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Trade unions and immigration in France

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Introduction

I – Immigration in France

- 1) Brief history
- 2) General overview of the population
- 3) Migrants on labour market
- 4) Public policies & debates

II – Trade unions approaches to migration

- 1) Respect of fundamental human rights beyond boundaries
- 2) Trade unions and migrants voices today
- 3) Universalism and equal opportunities

Conclusion

Introduction

- France's industrial development largely based on migration since 19th century.
- TU opened to migrants from the early 20th century (internationalism)
- Ambiguity between desire to protect and integrate (fight for new rights & against discrimination) and competition, protectionism (fights against undeclared work, demand for more control).

I - Immigration in France

1) A brief history

1918-1939 Une immigration essentiellement européenne	1945-1975 Une immigration en provenance d'Europe du Sud et du Maghreb	Depuis 1975 Une immigration venue d'Afrique subsaharienne et d'Asie
		
<p>Jeune polonais recruté pour travailler dans les mines du nord de la France, années 1920.</p>	<p>Ouvriers nord-africains sur une chaîne de montage, usine Renault de Fliris, 1975.</p>	<p>Ouvrier togolais sur un chantier, 2005.</p>

2) General overview of the population

In 2009 – 2010

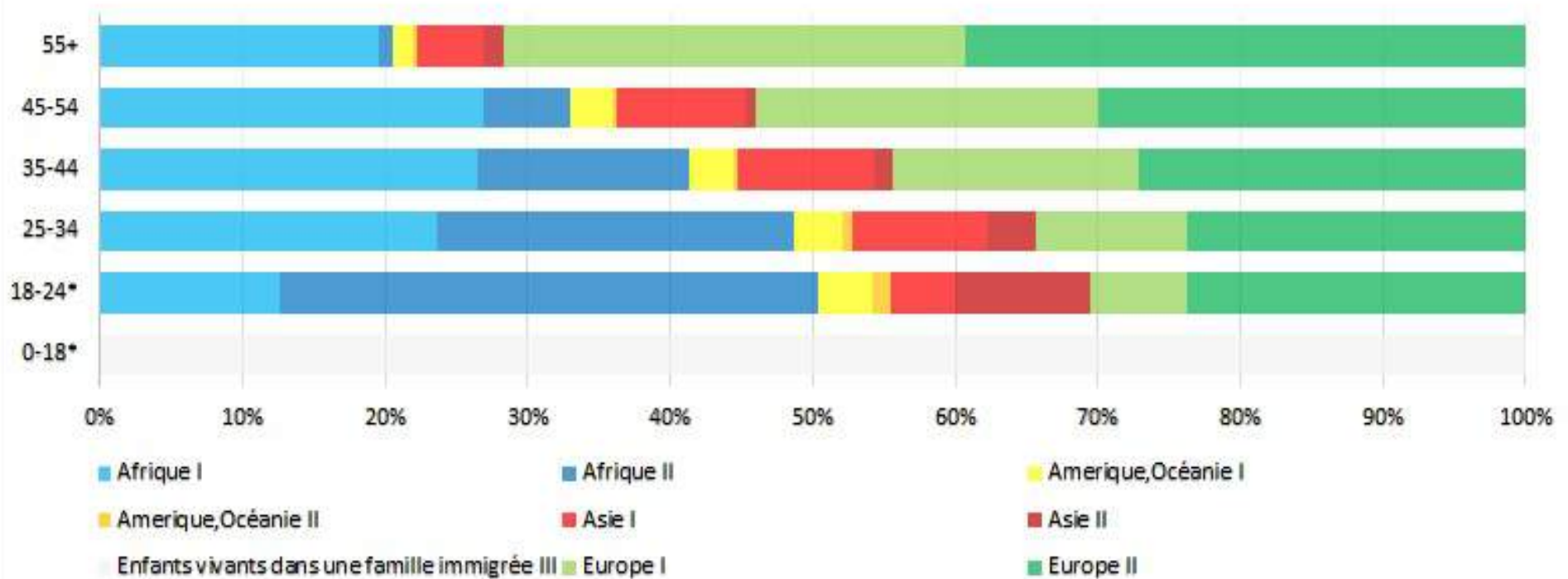
- 7.5 million foreign born persons (11.6% of the total population)

In 2011

- 6 % of foreigners (leaving in France without having the French nationality)
- 8,7 % of migrants (born with a foreign origin outside France and leaving in France, wether being or not a French National).

Between 300 000 and 400 000 undocumented workers

Immigrés et enfants d'immigrés par origines et classes d'âge en pourcentage du total



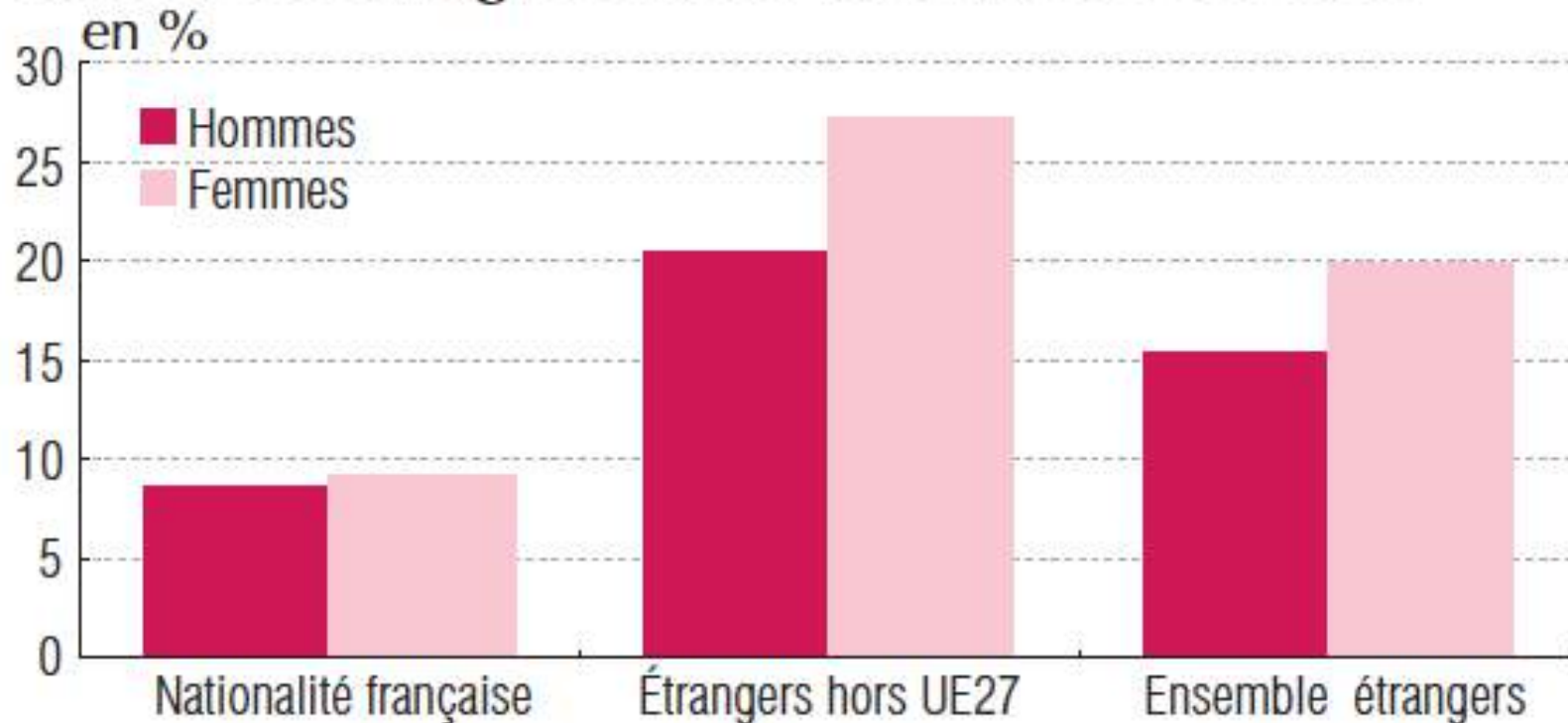
immigrants and offsprings of immigrants by origin and age group

3) Migrants on the labour market

- **2010:** Immigrants and offsprings of migrants represents 27% of the age group 25-54.
- **2010:** 2,7 millions of migrants over 15 years old are present on the labour market (9,4 % of workers);
- Migrants are over represented in low qualified jobs (65 %) and amongst artisans and shopkeepers(10 %)

Unemployment rate

Taux de chômage selon la nationalité en 2010



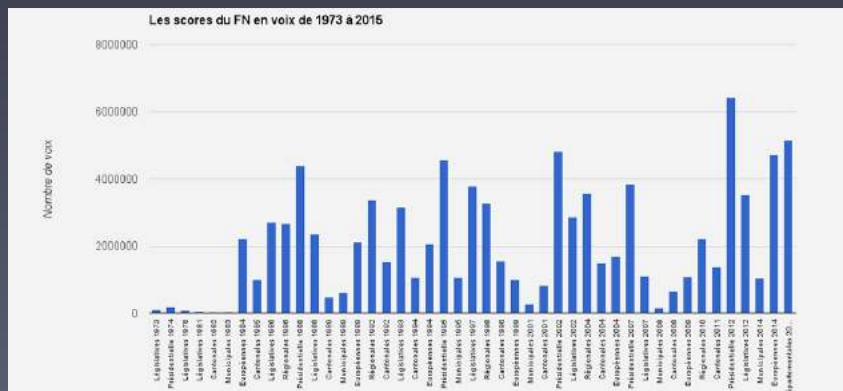
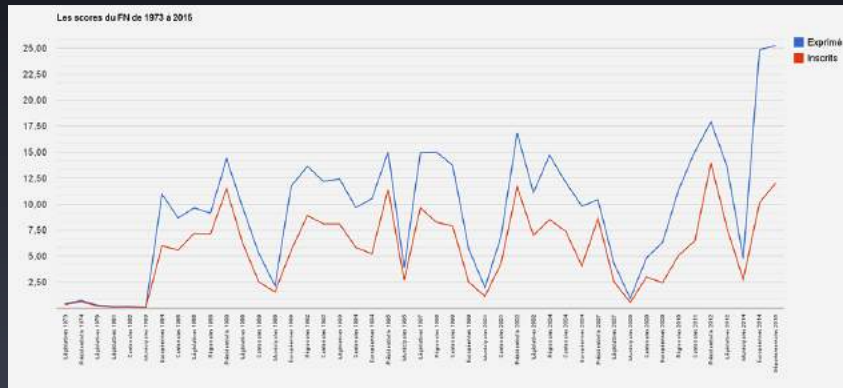
Champ : France métropolitaine, personnes actives âgées de 15 ans ou plus (âge courant).

Source : Insee, enquêtes Emploi du 1^{er} au 4^e trimestre 2010.

4) Public policies & debates

- Universalism: absence of recognition of race and ethnic minority as pertinent concepts
- From integration to diversity policies (Eberhard, 2010)
- The 16 November 2001 law. This declared it illegal for employers in the private sector to exclude or penalise anyone, directly or indirectly, 'because of his or her real or assumed ethnicity, nationality or race, political opinions, union activities, religious convictions, physical appearance, family name, health or disability.'

Growing influence of National Front



- First present at legislative elections 1973 (0,4 %)
- 25% of vote casts in March 2016 (0,1% in 1982 for similar departmental elections)
- Growing results in local elections

**PRODUISONS
FRANÇAIS
AVEC DES
FRANÇAIS**



LE FRONT NATIONAL, C'EST VOUS
FRONT NATIONAL - 8, RUE GENERAL-CLERGERIE - 75116 PARIS

In 1997, the National Front attempted to run candidates for the Prud'hommes (labour tribunal) elections. To this effect, it created the Coordination Française Nationale des Travailleurs (CFNT). 57 lists of candidates out of the 206 presented by this coordination were overturned before the elections by local courts, stating that such lists based on 'national preference' are contrary to fundamental principles of the Republic. 16 out of the 18 elected representant were also invalidated.

Trade unions approaches to Migration

1) Respect of fundamental human rights beyond boundaries

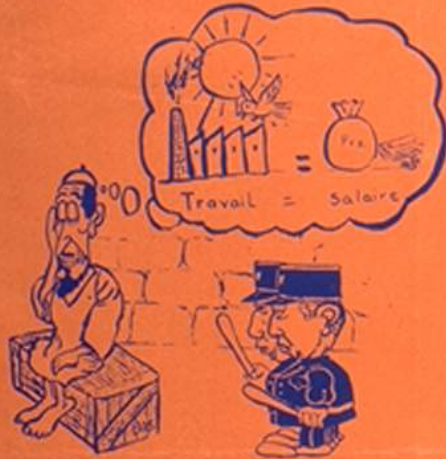
- Constant trend: TU emphasise the right to work and the right to leave in decent conditions for all workers;
- Ambiguity throughout their history between desire to protect and integrate (fight for new rights & against discrimination) and competition, protectionism (fights against undeclared work, demand for more control).



Anti-colonialism & anti-imperialism expressed as early as the 1920s – 1930s. It became a strong political axis during the Algeria independence war (with strong support to FLN at least from CGT).

We can see here, the CGT poster for the 1st May 1947 is dedicated to peace in Algeria.

C.F.D.T.



Revue **FLINS**

LA REPRESSION
LES EXPULSIONS
des travailleurs
immigrés
ne résoudrons
pas nos
problemes

Les PATRONS
exploitent sans
FRONTIERE
opposons leur
notre UNITE
sans RACISME
et
sans
FRONTIERE



C.F.D.T

Traces of trade union support to migrants against expulsions can be found as early as the 1920s. It was then aimed at protected migrants trade union members and activists. A systematic action against expulsions appears to have been set up by the CFDT during the 1970s as testified by the leaflet presented here.



During the 1980s, French trade unions strongly reacted against the National Front campaigns and developed themselves new campaigns against racism at work. This topic was actively researched by the CGT research institute during the 1990s, through several EU projects.

2) Citizenship: Undocumented workers



Undocumented workers: strikes began in 2008. Between 2009 and 2010, about 7000 workers on strike.

2) Trade unions and migrant voice today

The French Industrial relation system is based on four main principles:

- the institutionalisation of pluralism (despite the weakness of representative employer and employee organisations);
- a dual system of workplace representation of workers;
- tripartism at the level of national collective agreements and in the running of national welfare institutions linked to work;
- publicly-guaranteed minimum employment rights that provide protection to individual workers and a hierarchy of agreements such that local terms of employment cannot be worse than those established for the sector or nationally.



FEDERAZIONE EDILIZIA FRANCESE
33, Rue de la Grange-aux-Belles - PARIS-X

UNIONE SINDACALE ITALIANA

Appello ai Lavoratori italiani emigrati in Francia ai Muratori, ai Terrazzieri I A tutti i Coscienti I

COMPAGNI LAVORATORI ITALIANI!

A voi che un duro destino di miserie e di patimenti ha cacciato oltre frontiere, si rivolge la nostra attenzione, il nostro pensiero di fratelli di classe, di compagni. Pensiero di solidarietà, di fraterna assistenza.

COMPAGNI!

Nel nuovo paese ove voi avete cercato un rifugio per guadagnarvi il pane e molti anche per sfuggire alle persecuzioni, voi vi troverete al fianco di altri lavoratori del luogo che faticano e sudano come voi, ricavandone, come voi, un magro compenso.

Quei lavoratori, o compagni italiani, sono vostri fratelli. Con essi, voi dovete affratellarvi nel comune spirito di difesa del vostro pane, della vostra dignità, della tranquillità nel lavoro e per il lavoro.

Questi
zazioni, i
classe aperti
che hanno ha
dei miglio

agli operai p

LAV

Se qu
inscrivere gl
considerarli

A voi
una stretta
vostre famig
ma ricco di
guadagnarvi

Ma q
liani, non
aprono le

« Tu
fra noi, O
famiglia,
partecipa

« Noi abbiamo un orario, rispettalo; per il tuo bene e per il nostro, rifiutati di lavorare un minuto di più;

« Noi abbiamo una tariffa, rispettala; rifiutati di lavorare per un centesimo di meno. »

A questi doveri, lavoratori italiani, avete l'obbligo di sottostare, se non volete attirarvi, invece dell'amicizia fraterna e sincera degli operai francesi, il loro disprezzo.

Cosa avreste pensato voi, quando eravate in Italia, se dei Francesi fossero venuti nei vostri villaggi, nelle città vostre a dire ai vostri padroni: noi lavoriamo a minor prezzo od a orario prolungato?

COMPAGNI! FRATELLI!

La storia dell'emigrazione ha delle pagine dolorose



TU organised migrants from the early 20th century: general provision in early CGT statutes for accepting all workers regardless their nationality, beliefs, religion, sex...

- Specific immigrant' branches - Polish minors in the North of France; Italian workers from quarries in the Parisian basin found during the 1920s. Principal motive: language and concentration of labour force in some sectors.

Trade union membership today

- French trade union membership is one of the lowest in Europe, around 8 %. It is even lower amongst migrants, around 2 %.
- French trade unions are essentially based in the public sector (restricted access to French and EU citizens) and large companies. Migrants workers are principally working for subcontracting companies.
- Trade unions recruit their members amongst permanent and qualified workers. Migrants workers occupy low qualified jobs and are often employed under precarious contracts.



From the 1990s, the CGT and the CFDT emphasised the diversity of their membership. We can see here the communication outputs designed for recruitment campaigns.

Trade unions responsibilities

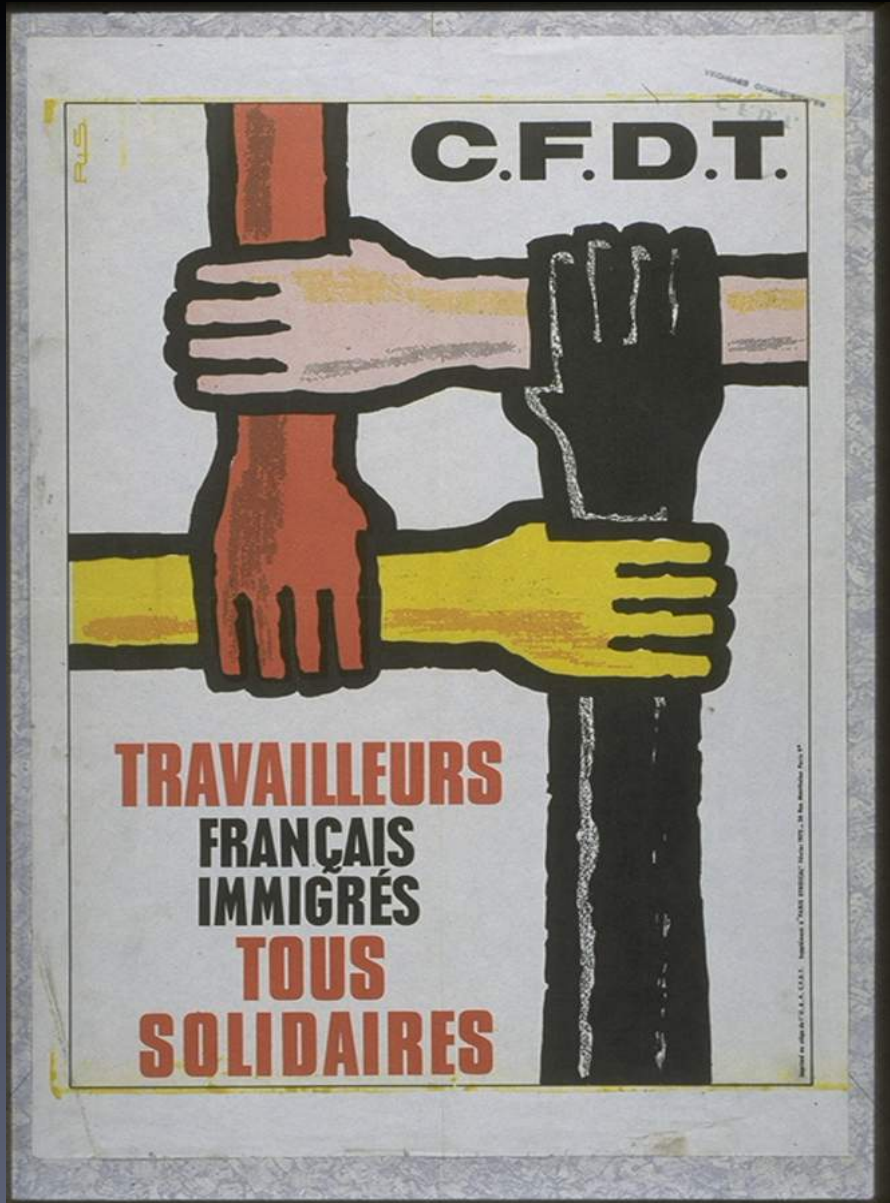
- No figures at the moment apart from participation to congress (“Nationalité”).
- Very few migrants in a situation to take responsibilities inside trade unions.
- Cooptation process that may exclude those who are in a position to take responsibilities.

Trade unions representatives

- French system based on dual representation: TU reps + elected representatives
- For a long time, French nationality (+ ability to read and write French) was required to be a TU rep inside companies. This is not anymore the case today.
- Foreign workers cannot be elected to labour tribunal (Prud'hommes)

3) Universalism and equal opportunities

- Universalism is the basic principle of action for French trade unions
- They do not dissociate their support for migrants from their support to other workers. Therefore, an action will be mainly presented as an action for the workers of such or such company or such or such sector, but it will rarely be mentioned that the workers in question were migrants or offspring of migrants.
- Trade unions engaged in action against discrimination (numerous cases brought to HALDE) and are active in negotiating charts on diversity in companies and national branch and inter-professional agreements.
- According to some authors (De Rudder), trade unions do not appear to deal with institutionalized racism / discrimination.



Provisional conclusion

- TU action towards migrants workers is becoming more visible since the implementation of anti-discrimination EU policy.
- Does not address so much institutionalised racism / discrimination.
- Mechanisms of institutionalised are reproduced inside trade unions.