

# QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MATHEMATICS TEACHERS – ANALYSIS

## FRANCE

The questionnaire was answered by 19 in-service teachers in lower secondary school of region of Creteil (one has left last year the region). Their pupils are 10-17 years old and all of the respondents teach pupils 12 years old or less.

Among the respondents, there were teachers with very short teaching practice as well as very experienced professionals: 6 teachers with 2-5 years of teaching practice; 7 with 6-10 years; 4 with 11-20 years; 2 with more than 20 years of teaching practice. All of them teach only mathematics and their experience as teachers is only as mathematic teachers, excepted for one of them who is also in charge, at the end of lower secondary school, of a training for pupils discovering the professional world.

The towns where they teach have more than 10 000 inhabitants (14 teachers) or between 5 001 and 10 000 (5 teachers).

In France there are some special classes, named UPE2A (Pedagogical Unit for Pupils Arriving and Allophone), for pupils newly arrived in France, and we can't ask any question about minorities, language spoken at home and so on. So we had to adapt some questions:

-the questions 9,10,11,12 concern pupils newly arrived in France (ENAF) (and not all the migrant pupils)

- there is no different program for migrant pupils, so the 8<sup>th</sup> question has been changed, in:

“Does your school have any particular structure for supporting pupils newly arrived in France?”

47% of the respondents are teaching in a school in which there is a particular structure to help pupils newly arrived in France : a UPE2A (4 teachers), a structure to teach French language as a foreign language or secondary language (2 teachers), a structure to help pupils with difficulties and pupils newly arrived in France can be helped in this structure among other pupils (1 teacher).

The average of the percentages of pupils newly arrived in France in the classes of the respondents is 4% (min = 0%, max = 15%).

58 % of the respondents (11 teachers) have already taught to pupils newly arrived in France in their school or in a previous school. It is sometimes an old experience or a new experience this year. One of them has taught in a special class for pupils newly arrived in France (UPE2A), another has taught FLE (French language as a foreign language).

Only one of the respondents has received an initial training about multicultural classes (initial training in the region of Creteil): 3 hours about allophone pupils with some ideas to adapt mathematics teaching to this public, and three hours about the management of conflicts connected to the multiculturalism.

The 10 other teachers who have taught pupils newly arrived in France, have not received any training for teaching in multicultural classrooms (initial training or in-service teacher training) and they have been forced to deal with the situation. Only two of them consider that they have found some suitable materials. The 10 teachers have searched special materials on Internet and in primary textbooks and almost all of them have discussed with their colleagues,

sometimes with colleagues teaching FLE (French language as a foreign language). However one teacher remarks that his colleagues don't manage to adapt their teaching strategies to classroom with many pupils having difficulties with the school language and his opinion is that they really teach only to five pupils per classroom...

Teachers generally don't receive any help from school management. Only two of them have received an help, in one case to move a pupil newly arrived in France to a special class and in the another case to call together different professionals (headmaster, teachers, educational psychologist and social assistant) to welcome the pupils the best.

Some of them have changed their teaching strategies, for example :

- using more pictures, diagrams, colors and less text (5 teachers),
- working in differentiated groups with many different activities, even with individual activities (3 teachers),
- adapting assessment like MCQ,
- introducing for all the pupils, at the beginning of every activity, five minutes for individual search long enough to be able to help the pupils newly arrived in France (1 teacher).
- using the results of the test which is proposed to every pupil arriving in France (level in French language, school skills and familiarization to write in his previous school language, other skills and interests) as a diagnostic, establishing some individual discussions with the pupil and a guidance by another pupil (1 teacher).

All the respondents think that it would be interesting for them to have some specific resources to teach in multicultural classes :

- supporting pedagogical documents ( 11 teachers),
- information about teaching mathematics in primary school (contents, methods) (2 teachers),
- information about the cultural backgrounds of minority groups, about geopolitical reasons for their migration (in the aim to avoid some contexts in the situations proposed to pupils, to understand some ethnic conflicts) (10 teachers) but two teachers think that the cultural backgrounds are not the main problem,
- concrete didactic units from various cultural backgrounds (8 teachers),
- information about curricula in the countries of origin (1 teacher).
- one teacher suggests that the new technologies could be used efficiently : pupils could use an individual computer with Internet (or their i-phone which is in their pockets...) in the classroom to look at mathematics websites in different languages.

One teacher suggests also that the exams have to evaluate mathematic knowledge and skills rather than the adaptation to the school mathematics French context.

6 teachers think that there could be some advantages of having pupils newly arrived in France in a classroom if their level in French language is good enough to an "ordinary classroom" and if they went to school before their arrival in France : cultural exchange, opening up to mathematics teaching in other countries, motivation of foreign pupils, motivation of pupils (French or not) to help the newly arrived pupils even if they have themselves some difficulties, exchanges about the material conditions in school, about school system (punishment for example). In other cases, the respondents consider that a special classroom is better for these pupils in a first transitional phase.

In this French questionnaire, some questions concerned only pupils newly arrived in France. However, many teachers in the region of Creteil have to teach in multicultural classes.