."

- encouraging the development of coordination bodies and federations;
- promoting the social economy concept on a European level;
- supporting representative bodies (CNVA, 1983 and Economic and Social Council, 1983)

In the early 1970s, a proposal put forward by the then Minister of the Interior Marcelin to reintroduce the obligation for organisations to obtain prefectorial authorisation, as was the case prior to 1901 Law, caused great concern throughout the associative sector. The result was the beginning of a period of reflection, not just with regard to the aims of associationism, but also with regard to the methods and contents of a possible associative policy which could also address the political world and be capable of developing a culture of a common organised citizenship among Christians and non-Christians. This process brought an end to the debate among large sectors of French associationism, which began along a common path which would see it emerge as the interlocutor of the State and an actor of socio-economic development policies.

The social utility of associative activity, public funding and administrative decentralisation were the issues that a large number of organisations had to face in the early 1980s. This period also witnessed the establishment of a governmental advisory body set up through the initiative of the Minister André Henry, the *Conseil National de la Vie Associative - CNVA* (National Council of Associative Life), which at the same time represented and was administered by the associative sector. The organisations had to develop a united stance on general issues and tried to produce some concise proposals, overcoming any disagreements between analogous organisations. Therefore, beyond the various different ideological or theoretical approaches, a common ground among organisations was found, and it was possible to establish a common stance on certain issues of particular interest. Topical issues such as the rigid application of tax regulations, volunteering and

suitable legislation for it, public funding, relationships between organisations or with other intermediary bodies (trade unions, parties, etc.) were taken into consideration on equal terms for the first time, thus forming an effective bargaining power on behalf of the organisations.

Since 11 December 2002, the Law on Decentralisation has provided for the establishment of independent local bodies, in which the democratic participation of citizens is made possible, along with ensuring the autonomous funding for these bodies. Furthermore, since 1 October 2003, the Council of Ministers has transferred authority to territorial collectivities in accordance with a reinforced practice of “intercommunality”. This law is drastically changing the traditionally centralised French State, which nevertheless continues to have a substantial influence<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, the associative sector is becoming increasingly important in France, and in this respect, the country is demonstrating that it can keep pace with the times and with the new Europe.

Chapter II of the recent Law on Social Modernisation of 17 January 2002, on the development of training, provides further illustration of this through the “validation of acquired experience” (*VAE - validation des acquis d'expérience*). This latest provision, in fact, broadens the field of application of the 1992 Law on the validation of acquired professional training (*VAP*), comprising the validation of *bénévole* experience. It is sufficient to have three years' experience in any sector in order to obtain a State diploma validation certificate.

## 2. IMPORTANCE AND EXTENT OF THE THIRD SECTOR FROM A STATISTICAL VIEWPOINT

Composed of organisations, cooperatives, mutuals and foundations (those of public benefit have been established since 1987, in accordance with Law No 87), the third sector in France is a complex network which has undergone significant changes in recent years with the

<sup>2</sup>Since 1986, extra-curricula school sports activities has had to be carried out through an association and could no longer be organised by the school itself; in 1989 the State provided support to intermediary associations which have created jobs for categories of the population which are excluded from the labour market, etc.

forementioned Law of 1 October 2003 on Decentralisation. Among the typologies that make up the third sector, organisations are the most common and developed form. The Market Research Department of *CREDOC* (the Research Centre for the Study and Observation of Living Conditions), estimates that there are approximately 900,000 organisations in total, as opposed to 13,650 cooperatives, 5,000/6,000 mutuals and just 500 independent foundations, according to the database records of *INSEE*, the National Institute of Statistics.

## 2.1 THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF THE THIRD SECTOR

According to research carried out in 1995 by the *Johns Hopkins University*, the third sector in France is a very significant element of the country's overall economic situation. It provides 975,000 full-time jobs: around 5% of the total employment, including the 15,000 workers employed in religious congregations<sup>3</sup>. Volunteers, in particular, are a strongpoint of the sector: 23% of the French population dedicates their time to not for profit organisations, with an average of around 23 hours per month. If all the hours worked by the 12.5 million volunteers in France were added up, the total would be the equivalent of those worked by 1,115,000 full-time employees, an amount higher than the paid workers in the sector. The workforce in the French not for profit sector, if volunteers are taken into account, is equivalent to 9.6% of the total number of employees.

## 2.2 THE SOCIAL ECONOMY BY SECTOR

For the purposes of analysing the impact and importance of the social economy in France, around 250,000 organisations which have at least one paid worker have been considered. This sample of organisations stored in the data analysis system known as SIRENE includes organisations registered in the *INSEE* (National Institute of Sta-

tistics) database. The sample is only part of the total sector, which is estimated to amount to around 880,000 organisations.

### Percentage distribution of organisations and employment in the main areas of activity

SECTOR	No. Organisations (% of total)	Operational Expenditure (% of total)	Employment (% of total)	Voluntary Activity (% of total)
Culture and recreation	41.6%	15.5%	12.1%	46.7%
Education and research	15.7%	24.8%	20.7%	8.9%
Health	2.4%	14.5%	15.5%	3.4%
Social services	20.7%	33.1%	39.7%	16.8%
<b>Subtotal (the first 4 areas)</b>	<b>80.4%</b>	<b>87.9%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>74.7%</b>
Environment	3.2%	1.0%	1.0%	8.7%
Development & home care services	3.8%	4.4%	5.5%	4.0%
Civil and legal associations	6.1%	2.6%	1.9%	1.8%
International activities	0.4%	1.3%	1.8%	3.0%
Professional associations, unions	6.1%	2.9%	1.8%	6.6%
<b>Subtotal (the last 6 areas)</b>	<b>19.6%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>25.3%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

In cross-referencing the data in the table above with other data, it is possible to give a brief but interesting outline of the impact and internal network of the sector from an economic point of view:

- The third sector is concentrated to a great extent in the first four areas: culture and recreation, education, health and social services; the last three being traditionally associated with the welfare system,

<sup>3</sup> The inclusion or exclusion of religious activities does not alter the economic impact, as the number of volunteers and donations to religious centres are somewhat limited.

provide employment for 88% of the full-time workers, and 75% of all voluntary work.

- From an occupational point of view, the social services sector alone employs almost 40% of the total number of employees in the third sector. Not for profit organisations provide 55% of all services related to home health care, practically holding a monopoly on services for the disabled.
- A high percentage of not for profit organisations work in education; a sector which receives around a quarter of all resources allocated to the third sector.
- Culture, sports and recreation constitute sectors which are developed to a large extent by not for profit organisations, particularly in relation to social tourism (already promoted before and after the Second World War) which presently represents 12% of French tourist activity. On the other hand, a rather low percentage is registered for not for profit involvement in health, a sector which has been affected by the process of secularisation which began with the French Revolution.
- The sectors are characterised by different shares of paid workers and volunteers: in those relating to education, health and social services most workers are qualified and, as such, remunerated, whilst the culture, sport and recreation sectors employ around half of the volunteers in the third sector. In the international, environmental and professional association sectors, voluntary work is the primary human resource.

### 2.3 THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND VOLUNTEERING

As previously mentioned, one of the most recent studies carried out by the *CNRS*<sup>4</sup> has estimated the existence of about 880,000 organisations throughout France (excluding the region of Corsica).

Sample testing was carried out on 13,000 organisations located in 1,400 communes with different political, cultural and environmental outlooks. It must be stressed that the estimate of 880,000 organisations does not constitute a precise figure; in fact, this figure was reached in the absence of an official census of organisations which, moreover, are not obliged to declare cessation of associative activity.

Nevertheless, the *CNRS* research is still an important point of reference for a better understanding of the associative sector in France. Certainly the most interesting data relates to economic issues, which clarify the great economic importance of the not for profit sector. Organisations, in fact, have a budget of 46 million Euro, representing 3.7% of France's GDP, providing work for around 1,650,000 people, of which 1,000,000 are full-time employees. Therefore, employment within the associative sector represents around 5% of total national employment (whereas 52% of not for profit organisation resources are allocated to salaries of employees in the sector), whilst the work of the so-called *bénévoles*, carried out within the organisations, involves around 11 million French citizens.

To a large extent, this enormous workforce forms the basis on which around 735,000 organisations (mainly sports and culture related) operate, whilst the remaining 145,000 mainly active in the social/health care sector, are principally supported by remunerated work. Even though this last sector only represents a numerically limited part of the associative sector (that is, about 90,000 associations), it operates in a key welfare area which proportionally involves a greater need for financial resources. In fact, the social/health care sector utilises around 38% of the total resources of the associative sector, and receives as much as 49% of the total amount of public funding allocated, thus exceeding by as much as almost 10% the resources allocated to organisations which are active in the areas of sport and culture (around 40% of all associations present in France). Public funding constitutes 57.8% of the total income. It is

<sup>4</sup>*Centre national de la recherche scientifique*, (French National Centre for Scientific Research), the equivalent of the Italian CNR, is a public institution for the coordination and support of scientific research linked with French universities; internet website <http://www.cnrs.fr>. Reference here is made to a research published in 2002, conducted by the "Matisse" Department (Department of models applied to institutional planning and socio-economic strategies) of the University of Paris I with the *CNRS* headed by V. Tchermogog.

not, therefore, the only means of support for organisations which benefit from other forms of revenue: donations, membership fees, financial income deriving from the sale of goods and services. These forms of funding and income guarantee the survival of the majority of small organisations (76%), which, incidentally, do not even correspond to 4% of the gross domestic product of the not for profit sector. With such limited funding, which corresponds to an insignificant 1% of the total public funds allocated, smaller organisations also struggle to gain access to further forms of funding. An even more significant data is that of the 880,000 estimated organisations, 49,000 (that is, 6% of potentially active organisations) receive as much as 82% of the total income, with more than 91% of State and/or European funding.

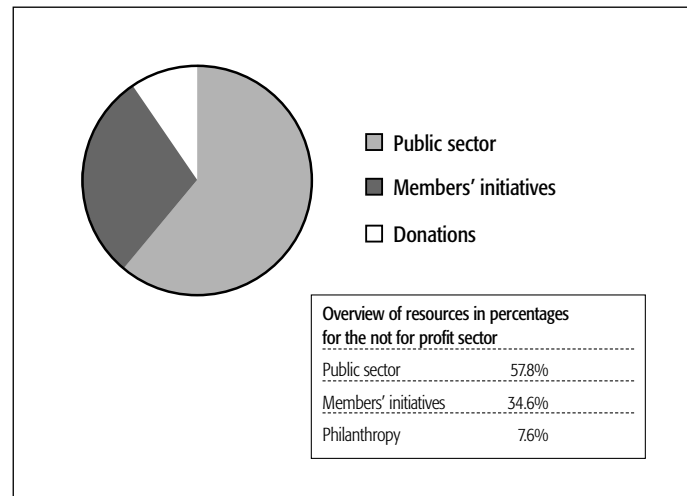
#### 2.4 FUNDING, RESOURCES, AND AREAS OF ACTIVITY OF THE THIRD SECTOR

The main sources of funding for the sector can be presented as follows:

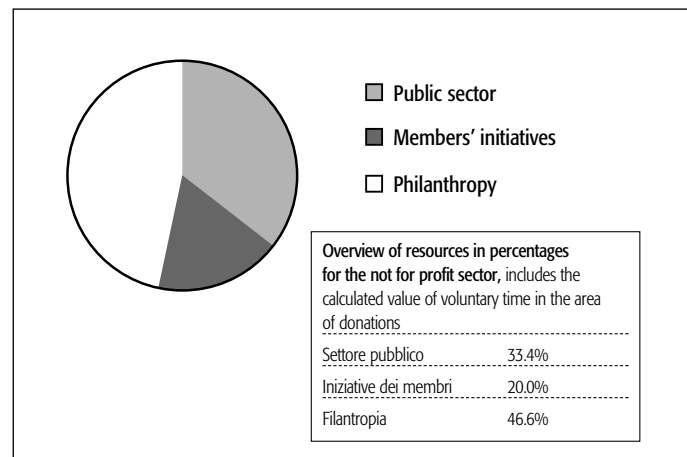
- Public sector. Provides 58% of funds directed, in particular, to social security.
- Central government. Allocates resources mainly to education and research.
- Local government. Mainly funds activities and projects in the areas of culture, recreation, "secondary" social services, development and home care services.
- Self-financing activity. This represents just over a third of the total resources, around 35%, distributed over various commercial activities (fairs, sales and other), organisation membership fees - the smallest source - and small investments.
- Donations. Represent 7% of the total income and come from individual donors and sponsors.

<sup>5</sup>Philanthropy in the first graph.

#### Main sources of funding



#### Main sources of funding, including the value of voluntary work



The graphs illustrate that if the value of voluntary work is included under "donations"<sup>5</sup>, this becomes the most significant source, with 46.6% of total funding. Furthermore, the distribution of sources of funding varies greatly according to the sectors of activity: health (80.4%), education (72.3%) and social services (58.3%) are the ar-

as with a high proportion of public funding, as provided for by the French welfare state system. Business-related activities predominate in the culture and recreation sectors (65.1%), home care and development services (61.1%), environmental organisations (59.7%) and professional organisations (52.4%).

### Financial resources of the not for profit, per sector of activity

	Members' initiatives	Public sector	Philanthropy
All sectors of activity	34%	57.8%	7.5%
	Members' initiatives	Public sector	Philanthropy
Culture	65.1%	29.6%	5.3%
Development	61.1%	37.1%	1.8%
Professions	59.7%	29.9%	10.4%
Environment	52.4%	32.1%	15.4%
	Members' initiatives	Public sector	Philanthropy
Health	13.4%	80.4%	6.3%
Education	17.9%	72.3%	9.8%
Social services	36.3%	58.3%	5.5%
Civil	41.8%	44.9%	13.2%
International	16.8%	43.4%	39.8%
	Members' initiatives	Public sector	Philanthropy
Philanthropic works	33.1%	3.0%	63.9%

Source: Johns Hopkins Research, France: *From Jacobin Tradition to Decentralization*, 1995.

## 3. WHO ARE THE BÉNÉVOLES? VOLUNTEERING IN FRANCE

### 3.1 DEFINITIONS

The following description outlines the main definitions of persons involved in volunteering in France and their role in society:

<sup>6</sup>Jean Rieux is a multi-purpose centre connected to the National Federation of Social Centres of France (FCSF), situated in Côté Pavée, on the outskirts of Toulouse; this association boasts a solid network of *bénévoles*. About one hundred people promote thirty or so activities proposed by the centre; around 2,000 people visit the centre every week

### Militant

A person who actively promotes a cause or an idea, the member of an organisation, a trade union or a political party. Very similar to the so-called "active" *bénévoles*.

### Bénévole

Freely carries out an activity without obligation, and without financial gain; a *bénévole* is therefore an individual who devotes his/her time to helping fellow citizens, without receiving remuneration. In the French associative sector, the *bénévole* can take on two roles: that of managing policies and administrative aspects of the association, or that of a volunteer involved in carrying out the activities of the organisation.

### Volontaire

Refers to a person with a full-time position, even if for a specific given period that may receive economic remuneration. They are mainly found in NGOs, though a *volontaire* may also be a young person who carries out European Voluntary Service or is in the army. This type of volunteer has a status, which the *bénévole* does not yet legally possess.

## 3.2 A FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL: THE BÉNÉVOLE CHARTER

In order to help us understand the role and nature of involvement of the *bénévole*, which comes from a territorial reality, below is a brief outline of the *Bénévole Charter* drawn up by Jean Rieux<sup>6</sup> Social Centre in December 2004. It was presented to the public and to the local public authorities, and one of the objectives of the Charter is to foster greater involvement of the *bénévoles* in the projects of the associations they operate in.

Here is a summary of the principles expressed:

- To participate constantly and regularly in the life of the social centre.
- To participate in a work group, with a collaborative spirit.

- To understand the internal mechanisms of the social centre and its triennial project.
- To contribute one's own skills towards fostering the advancement of the centre and implementing the social centre project.
- To participate in training courses and meetings which regard associative life.
- To commit oneself for a certain length of time, at least two years, establishing working methods and hours with the centre.

### 3.3 THE PROFILE OF THE *BÉNÉVOLES*<sup>7</sup>

In order to gain a full understanding of the structural, economic, social and political importance of the French associative sector, it is important to consider the *bénévoles* who form its backbone. To this end, we can refer back to the results of a recent study carried out by the Market Research Department of *CREDOC* on the occasion of the centenary of the 1901 Law<sup>8</sup>, the results of which were subsequently confirmed by *INSEE* (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies).

The research, taken on a sample population of 15,000 people over the age of 15, has shown that 40% of those interviewed state that they are members of at least one organisation, and that as many as half of this percentage claim to be members of at least two organisations (*INSEE*, in fact, refers to 35.6 million members). Even when taking into account those who are members of two or more organisations, we still have a very high proportion (presumably almost half

of the adult population) who are directly or indirectly involved in associative life. They can be divided into two major categories: active and/or ordinary members and occasional participants. Those belonging to the **active member** category are defined as belonging to at least one association, performing activities for longer than five hours a month. This group represents around 13% of the total French population. These active members are furthermore characterised by the following aspects:

- 63% are members of at least two organisations.
- 69% have been members for over ten years.
- A third spends more than ten hours a month carrying out organisation-related activities.
- 80% prefer to belong to sports-related, culture or leisure organisations<sup>9</sup>.
- 36% are involved in an organisation which supports social or humanitarian causes.

The ordinary members, those who are involved for less than 5 hours a month, and do not actively and periodically participate in general assemblies, represent around 26% of the French population.

The other category identified in the study is that of **occasional participants**. They are indicative of the average profile of the French population and represent 39% of the total members. Of these, 43% are aged under 40 (the age bracket 25 - 39 alone makes up 30% of the total), 74% are involved in helping disadvantaged persons and, of these, 42% participate in activities connected to international solidarity.

Then there are those who do not participate in any manner, which *CREDOC* researchers have divided into **non-supporters and**

<sup>7</sup>Principal studies recently published on the French associative world:

- *INSEE, Enquete permanente sur les conditions des vie des ménages*, 2002.

- *CREDOC, Enquete auprès des ménages*, 2001.

For further information go to University of Paris website - Matisse Department: <http://matisse.univ-paris1.fr>.

- "Les associations culturelles dans le paysage associatif français, Poids et spécificité", in *Les associations dans la vie et la politique culturelle: regards croisés*. Textes coordonnées par P. Moulinier, Paris, La documentation française, July 2001.

"Le secteur associatif français, État des lieux", Communication au colloque organisé par la Mission de célébration du Centenaire de la loi de 1901 in Tchernogog, *Les associations et l'économie sociale*, Nîmes, 2001.

<sup>8</sup>Commissioned by the Inter-ministerial Delegation for Social Innovation and Social Economy (Dies).

<sup>9</sup>Within this category, over 13% are members of more than one association, and this is why the sum of the last two percentages exceeds the total quota: 100%.

**the unwilling.** They represent the remaining 20% of the French population. The former, unlike the latter, do not rule out any future direct or indirect involvement with an organisation. There are, however, certain common elements to both categories: women especially are “over-represented”, in that 61% are either non-supporters or the unwilling, compared to the female population which makes up 53% of the total population. Secondly, both non-supporters (48%) and the unwilling (43%) mainly belong to the highest socio-economic class. Finally, 60% of the unwilling are aged over 50, which is a large percentage if one considers that this age bracket constitutes only 37% of the population. Most of these have not completed their secondary studies and live in Paris where the hectic pace of the city and the many available alternatives reduce access to the associative sector.

### 3.4 OUTLOOK OF SOCIETY ON THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERING

*CREDOC* research also indicates the reasons and restraints that lead to membership or not of a voluntary organisation in France: 31% of those interviewed claim to be members in order to satisfy “the need to do something”, 25% are members “in order to be useful to society”, whilst 20% are members “due to the desire to do something together with other people” and, lastly, 17% “to practice a (useful) activity for themselves”. Furthermore, 57% of French citizens believe that organisations are well run, but as many as 53% of these think that they are manipulated by the political world. Probably the most interesting finding indicates that 70% of the population believe that “reduced working hours would not in any way alter their relationship with organisations”.

Furthermore, in response to a managerial crisis which has afflicted the associative sector in France, 8 out of 10 French citizens believe that those in charge of organisations sacrifice too much of their time for the common and collective good, and that they have a legal (criminal and civil) liability that is too high for commitment they undertake, especially if one considers the gratuitous nature in which they carry out their activities.

Another interesting finding is that as many as 44% of French cit-

izens purchase services and products from these organisations, and out of these, as many as 44% do not come within the range of people directly involved by the associative phenomenon.

## 4. JURIDICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE THIRD SECTOR

Since the end of the 19th century, all legislation relating to the establishment of the third sector in France has been guided by the principle whereby the main activity should not, under any circumstances, be profit-seeking, but rather the pursuit of some kind of social economy with a view to mutual assistance, which is the fundamental requisite for establishing an organisation. The principles that lie behind the juridical recognition of French associative law are found in both the introduction to the Constitution of the 5th French Republic, and in the 1789 French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.

### 4.1 1 JULY 1901 LAW ON ASSOCIATIONS IN FRANCE

The 1 July 1901 Law on Associations constitutes one of the fundamental regulatory mechanisms of the French third sector. Since the law came into effect, most of its 22 articles have been amended. This law was approved only after several decades of debate which put an end to the hostility traditionally felt towards private organisations which had been viewed by the post-revolutionary republic as a continuation of the elitist privileges of the *Ancien Régime* and of the Napoleonic regime, and as a danger to the cohesion of the empire. With the promulgation of the Law on Associations, the process of the full realisation of the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity, which are at the heart of the creation of the French State, was completed. Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau, former minister of the first Gambetta Government, gave form to this operation, firstly by drafting the 1884 Law on Trade Unions, then in 1898 with the Law on Mutual Aid Societies, and finally in 1901, with the Law on Associations.

The first article defines an organisation (*association non déclarée*)

as “the agreement whereby two or more persons grouped together, in a permanent manner, share their knowledge or their activities for a purpose other than to their [personal, editor’s note] advantage”. The second article states that “associations of persons may be formed freely without declaration or prior authorisation on the part of the authorities”, unless they wish to obtain legal status, in which case, they must file a document with the Prefecture which includes their statute, headquarters and the names of the governing members (*association déclarée*). Moreover, even this declaration is not subject to prior control.

This law completely respects the Rights of the Citizen established in 1789 (see Art. 20 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man<sup>10</sup>): the supremacy of the individual and his civil liberties, especially the right to meet with his fellow man for a common purpose and with equal dignity. Furthermore, with the 16 July 1971 ruling, the Constitutional Council included the principle of freedom of association as stated in the 1901 Law, among the fundamental principles recognised by Republican law, and consequently this right can only be regulated and amended by legislation. An organisation, therefore, is an agreement between two or more individuals, either physical or legal (French or of another nationality, provided that they have a legal status in their own country’s legal system), who undertake to participate in an alliance, making material or intellectual goods available for an unlimited period of time (until the social purpose has been achieved and satisfied), in an unsubordinated manner and without personal economic benefit

through the organisation (it is prohibited to distribute any foreseeable profit from financial transactions, under any form or circumstances, or any other benefits following prior achievement of the statutory aims).

Article 2 - and with reference to Articles 5 and 6 contained therein - regulates the possibility for an organisation to obtain legal status by registering its statute and other documentation<sup>11</sup> at the Prefecture, thus making the association liable with regard to available assets and goods, establishing the power to be represented legally, to possess assets (in so far as they are limited to the needs imposed by the subject and aims of the association), to receive charitable donations, to purchase for honourable purposes, to administer membership fees, premises and properties which are strictly necessary for the life of the association. Article 10 and the subsequent articles regulate the possibility of the Council of State to grant, subsequent to a complex assessment process, the “recognition of public utility” to the association whereby its range of economic and financial management is increased.

#### 4.2 PRINCIPAL TYPES OF ORGANISATIONS

In order to provide a clearer outline and description of the main types of organisations as provided by French legislation, they can be summarised as follows:

<sup>10</sup> “1. Each person has the right to the freedom to meet and associate peacefully. 2. No one can be obliged to become part of an association.”

<sup>11</sup> Art. 5 of Law 01/071901: “Any association that wishes to benefit from the legal status (...) must be made public through the initiative of one of its founders. The prior declaration shall be filed with the Prefecture (...) of the district where the association will have its head office. The name and purpose of the association must be stated, as well as the headquarters of the activities and the names, professions, addresses and nationalities of those who, in any capacity, shall be charged with its administration or management. Two copies of the Statute shall be attached to the declaration. A declaration of receipt for this documentation shall be issued [from the Prefecture, editor’s note] within five days. If the head office of the association is located abroad, the declaration provided for in the preceding paragraph, shall be made with the Prefecture of the department in which its activities are carried out. The association is made public following publication of a notice in the Official Journal, pursuant to presentation of this receipt. Associations must communicate any changes which have taken place in their administration or management within three months, as well as any amendments made to their Statute. These amendments shall not be binding on third parties until the day on which they are declared [to the Prefecture, editor’s note]. Amendments and changes shall be recorded in a special register which is to be presented to the competent authorities on request.”

Art. 6: “Any association, duly declared, may, without any special authorisation, participate in court proceedings, receive donations from physical and legal persons, acquire for honourable purposes, possess and administer, outside of agreements with the State, regions, departments and other local bodies: 1. Membership fees (...) 2. The premises used for the administration of the association and for meetings of its members. 3. Property strictly necessary for the achievement of its social purpose. Declared associations whose sole purpose is aid, charity, scientific or medical research, may accept donations *inter vivos* or by testament according to conditions established by decree of the Council of State. If an association allocates the proceeds of a donation to a purpose other than that for which it was authorised to accept it, the authorisation may be withdrawn by decree of the Council of State.”

### ***Association non déclarée***

They have no legal status and are prevented from holding assets, receiving donations or bequests, entering into agreements unless these operations are carried out in the name and on behalf of one of more members (Art. 1 1901 Law).

### ***Association déclarée***

Registered at the Prefecture and thus granted legal status, whereby it is permitted to possess property and administer goods which are necessary to reach the objectives of the organisation itself. (Art. 2-5 and 6 1901 Law).

### ***Associations reconnues d'utilité publique***

Once recognised by the Council of State, they have a broader operational capacity, may receive bequests and donations, in so far as they pursue a collective goal, and must be subjected to strict monitoring for the first three financial years. These organisations must demonstrate the quality of the activity performed, transparency and conformity with their Statute in their operations, and financial soundness (Art. 10-11 Law of 1901).

### ***Association agréée***

Accredited by public administration bodies, they carry out activities of general interest, and can undertake transactions of a commercial nature. These organisations are subjected to even stricter controls, since the qualification of "*agrément*" allows them to benefit from substantial concessions, such as the possibility to receive State subsidies and funds from local collectivities, obtain tax benefits or to carry out civil action of collective interest with legal status, as in the case of associations which protect consumers or the environment.

With regard to the running of this type of organisation, the law does not stipulate a model for the statute or for a management system although, by analogy with the management methods which are

most in keeping with administrative law, an operational model has been drawn up which provides for at least the following bodies:

- **A general assembly:** the forum for strategic decisions, planning budgets and budget approval, as well as an evaluation of the administrators carried out by the association as a whole.
- **A governing board:** its members, appointed by the general assembly, supervise the life of the organisation.
- **Bureau:** created in the case that the organisation is particularly large; made up of trustees elected by the governing board, which deal with the day-to-day management.

By analogy with company law and by concession of tax legislation, the organisation may take on paid employees who, if members, have the right to sit in the general assembly, with the right of vote, as well as on the governing board, if stipulated by the Statute, and as long as they do not exceed 25% of the organisation's components<sup>12</sup>. Large organisations may need to appoint a chairperson with a solely executive role, and his/her subsequent transformation into a *de facto* director (who, in fact actually performs the role of a director) would lead to administrative sanctions which can result in the loss of the association's legal status.

Furthermore, tax law stipulates a limit to the voluntary activity of managers in large organisations, generally allowing their remuneration to be no greater than two thirds of the average wage rate (*SMIC*) - which in July 2004 corresponded to 7.61 Euro per hour gross, which for an average monthly wage of 169 working hours corresponds to around 1,286 Euro gross - which comes to about 860 Euro.

For organisations which find themselves in the particular conditions (for example, a statute which provides for the remuneration of managers, regular and periodical elections of the directors, monitoring of management on behalf of members, approval of remunerations with the consensus of two thirds of those with the right to vote), Article 261 paragraph 7.1 of the General Tax Code permits the regular remuneration for managers as paid employees.

<sup>12</sup> The association can require a representative of the paid employees to attend the meetings of the board of directors; in this case, they do not have the right to vote or speak, but only attend as observers.

### 4.3 THE CASE OF ALSACE-MOSELLE

In the Alsace-Moselle region, the 1901 Law was replaced by the 1908 Empire Law that is included in the local Civil Code, Art. 29-71, which has led to some small but significant differences in the regulation of the associative sector in the region:

- Organisations must be made up of at least 7 people, as opposed to 2, a principle which appears to restrict the freedom of association, but which according to Myriam Gloppe, director of the *Maison des Associations de Strasbourg*, allows for greater thought and awareness at the time of creating the organisation on behalf of its founders.
- Organisations which wish to obtain legal personality and status must register with the Court of Justice where their head office is located, and publish an announcement in the local press, in the legal announcements of a newspaper approved by the Prefecture.
- The provisions applicable to the recognition of public interest do not apply to “registered” organisations as these already have full legal status to sell, sign agreements, purchase, rent, etc.
- Furthermore, they are not restricted with regard to the purchase of property.
- Donations made by private societies are also deductible up to 60% as opposed to a maximum of 42% of the taxable profit in the rest of France.
- Organisations may also be for profit, which is prohibited by the 1901 Law.

These provisions have been kept in force by the law of 16 January 1924, which confirms the current validity of similar legislation in the region mentioned.

### 4.4 COOPERATIVES

Cooperatives are probably the oldest type of organised groups of

the social economy; in fact, some date back to 1844 as in the case of the Rochdale Pioneer weavers, or that of the French *Association des Menuisiers* of 1831. A special statute has regulated these organisations since 1947, revised in 1992, defining them as a group of individuals who join together voluntarily for the purpose of achieving common objectives, constituting a democratically run undertaking, and sharing the risks and benefits incurred. Cooperatives may provide for consumption goods, accommodation for the disadvantaged, and for production. The main national coordination body is the *GNC*, together with the *CN-LAMCA*, a union and representative body set up in 1970 to give due recognition to the mutual assistance movement. Cooperatives are principally found in the agricultural sector, specialising in mutual support for farmers in response to the working class need for credit.

### 4.5 MUTUALS

The origins of mutuals date back to the medieval brotherhoods and the mutual assistance societies of the 19th century. In 1902, the National Federation of French Mutual Benefit Societies was established. Under the Mutual Societies Code of 1955, mutuals administer certain special complementary social security systems (for teachers, students, farmers), ensuring integrated support, such as the Agricultural Mutual Society.

### 4.6 FISCAL ASPECTS

With regard to tax and financial issues, in 1973 the Council of State articulated the fundamental criteria relating to tax benefits, the categories which are eligible for concessions<sup>13</sup> and the methods.

In France, the taxes imposed on organisations (for profit or not) are regulated by Article 206-1 of the General Tax Code. The necessary

<sup>13</sup>The law in question was the subject of much debate, and its approval was a painful process as it contained two contradictory principles which clashed and created controversy: the concept of equality for all with regard to the tax system and the exemption clause for associations of public and general interest.

requisites in order to be considered a not for profit organisation, and thus eligible to the right to tax benefits, are:

- To carry out an activity of social utility.
- The aims and activities do not include the pursuit of profit.
- The organisation does not systematically seek a positive balance.
- Any surplus, if existing, must be reinvested in the same organisation which generated it.

These organisations are exempt from paying VAT, as provided for in Article 256/A of the French Civil Code and, in addition, they may receive donations from private bodies or organisations that are eligible for tax reductions<sup>14</sup>. All other financial income and assets are covered by the relevant legislation<sup>15</sup>, including the 1901 Law. The fundamental condition expressed by this legislation is that assets and profit gained must not be shared between members and that seeking profit must not become the main activity, but may possibly be practised solely as an activity which is supplementary to the mission, and to realise the set statutory aims.

An organisation, for example, may obtain revenue through proceeds deriving from: concerts, shows, guided visits, film premieres, or even restaurant openings. It may also collect funds through payment from lotteries, bingo, balls, displays and galas. Last of all, the State regulates the subsidies that it allocates. Obviously, incorporated organisations, those recognised as of public interest, have a greater chance of being subsidised<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> These donations, in fact, allow the donor to benefit from a tax reduction equivalent to 40% of the value of the donation (50% if dedicated to the distribution of free food or lodging for people in need). Donations made by private societies are also deductible up to 37% or 42% of the taxable profit. As far as membership fees are concerned, the tax authorities impose a maximum ceiling of 65 Euro for each one, and they must be made out to the organisation and paid personally.

<sup>15</sup> Benefits obtained through commercial profit-making activities are regulated by the following laws: 1 March 1984, 25 January 1985 and 11 July 1985.

<sup>16</sup> To avoid unlawful action, one must be aware that the first clause prohibits an organisation which has received subsidies from giving part of this sum to another organisation. This same clause also states that "A commune (or city authority) may not subsidise an organisation which has a political objective. A department may not grant subsidies to an organisation for activities carried out in the interests of the department." and so on, along these lines.

<sup>17</sup> *UNIOPSS* (social/health activity); *UNAF* Family Associations (family movements); *UNAT* (family and youth tourism); *CNOSF* (sport); La Ligue de L'enseignement; *CCOMCEN* (education/youth); *CNAJEP* (youth/popular education); *CADECS* (education/human rights); *ANIMA/FAC* (student life/education); *COFAC* (cultural life); *CELAVAR* (local development in rural areas); *COORDINATION SUD* (Coordination of Solidarity Emergency Development); *FONDA* (associative life...); *CNL-CAFF* (women's/female and feminist rights); Justice Coordination - Rights of Man, Social/Legal Intervention, Protection of Rights.

## 5. REPRESENTATION AND COORDINATION OF THE THIRD SECTOR

The actors of the associative sector in France receive support from a multitude of bodies which carry out an advocacy role on behalf of these associations. A brief outline is provided below of this articulated scenario, whereby the profile of each of these bodies is summarised.

### 5.1 CPCA

The *CPCA* (*Conférence Permanente des Coordinations Associatives*) was founded on 21 February 1992 by a large number of national association coordinating bodies<sup>17</sup>, involved in various areas of the third sector, that are characterised by a regional and departmental presence throughout the entire national territory. This institution, recognised by the Prime Minister, became an association in 1999. The *CPCA* today is certainly the most privileged forum for contact and negotiation between the associative sector and the State, with the aim of establishing a broad partnership between both parties. A "Charter for Mutual Commitment", signed on 1 July 2001 on the occasion of the centenary of the 1901 Law, by the Prime Minister Lionel Jospin and *CPCA* President Hubert Prevot, establishes the terms of this relationship between the State and the organisations. Recognising the contribution made by the organisations to civil and democratic life, the

State acknowledges their independence, underlines their credibility and their capacity as a partner. In line with greater cooperation, the State fosters relationships founded on “task-based” agreements with long-term projects, which are transparent in their responsibilities and outcomes.

Therefore, the *CPCA* is an important representative of the needs of the associative world, defending its role in society and promoting its activities in collaboration with the State.

## 5.2 CNVA

Composed by members appointed by the Prime Minister, the *Conseil National de la Vie Associative - CNVA* is a government advisory body, founded in 1983 with the mission of studying, promoting development and monitoring organisations in the country. In particular, it expresses its view on projects regarding legislative and regulatory documentation. Following the 20 November 2003 Decree, the *CNVA* now has 76 members; 66 of which are organisations and 10 qualified persons. Whilst organisation representatives were initially appointed directly by the Prime Minister, today the organisations themselves nominate their candidates, whereas the ministers propose the associations. The *CNVA* is also responsible for drafting a report on the associative life in France and its development before the end of each mandate, which lasts three years.

The *DIES* - Inter-ministerial Delegation of the Social Economy, which serves the State Secretariat on the fair trade issues, was created in 1981<sup>18</sup> as the privileged interlocutor of social economy organisations with respect to public authorities.

The *DIES* prepares and follows the national sessions of the *CNVA* and also the regional assemblies of the fair trade organisations, coordinates the activities of various ministries particularly with regard to associations through regional representatives at the Prefecture, authorises and promotes the development of organisations at a nation-

al and European level, offers support to various association networks, and encourages training of employees in the sector.

## 5.3 FONJEP

The *Fonds de coopération de la jeunesse et de l'éducation populaire*, created in 1964, is an association which unites representatives from various public administrations (*Jeunesse et Sports, Affaires sociales, Environnement, Coopération, Economie sociale, Affaires étrangères, Agriculture*) with the task of fostering joint management and cooperation between the ministries, public bodies and associative territorial collectivities. Its main goal is to support the remuneration methods and levels of permanent employees within local and national associations with leadership and management roles.

## 6. ORGANISATIONS AND PROVISIONS TO SUPPORT AND QUALIFY VOLUNTEERING

### 6.1 ORGANISATIONS PROMOTED BY PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

In France, a clear distinction can be made between organisations that support associations and volunteering promoted by public institutions and authorities, with similar missions, established by subjects of the third sector. La *Maison des Associations*, the *MAIA*, and the *FNDVA*, figure amongst those structures with institutional origins that are briefly described below.

### 6.2 MAISON DES ASSOCIATIONS

Among the main initiatives launched by the public administra-

<sup>18</sup> Decree no. 81-1125 of 15/12/1981.

tion, there are the *Maisons des associations*<sup>19</sup> which literally means houses for associations.

Bertrand Delanöe, the current Mayor of Paris, and his municipal council are committed to supporting the development of organisations through opening one *Maison des Associations* for each district in Paris. There are currently five (in the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement*); a further two are in the process of being established (in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement*), and it is expected that they will soon be widespread.

The *Maison des Associations* are structures which focus on assisting organisations in their everyday activities, sharing information and knowledge, involving organisations in the life of the district and in mutual exchange, and giving association the opportunity to collaborate with professionally-trained persons in order to work towards operational synergy. Meetings are organised with representatives from the banking sector and with accounting experts. The *Maisons des Associations* are also involved in promoting and supporting interassociation initiatives and projects, providing organisations and Parisians with information, organising training courses, offering various services and work equipment; press releases and announcements; publications made available on request; venues equipped with computers and free Internet access; offices and meeting rooms; services for providing associations with a registered or postal address; documentation; support for project development. The running of each *Maison* is entrusted to the Municipality of Paris employees.

The *Maison* of the 13<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement* is an interesting case, in that a *Conseil de Maison*, constituted through an independent initiative of 15 organisations, undertakes to support and unite the activities of the *Maison* with the 250 organisations which have so far sought its assistance. In the 13<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement*, there are 1,300 active organisations, 600 of which have been registered thanks to a survey undertaken by the Council.

In Ile de France *Maison*, all services are free of charge (with the exception of volunteer training, which requires outsourced profes-

sionals), whilst in the Strasbourg *Maison des Associations*, an organisation which is nevertheless funded by its municipality, rents out premises to organisations. This may occur precisely because of the different legislation in force in Alsace-Moselle, where the Civil Code (art. 21-79), unlike the 1901 Law, stipulates that an organisation may also perform its activities for profit.

Other attempts on behalf of public institutions to promote the *bénévolat* in France have been accompanied by “municipal charters of solidarity” (*fraternité*). One of the provisions generally included in these charters states that “in order to encourage the greatest number possible of citizens to perform civic duties and to achieve a better balance in supply and demand of *bénévoles*, the city undertakes to organise a municipal service to promote *bénévolat*”. These municipal initiatives have the task of intercepting the various resources available to carry out voluntary activity, grouping together the possible interlocutors and municipal services and organisations, in order to reach the citizens themselves. The service aims to centralise information and support associations as well as the *bénévoles*, through training, supporting projects, etc. There are numerous city mayors who have launched these kind of initiatives (see [www.grandecausefraternite2004.com](http://www.grandecausefraternite2004.com)). These initiatives move towards the quantitative and qualitative development of the *bénévolat* and even greater consolidation.

### 6.3 MAIA

The *Mission départementale pour l'accueil et l'information des associations (MAIA)* was created by the Prime Minister in 1999 with the aim of giving the associations easier access to relevant information. It was constituted by the prefects of each department to modernise and simplify bureaucratic procedures.

The *MAIA* is a centre serving all partner organisations, and an integrated training centre for future state employees involved in working with the associative sector. A departmental delegate appointed by the prefect

<sup>19</sup>The information regarding the *Maison des Associations* was provided by Joelle Maury, director of the 13<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement* of the *Maison des Associations* and by Myrian Glope, in charge of the management équipe, accompagnement and montage projets.

deals with the administration, public policies and funding of these activities.

#### 6.4 FNDVA

With regard to State funding for associations, a special fund has been established under the name of FDNVA (National fund for the development of associative life), which is aimed at developing the sector. Through this fund, training projects are funded for the *bénévoles* who are responsible for activities, or members appointed to perform tasks of responsibility or studies of national interest for a greater understanding of associative life and its development. A “council”, re-

sponsible for allocating funding, is made up of the Minister for Youth and Sport and the Minister for Social Affairs, the inter-ministerial delegate for social innovation and the social economy, nine State representatives appointed from different ministries, nine representatives of associative groups nominated by the Minister for Youth and Sport for a three-year term and, finally, three qualified individuals, again appointed by the same minister, and proposed by the *CNVA*. An annual report submitted to the Prime Minister on the general status of activities of the Fund, ensures that it is used properly.

#### 1. VOLUNTEER SERVICE CENTRES IN FRANCE

Alongside the State initiatives, there are also those carried out by the

## Support bodies

third sector organisations themselves, through private agencies, with a view to promoting the voluntary and associative sectors on a national level.

### 2. FRANCE BÉNÉVOLAT

In 2003, a national network for recruiting and guiding the *bénévoles*, *France Bénévolat*<sup>20</sup> was founded, which was the result of a merger between the existing *France Bénévolat* and the organisation *Planète Solidarité*. The aim is to create a specialised network for promoting the *bénévolat*, by recruiting, informing and guiding the active *bénévoles* in the organisations. One fundamental tool is the website run by *Planète Solidarité*. There are currently 58 members from organisations, foundations, local and national association networks (*Secours Catholique and Secours Populaire, Croix Rouge, etc.*). The organisation has a large budget, as it collaborates with local authorities and institutions such as the municipality and the region, CAF, the Ministry for Youth, Sport and Associative Life, the Ministry for Social Affairs, DIES (which fund its agreements and subsidies in exchange for services), the *CEV - European Centre for Volunteering, IAVE - International Association for Volunteer Effort*, certain private organisations such as the *Caisse de Dépôt et de Consignation*, the *Caisse d'Épargne*, and the *Credit Mutuel* (funding for projects), etc.

### 3. PASSERELLES ET COMPÉTENCES<sup>21</sup>

“Le volontariat de compétence.” The mission of this association is to connect professionals who wish to offer their skills free of charge to associations which need or would like to optimise their operations

through acquiring specialised knowledge. The volunteer search and contact service is provided to associations which apply and join *Passerelle et Compétences*, for an annual subscription fee of between 100 and 200 Euro, depending on the budget of the organisation. Set up recently, in 2002, *Passerelle et Compétences* is an association which is currently based in Ile de France and is expanding, with another branch in the city of Lyon. The association today has over 71 members in the Ile de France region alone.

### 4. POINTS D'APPUI

In the complex and diverse world of French not for profit organisations, a special role is reserved for the *Point d'appui* (literally “support points”), social organisations established by the 1901 Law, whose principal objective is that of “assisting social organisations at all levels and in all sectors”. The *Points d'appui* were created at the end of the 1980s, when the social welfare crisis induced the French State to rely increasingly on the third sector to provide several social services. This decision led to an increase in the number of organisations and, above all, of people (*bénévoles*) ready to engage in social work. During this stage of development and significant growth in the third sector and in active citizenship, a sudden need arose to support organisations with specific tools that simplified bureaucratic, administrative, and legal aspects of the complex juridical system that regulates the sector.

With the 1901 Law, the State therefore conferred a new status on certain organisations, that of *Point d'appui*, that is to say, they were entities with the right and obligation to help, support, and assist other organisations by providing them with assistance, advice, and concrete services. Initially, all the *Points d'appui* in France formed a con-

<sup>20</sup> Jean Bastide is the current President, André Hochberg is the Managing Director.

<sup>21</sup> Information relating to Passerelles et compétences was gathered during a meeting with the President of the association, Patrick Bertrand.

federation through a network called the *Reseau d'information et gestion* or *RIG*. This network was active until the year 2000, when the structure, as well as a large number of the "support points", dissolved due to lack of State funding. In spite of this, several *Points d'appui* managed to remain open, continuing their activities by providing services to organisations in their areas.

One example is the *AGECA* in the Ile de France - the Paris region - which is one of the oldest *Point d'appui* associations that is reorganising itself and currently working with new Paris *Points d'appui* to create a new federation, the *SARIF*. The primary objective of this association will be the development and networking or partnerships of organisations in the area which will all be part of the *Point d'appui* system for the Paris region.

Amongst the *SARIF* member organisations, worthy of mention is the *ADDEL*, *Paris Profession Sport et Jeunesse*, *Projets 19*, *Service 18*, as well as the *AGECA*, of course.

The *Points d'appui* operate in accordance with two criteria: the first is that of territorial competence - the *arrondissement* (city district) in which they are based - and the second is one of specialisation. For example, the *Point d'appui Paris Profession Sport et Jeunesse* is located in the 13<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement* of Paris<sup>22</sup>. Not only organisations in the area, but also the majority of organisations working in the domain of sport and recreation in Paris, refer to this association. Thus, the strong collaborative network and interaction between the *Point d'appui* cannot be stressed enough. In fact, if an organisation refers to its own area "support point" for specific services which it cannot supply, then the organisation will be put in contact with a *Point d'appui* which is in a position to satisfy the particular requirements requested.

In real terms, the *Point d'appui* provide the following activities and services, which organisations can use, almost always free of charge, from the time they are founded onwards:

- Facilitate understanding relating to what a not for profit organisation is, the laws regulating their activities, their functions, their principles, and possible areas for action<sup>23</sup>.
- Assist in the drafting and editing a charter which respects these principles and legal requirements, and above all, the intentions and views of other members.
- Provide assistance and information about financial and tax management that must be carried out according to their specific characteristics, even for particular charters and legal documents obtained, obligations, rights, and duties.
- Provide general or specific information regarding funding channels and procedures: private (donations and sale of services) and public (at the local, regional, national, and European Community level - see *Point d'appui Projets 19*).
- Provide documentation and necessary forms.
- Find solutions to day-to-day problems, such as the recruitment of volunteers, organising management techniques, tools and communication strategies, logistic and structural support (premises for organisations, offices that can be used for meetings and conferences).
- General assistance during the life of the organisation.
- Training courses, requested by the same organisations for: volunteers, managerial staff, members of the board of directors, office members and employees.
- Support in developing and realising projects.

In essence, the *Point d'appui* are, in actual fact, a partner association: together with the *Maisons des Associations*, supported by municipal authorities, the two offer the general support necessary for the development of organisations in France.

<sup>22</sup> Paris is divided into 20 *arrondissement* with functions resembling those of Italian municipal districts.

<sup>23</sup> It should be noted that through the interviews provided by the various staff members of the above-mentioned *f* we now know that there are many people who come to the association thinking of opening an organisation with objectives far removed from those of solidarity and charity, but rather with the idea of being able to create employment for themselves or an organisation with clear objectives of making money.

## 5. FCSF - FÉDÉRATION DES CENTRES SOCIAUX E SOCIOCULTURELS DE FRANCE

### 5.1 HISTORY OF THE FCSF

The first examples of what we now call social centres appeared in England in the second half of the 19th century (called “settlements”) and in France later that century called *Maisons Sociales* or “Charity homes”. They were not operative during the First World War, though the phenomenon came back to life after the war. During this post-war period, there were increased exchanges between the European experience and overseas countries at the forefront of the sector, creating an international network with the aim of reaching world-wide proportions.

In 1922, on the occasion of the first international conference at Toynbee Hall in London, the *FCSF - Fédération des centres sociaux e socio-culturels de France* was formed, with the aim of ensuring adequate representation for the diverse realities in the nation. It was not until the mid 20th century that the phenomenon really took off, when the *FCSF* grew from 60 social centres that it encompassed in 1932, to about 2,000 in the first half of the 1950s. In 1945, the Departmental Federation of Social Centres of the Loiret, the first federation of a local nature was established and following this, a long series of federations at a regional or departmental level sprung up, all of which now form a part of the Federation.

The *FCSF* has been recognised as an organisation of public benefit (Decree of 8 April, 1931) with the mission of “Popular Education” (Decree of 6 July, 1964). In the year 2000, Gérard Sanvincens became Managing Director of the *FCSF* as successor to Jean Bastide, a key figure of the Federation since 1982, who was also the President of the *CNVA* in France in 1990, and is the current President of *France Bénévolat*.

### 5.2 WHAT ARE SOCIAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL CENTRES?

The social objective of social centres is to “create society”, to “live

together” in active collective solidarity. In fact, social and socio-cultural centres want to achieve the following:

- To be close at hand, welcoming everyone without discrimination.
- To develop projects of active citizenship by:
  - unifying actions that involve all generations from the very young to the elderly, through the involvement of the entire family unit;
  - activities that foster the development of culture, sport, and education;
  - activities that assist people in difficulty and the fight against all types of exclusion;
  - actions aimed at stimulating social recreation and cohesion (neighbourhood feasts, etc.).
- To be a support platform for organisations, associations and all individual and group projects.
- Teams, composed of volunteers and professionals, which propose activities, recreation, and services.
- The approval of projects specifically designed for the “Family Allocation Fund”.

### 5.3 FCSF SOCIAL CENTRES: HOW THEY OPERATE

The social centres, their local federations, and the *FCSF* base their operations on the principle of subsidiarity. They encourage the realisation of the social and educational development projects for social development and ongoing popular education; they develop projects of fair trade elaborated and conducted by the citizens themselves; they offer social services and promote social recreation initiatives. Therefore, the social centres are actual meeting places for active citizenship and, in fact, they are often present at local consultations, such as local community and municipal councils.

The social and socio-cultural centres are accredited by the “Family Allocation Fund”<sup>24</sup> (*CAF*) in accordance with a “Project” contract

which ensures the coordination between the two bodies with a view to achieving a common objective: that of developing the neighbouring area as agreed in the contracted project<sup>25</sup>. Out of almost 2,000 social centres recognised by the *CAF*, 1,198 social development centres and organisations are active members of the Federation network. Of these, 83% have the organisational structure of organisations; 7% are directly managed by the *CAF*; and 10% are managed at a municipal level.

Most of them are managed at the departmental or regional level, whilst a hundred are in direct contact with the *FCSF*. The entire network of the Federation employs more than 20,000 people, and has over 40,000 volunteers that collaborate in the various structures of the network.

#### 5.4 *FCSF* AT PRESENT

During the last few years, the *FCSF* has reorganised itself from an operational point of view. Established prior to 1999 as a central funding administration office, its role is now considered to be more akin to that of a guiding body. This comes into play for projects that are shared between departmental or regional Federation members, which are ever-increasing in number in accordance with the decentralisation principle. From its initial pyramid structure, the *FCSF* has now taken on a new type of structure which Henry Colombani (Deputy Head of the Federation) describes as a “burgeoning”, that is, projects are carried on the basis of sharing roles and objectives.

#### 5.5 THE TASKS OF THE FEDERATION

The *FCSF*, in collaboration with its 1,200 member social centres

which it recognises as local coordination bodies, has various functions:

- Developing policies and future prospects for social and socio-cultural centres through increasingly modern means.
- Activity of and in the network itself (by means of thematic projects and the organisation of coordination encounters which allow the *FCSF* to follow the federations and cooperation activity in a methodical and systematic manner).
- Reporting what participation in various projects entails and the richness of the network in all its diversity to public institutions, partners, local authorities, and the public at large. (The Federation has developed an external communication system which disseminates information to this regard through television, radio and printed matter).
- Development (assistance in the set up of centres; support to local actors for social development: associations, local and area groups, and social institutions; activation of sector policies through local centres in direct contact with young people, adults, the elderly and those in difficulty; action-groups, etc.)
- Training and ongoing qualification of network members and social development actors.

#### 5.6 RELATIONS WITH OTHER BODIES

“The Federation cooperates directly and indirectly with all public decision-making bodies and at all administrative and territorial levels; with town councils through associated member social centres and with the European Community; with international governmental organisations through the new structural set up. Furthermore, it will actively participate in all aspects of the development of French social associative life.”<sup>26</sup>

Today, it represents one of the principal reference points for a greater understanding of the domain of social organisations in France.

<sup>25</sup> This is the “Essential condition for the autonomy of the social centre” (See CNAF Circular n. 56 of the 31 October 1995).

<sup>26</sup> *CNVA* - National Council for Social Organisations (The President of the *FCSF* is a member of the *CNVA*); *CPCA* - Permanent Congress for the Coordination of Social Organisations; *CNJ* - National Council of Youth.

## 6. OTHER SUPPORT BODIES

### 6.1 IRIV<sup>27</sup>

*IRIV - Institute for Research and Information on volunteering*, is a private, independent not for profit institution, founded in 1997 by Bénédicte Halba, with the aim of fuelling the public debate on and in favour of promoting volunteering through research, publications and presence in the media. Since 2000, it has been a training centre, registered with the Ile de France Regional Department for Labour, Employment and Professional Training, offering training programmes aimed at those working with *bénévoles*, in programmes for *bénévoles*, or for those who wish to acquire specific skills. These programmes are funded by the Municipality, the Paris Departments and the Regional Council. Moreover, IRIV is also responsible for a 2003 project which forms part of the Leonardo da Vinci community programme "Lifelong Learning". This project, entitled *Valider les acquis d'une expérience bénévole*, has been undertaken in collaboration with six other EU Member States: Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Poland and the England.

### 6.2 FFBA

The "French Federation of *Bénévolat* Associations" is a body whose aim is to help and support small and medium-sized organisations in France and the DOM-TOM<sup>28</sup> in a multidisciplinary manner.

The *FFBA* currently unites over 10,000 organisations, involved in 150 various contexts. The *FFBA* is structured into regional and de-

partmental groups and local branches, with a presence in 11 out of 22 regions and it administers a membership list of over 100,000 associations.

The *FFBA* provides member organisations with services to suit their needs, for an annual fee of 47 Euro (8 Euro for Blood Donor Associations). The services offered are: legal, tax and accountancy advice, administrative and legal assistance, through specialised advisers; guidance on tax exemptions and benefits, health insurance and accident insurance.

### 6.3 CICOS<sup>29</sup>

The *Centre d'Information et de Communication Social* founded in 1983 by Michel Giraud, is "an association for organisations". Initially funded by the Region, this association underwent considerable change in 1998, following new political orientation which led it to rely solely on its own financial resources that come from membership fees. *CICOS* is a forum for "resources", exchanges, information and training for organisations, supported by around 40 volunteers (*bénévoles*). Advice with regard to legal, social, tax and information technology issues are provided free of charge, whilst education and training is offered to workers and *bénévoles* for a nominal or "token" sum. Financial aid is also offered to those organisations which are formed with the help of the Centre. *CICOS* is also opening up its horizons and expanding its activities across Europe, with its current "Europe Group", made up of three organisations; "*Accueil Villes Françaises*", "*Femme active et Foyer*", the *UFCS (Union Féminine Civique et Sociale)*. Other projects such as Leonardo are undertaken in collaboration with another volunteer and organisation support body, the *IRIV*.

<sup>27</sup> The information regarding *IRIV* was provided during a meeting with Bénédicte Halba, founder and *IRIV* President.

<sup>28</sup> Territories under French jurisdiction, though not within French territory.

<sup>29</sup> The information regarding *CICOS* was provided during an interview with Chantal Ganne, President of the Association.

#### 6.4 FONDA

Created in 1981, the *Fonda* is an independent association of Voluntary organisations, with a regional network of 10 offices. Its mission is to promote associative life and to demonstrate the value of the role of active citizenship in a rapidly developing democratic society. It is a forum for study, reflection and action across its various “actors” belonging to the associative sector, in order to put forward common strategies as a result of the constructive influences of the active fringes of society. The *FONDA* is an active partner in interassociation dialogue in France and in Europe, and is a member of the *CPCA* (Permanent Conference for the Coordination of Associations). It also operates within the *CNVA*, the *CEGES* (Council for Businesses, Groups and the Social Economy), the *CEDAG* (European Committee for Voluntary Organisations) and the *CEP-CMAF* (Permanent European Conference of Cooperatives, Mutuals, Associations and Foundations). The association publishes a journal, *La tribune fonda*, which deals with all matters relating to associative life in France.

#### 6.5 FONDA RHONE ALPES<sup>30</sup>

Founded in 1989, the *Fonda Rhone Alpes* is one of several regional groups for national coordination, with 50 member organisations (and individuals).

It provides an excellent information service on the 2002 *Law on Social Modernisation* and the *validation des acquis d'expérience* in the field of professional training within associations. It also prepares seminars, discussion groups, collective working days; it is involved on a local level when required by the local communities and areas, it intercedes with the *Caisses d'allocation familiale* on behalf of small associations who do not have a registered address, supports a network of 150 women's groups, liaises with the *FASILD* (*Fonds d'aide et de soutien pour l'intégration et la lutte contre les discriminations*) and with the regional and departmental authorities (*Jeunesse et Sport, Affaires Sociales et Droit au Travail*). It collaborates with the *Fonda Ile de France* in a coordinating role.

<sup>30</sup> All the information relative to the activities and history of the Fonda were provided by Murielle Kaiser, in charge of territorial intervention and the so-called “regional gardens” of the regional Fonda Rhone Alpes.

## 7. PRINCIPAL NATIONAL FEDERATIONS AND COORDINATION ORGANISATIONS

### 7.1 THE ROLE OF NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

The “organisations coordination association” are an example of the “networking” which forms the backbone of today’s associative sector in France. The survival of the organisations, in fact, is increasingly dependent on their ability to share resources and experience, in order to withstand the strong competition introduced by the new decentralised system.

This networking is based on the premise that it is essential to involve the local community, provide it with resources and a sense of civic responsibility for the development and well-being of the community itself, for which the organisations become a point of reference.

The organisations coordination association are, therefore, umbrella bodies which bring together organisations and groups involved at various territorial, national, regional and departmental levels. Although within the realm of the same sectors of involvement, they defend the interests of the member associations and those of the community, and represent the views of the organisations to the institutional authorities.

### 7.2 CNAJEP<sup>31</sup>

*Le Comité pour les relations Nationales et internationales des Associations de Jeunesse et d’Education Populaire (CNAJEP)*, established in 1968, is a voluntary coordination agency of organisations, unions, federations and national youth and popular education movements. An incorporated and recognised organisation, *CNAJEP* brings together 74 national member organisations. Each organisation at a national level is often a federation or a confederation of departmental or regional organisations. Three or four million members are thus involved in the actions of *CNAJEP*<sup>32</sup>. This association encourages liaison between its member organisations at all levels, in relation to the Regional Coordination Agencies of Youth and Education Associations (*CRAJEP*), the Regional Associations for the Development of Associative Life and similar associations in the region. *CNAJEP* operates through education, innovation and social intervention, for and with children, the young and adults, in accordance with the action principle which sees them at the heart of every social dynamic. It also contributes to the growth and development of individuals, developing awareness of their role as citizens with rights.

*CNAJEP* supports and represents the association network before the public institutions, other national inter-association groups<sup>33</sup>, and the equivalent national institutions<sup>34</sup> in the international sphere<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> Information regarding the *CNAJEP* was gathered through an interview with Elena Brian, in charge of the Committee’s international projects.

<sup>32</sup> The funds made available to the organisation derive from two sources: membership fees and public funding (Ministry for Youth and Sport - privileged institutional partner), Ministry for Foreign Affairs, *FONJEP*, Ministry for Employment (youth employment funding), European Union; which amount to a budget of over 350,000 Euro. The European Union in fact provides funding for the promotion of partnerships in particular with Germany, whilst in the international sphere there are certain *CNAJEP* groups located in Palestine, Algeria and Turkey (who support its entrance into the EU).

<sup>33</sup> Coordination Sud (which unites French associations and bodies involved in international solidarity) and *CPCA* (Permanent Conference for the Coordination of Associations).

<sup>34</sup> *CNVA* (National Council of Associative Life), *INJEP* (National Institute for Youth and Popular Education), *OFAJ* (Franco-German Youth Office), *CIDJ* (Youth Information and Documentation Centre), *FNDVA* (National Fund for the Development of Associative Life), *CNEPJ* (National Council for Popular Education and Youth), *COCODEV* (Development Cooperation Commission), National Committee for the European Youth Programme.

<sup>35</sup> *CNAJEP* is a member of the European Youth Forum (which unites 40 European youth committees and 47 international non-governmental youth organisations). *CNAJEP* provides information to the European Youth Forum. It also has numerous contacts on other projects and collaborates with European youth committees. *CNAJEP* is a member of *CEDAG* (European Committee for Voluntary Organisations). It also has the role of informing, organising and training its own members through studies, congresses and publications.

### 7.3 CRAJEP OR ARDEVA<sup>36</sup>

*Comité des relations Régionales des Associations de Jeunesse et Education Populaire or Association Régional pour le Développement de la Via Associative.* ARDEVA was set up in 1990 through the initiative of major Ile de France association coordination groups from various sectors of activity (youth, popular education, environment, social and cultural development) which decided to join together in this regional association. The aim of the association is to promote associative life in Ile de France, with regard to its sectors of activity, developing regional partnerships, creating exchange opportunities for members, and the possibility for study and widening knowledge. At present, ARDEVA has 35 association and federation members, over 3,000 employees, and more than 20,000 *bénévoles* and supporters. The association also has a presence in other public and private bodies, such as: the CESR (*Conseil Economique et Social Régional*), CNAJEP (*Comité pour les relations nationales et internationales des associations de jeunesse et d'éducation populaire*); CPCARIF (*Conférence Permanente des Coordinations Associatives de la Ration Ile de France*), Mission Ville de la Préfecture, and Commission Régionale FONJEP.

### 7.4 ANIMA'FAC<sup>37</sup>

A network for the exchange of experiences and support to initiatives, Anima'fac provides the means to carry out the projects of over 6,000 student organisations (stored on its database) as effectively as possible. Its mission is to enable the growth and development of a large number of sectors: social, cultural, sport, international as well as all kinds of networks and structures. Founded in 1974, it has over 10,000 member organisations and 2.2 million students. Its network

structure enables the group to maintain a certain amount of flexibility in its work with students, who are not always consistent in their undertakings. ANIMA'FAC offers several services to organisations (insurance, promotional campaigns, assistance with planning, information, etc.). The *Maison des initiatives étudiantes* led by Roman Barres, is part of this coordination agency, and its project was supported by the Mayor of Paris, Bertrand Delanoë in 1999.

### 7.5 LFEEP<sup>38</sup>

*La Ligue de l'Enseignement*, a popular education movement founded in 1866 by Jean Macé, is organised into 100 departmental federations, uniting 34,000 local organisations and 2.3 million individual members. A social economy undertaking, the *Ligue de l'enseignement*, has a budget of 500 million Euro and the equivalent of 18,000 full-time employees, of which 8,000 are permanent. It works to promote and improve awareness of active citizenship by inviting citizens to join together in the struggle against inequality, to become active actors in building a fairer, freer and more stable society; it therefore declares itself as a "political" structure of collective initiatives. The *Ligue* is active both in France and abroad in the educational, social, cultural and recreation sectors. In terms of communication, the group publishes *Les idées en mouvement*, a weekly review produced by a documentation centre, open to the public.

### 7.6 UNIOPSS<sup>39</sup>

*Union Nationale Interfédérale des Organismes Privés Sanitaires et Sociaux (UNIOPSS)* is an organisation coordination body active in

<sup>36</sup> The information regarding ARDEVA was provided by Slivie Rab, Director General of the Committee.

<sup>37</sup> A description of the activities conducted by ANIMA'FAC was provided by Nadia Bellaoui, Director General of the Committee.

<sup>38</sup> The information regarding LFEEP was provided by Director General of the Movement, Christine Menzaghi.

<sup>39</sup> The history and activities of UNIOPSS were described during a meeting with Carole Saleres, Technical advisor on European issues.

the social action and health sectors. Its activities focus on improving the organisation of social response and strengthening the role and position of organisations in regulating social protection in France and in Europe. The beneficiaries of its activities are people with health problems, temporary or permanent disabilities, children with physical or psychological problems, the elderly, the disabled, and generally people temporarily in situations of great hardship. In its entirety, the welfare and medical-social associative sector employs 400,000 paid workers (full-time) and involves as many *bénévoles*. *UNIOPSS* unites 140 large associations or federations working at a national level and 22 regional unions (*URIOPSS*), thus forming a network to which over 7,000 association bodies and services belong, with a budget of almost two billion Euro.

The *UNIOPSS* is, in fact, a member of several European networks including the NGO platform of the social sector, the *EAPN* (European Anti-Poverty Network), the *CEDAG*<sup>40</sup>, the *ET WELFARE* (European Round Table of Charitable Social Welfare Associations). It also maintains a continuous dialogue with the German coordination body for solidarity organisations, the *BAGFW*, with the *NCVO* in England, and with the Belgium *Charitas*. *UNIOPSS* was one of the main protagonists in the fight to change the French public health system in the 1940s, bringing an end to the charitable character of State intervention based on moral values of a religious nature, and encouraged the professional nature of the sector, creating businesses in the sector, and encouraging a shift from charity to organised solidarity. Even from a short appraisal of the *UNIOPSS*, it is possible to gain an understanding of the complexity of its operations and the widespread ramifications of activities in the areas in which it has worked over the years. Its role is to help and coordinate proposals and initiatives in the fields of health and welfare, and the diffusion of innovations through its network, as well as to offer a place for reflection for all its partners. To this end, it regularly organises conferences, seminars and work groups, sometimes even on a permanent basis. Additional functions of the *UNIOPSS* regard the representation of health and social or-

ganisations to public institutions and local bodies, whilst respecting the diversity of each one; and technical and operational support for member organisations carrying out health-related and social work, developing their management abilities with regard to both finance and human resources management.

The *UNIOPSS* has another function, that of intermediary body between public institutions such as the Ministry for Work and Health, the Ministry for Social Affairs and social organisations and actual national health organisations such as *GNOSSAL* (*Groupe National des Organismes Sanitaires et Sociaux*) and *UNOGEP* (*Union Nationale des Organismes faisant appel à la générosité publique*).

## 8. THE FUTURE OF VOLUNTEERING: PROBLEMS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

The historic legislation through which France reduced the working week to thirty-five hours in 1998, engendered changes to work organisations and to the customs and practices of society in general. Free time has assumed new importance, not only for the single worker and his/her own family, but also for the community as a whole, as citizens are now able to devote more attention and a part of their 'regained' time to it. This factor led to the founding of *France Bénévolat*, an organisation committed to promoting voluntary action and introducing not for profit organisations to citizens interested in offering some of this "regained" time to just causes, thus encouraging solidarity.

Jean Bastide, the President of *France Bénévolat*, describes French volunteering as a growth sector currently undergoing two main trends. The first trend is that of the increasingly professional nature of personnel employed in the not for profit sector. The so-called *bénévoles*, namely those people who are involved on a voluntary basis in the work of the organisation, find themselves working side-by-side with newly employed paid professionals, recruited on the basis of specific competences. These "social sector workers" have specific

and particular characteristics that have set them in a category apart: they are not volunteers and have knowledge often gained in other sectors of the economy. At the same time, they are not corporate employees like other workers, because their commitment is always greater in relation to the salary that they actually receive, and this is the added value that they represent for the not for profit "market". The second trend that can be found in the French voluntary sector relates to the growth of commitments for short-term projects, often realised with public funding, and rarely with donations from private individuals, to whom the French voluntary sector seldom turns to for funding.

In addition, it is a matter for concern that a new phenomenon seems to be spreading which involves political parties, which form and directly control organisations created with the objective of raising funds from local institutions. In this way, funds are directly controlled by the parties and aimed at projects which have the sole objective of increasing their political visibility and obtaining support for their own parties. With regard to sectors that are mainly funded by the State, the health and welfare sectors come first, with the social sector following closely behind it. The sector which receives the least funding is that of "sport and youth", in spite of the fact that this category is regulated by the Ministry of Youth and Sport itself.

# About voluntary organisations

## 1. LEGAL STATUS, ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF ORGANISATIONS

The survey carried out on voluntary organisations in France provides a fairly clear illustration of the nature of these bodies and the activities they perform. Nineteen organisations in total were interviewed and these, on the whole, were reasonably newly-founded organisations. In fact, with the exception of one established back in 1872, the remainder embarked on their activities from the 1960s onwards until 1997, when the most recent organisation of those interviewed was founded.

Only one of these organisations has its headquarters located at the home of one of its members, six rent their premises, eight have their **headquarters** provided by another body free of charge, and three own their headquarters.

Nearly all of the organisations (17) operate on a typical five-day week (from Monday to Friday) and only two remain operational also on Saturdays and/or Sundays. **Opening hours** to the public range from around 30-40 hours per week, increasing to over fifty in those organisations working a seven-day week. All work throughout the year.

Seven organisations have been set up by independent groups of persons, whilst five have emerged as extension of a pre-existing activity and six have been formed on the initiative of student groups, social centres, individuals, etc.

Most of the organisations (14) are defined solely on the basis of their programme and goals, five claim to be moulded on secular and nondenominational ideology. The activities of eight organisations are carried out for the sole benefit of their members, eleven for the benefit of members and non-members.

Of the various types of **legal status**, over half of the bodies interviewed (13) are defined as not for profit organisations, followed by four social centres and two voluntary associations.

The activities of the organisations studied are regulated by their **statutes** and eleven of these also have set of laws. All of the organi-

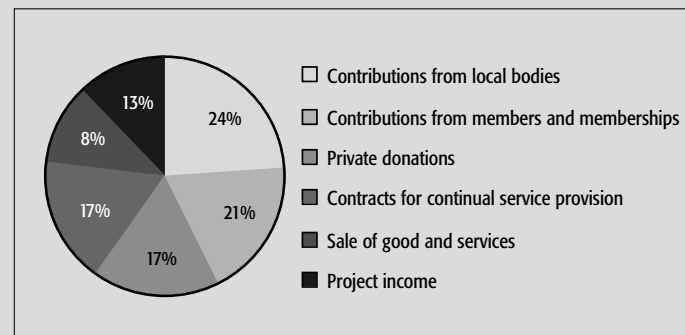
sations declare, in their statutes, the democratic nature of their body, the charitable nature of social duty and fourteen claim to operate for the sole purpose of solidarity. Finally, all of the bodies claim to be recorded on a particular **roll** or **particular register**: fifteen at the Prefecture and four at the Court.

The **organisational structure** of all of the bodies is headed by a president, a governing board and an assembly, fifteen also have a management body and only one has monitoring bodies.

The organisations are governed by **sector legislation** (Law on voluntary organisations, Law for the disabled, Law on international cooperation, Law on sports associations, etc.), which stipulates more specific legal requirements (performance of not for profit activities, democratic nature of the body, etc.).

With regard to the income that the organisations have available for carrying out their activities, it can be deduced from the responses that the majority of funding is derived from contributions from local or regional bodies (24%) and from contributions from members and memberships (21%). The same amount of income (17%) is derived from both private donations and contracts for continuous services provided by the associations. Finally, 13% of funds are attributed to projects submitted by the organisations to public bodies and the European Union and 8% comes from the sale of goods and/or services.

Typology of the organisations' income in 2003



The amount of income exceeds 150,000 Euro in fifteen organisations, only one body claims to receive proceeds of between 26,000 Euro and 50,000 Euro and one other an income ranging between 11,000 Euro and 25,000 Euro. All organisations are also legally eligible to tax benefits (mainly consisting of VAT exemption).

## 2. TERRITORIAL RANGE, HUMAN RESOURCES AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER BODIES

With regard to the **territorial range** within which the organisations perform their activities, it can be seen that only a few organisations operate above the local level (six nationally and one internationally), whilst eight operate at a district level and four within their city's territory.

The activities of the organisations are however undertaken in con-

tinuous collaboration with other subjects. These consist of other voluntary organisations and also agencies which operate at a European or international level. In fact, in 2003, the organisations engaged in numerous working relationships with other entities, implementing **projects and initiatives as part of a network** with certain services and municipal authorities (14), organisations with a socio-cultural focus (13), with national organisations (12), provincial services (11), with various public bodies, such as educational bodies, civil protection bodies, etc. (11). Only three organisations collaborated with foundations, three with health structures, two with cooperatives and one with businesses and banks.

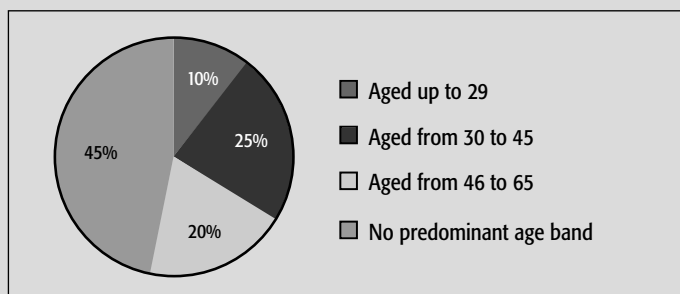
Almost all of the organisations interviewed are members of a **coordinating body** at various levels: all form part of a national or regional network, eleven belong to provincial bodies and twenty-two to international bodies. It may be of interest in this regard to refer to the table which illustrates the bodies and federations in which the organisations are actively involved.

Name	Provincial or local		National or regional		International		Sector vertical	Area horizontal
	Advice	Coordinat.	Advice	Coordinat.	Advice	Coordinat.		
1. ANPAA = EUROCARE						X	X	X
2. Federation of Parisian Social Centres	X						X	
3. National Federation of Social Centres in France				X				X
4. <i>Maison d'Europe</i> Federation						X	X	X
5. <i>Espace Bénévolat</i>		X					X	
6. Federation of Social Centres of Bas Rhin				X				X
7. UNACS ( <i>Union Nationale des Asso des Centres de Santé</i> )				X				X
8. URACS ( <i>Union Régionale des Asso des Centres de Santé</i> )				X				X
9. CNAJEP				X			X	
10. UNIOPSS				X			X	
11. FONDA				X			X	
12. LEF				X				
13. <i>Comité de Pilotage Gare de l'Est</i>				X				X
14. <i>Comité "Mort de la rue" Gare du Nord</i>				X				X
15. <i>Collectif Foyer Travailleurs Migrants</i>				X				X
16. <i>Comité de Pilotage</i>	X						X	
17. <i>Comité Région Jeunesse pour l'Europe</i>			X					X
18. <i>Comité Départementale pour la Jeunesse</i>	X							X

Regarding the relationships that the organisations engage in with **volunteer promotion and service entities**, only seven organisations were found to benefit from services offered by these bodies and mainly in terms of training, information and communication, legal and tax advice, logistical services, participation in events and seeking volunteers.

The only significant result is in relation to the predominant age groups of people acting gratuitously and continuously (see graph). In the majority of cases (45%) the groups of volunteers are of a mixed type and do not predominantly belong to in any specific age group.

### Age groups of volunteers



Only eight of the nineteen organisations are involved in recruiting new volunteers and, in so doing, six of these use the services of a support body (*France Bénévolat, Passarelles et Compétences, the FCSF*).

The intake requirements for volunteer recruitment depend, in half of the cases, on the project concerned although, generally speaking, the associations do not require any specific skills. In any case, eleven organisations provide in-house training courses for the volunteers and ten organisations require the individual to devote a certain amount of time at least once a week.

### 3. AREAS OF ACTIVITY, GOALS AND TYPOLOGY OF USERS BENEFICIARIES

The tasks carried out by organisations vary in that they embrace

and encompass several areas of activity. The following table is broken down according to areas of activity. It is evident that one of the most active areas is education/training, followed by recreation, welfare, advocacy, etc.

### Activities performed by the organisations

Welfare	9
Health	3
Advocacy	6
Cultural issues and protection of cultural assets	4
Education and training	13
Recreation	11
Sport	6
Protection and raising awareness of the value of environmental and natural heritage	1
Coordination and support for operational groups or territorial areas	7
Other	6

The major commitment of organisations, in terms of investment of resources and the amount of services, however, relates to the advocacy, social and professional activities and training and educational activities.

Of those interviewed, thirteen organisations were in a position to quantify their **beneficiaries**, which include both individual members of the public (up to a maximum of 5,000) and organisations (42 in total). The services provided by thirteen organisations are offered upon payment of an annual membership fee, whilst twelve request payment for services rendered and only seven organisations request no fee or charge at all for services.

In analysing the data gathered, it is possible to identify the main **areas and goals of intervention** of those organisations which, within their specific areas, also carry out activities relating to other sectors (the total does not tally as multiple answers could be given to the question).

The five macro goals were identified as follows: carrying out services of public interest (which applies to 22 associations), performing

promotion and awareness activities (40), protecting the environment and the area (1), undertaking training and research activities (4) and other (1).

The questionnaire also asked the organisations to identify specif-

ic beneficiaries and types of individual with whom the organisations are involved on a continual basis. Combining all the responses, it is evident that the largest groups of users are: children and young people (20), people in need (1), the disadvantaged (17) and families (8).

## ORGANISATIONS

These are the organisations we have met, that have allowed for some direct insight into the reality we have been investigating.

A.D.D.E.L. - Association pour le Développement d'une dynamique de l'économie locale, Paris  
 A.N.P.A.A. - Association Nationale de Prévention en Alcoologie et Addictologie, Paris  
 AGECA - Association pour la Gestion d'un Centre d'Animation Culturelle, Paris  
 Agir pour l'Environnement, Paris  
 ANIMA'FAC - Rete di associazioni studentesche, Paris  
 ARDEVA o CRAJEP, Association Régionale pour le Développement de la Vie Associative, Paris  
 ARES - Association des Résidents de l'Esplanade, Strasbourg  
 Association DIRIGEANTES, Paris  
 Association des Centres Sociaux de la Croix Rousse, Lyon  
 AUTREMONDE, Paris  
 CARDEK - Centre Socio-culturel de la Krutenau, Strasbourg  
 CASF - Bisch'art, Centre d'Animation Social et Familial, Bischwiller  
 Centre Social Accueil Gootte Dior, Paris  
 Centre Social de Gerland, Lyon  
 CICOS - Centre d'Information et de Communication Social, Paris  
 CNAJEP - Comité pour les Relations Nationales et Internationales

des Associations de Jeunesse et d'Education Populaire, Paris  
 Elles aussi, Paris  
 Espace Riquet 19 Centre Social, Paris  
 Espace Torcy - Centro Sociale di Torcy, Paris  
 FCSF - Federazione Nazionale dei Centri Sociali di Francia, Paris  
 Federazione dei Centri Sociali Seine Saint-Denis, Paris  
 Federazione dei centri sociali di Parigi, Paris  
 Federazione du Bas Rhin, Strasbourg  
 Fonda Rhone Alpes, Lyon  
 France Bénévolat, Paris  
 Joie et Santé - Association Joie et Santé Koenigshoffen, Strasbourg  
 La maison de l'Europe, Lyon  
 Licra Jeunes, Paris  
 Ligue de l'Enseignement, Toulouse  
 Maison des Associations de Strasbourg, Strasbourg  
 Maison des Associations du 13<sup>e</sup> arrondissement, Paris  
 PPSJ - Point d'appui Paris Profession Sport et Jeunesse, Paris  
 Projets-19, Paris  
 UFCS - Union féminine civique et sociale, Paris  
 UNIOPSS - Union Nationale Interfédérale des oeuvres et Organismes Privés Sanitaires et Sociaux, Paris  
 Unis Cité - Association Unis Cité, Paris  
 URIOPSS - Union Régional Inter-fédérale des Organismes Privés Sanitaires et Sociaux, Lyon  
 Voix d'Elles - Associazione Voix d'elles - Rebelles, Saint-Denis

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