

# THE FRENCH LANGUAGE WORLDWIDE Overview 2022



**2022  
Edition**



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# PREFACE



The following report is not so much a description of the state of the French language as it is a presentation, a snapshot of the Francophone movement in the world. It opens with this observation: "We are born less and less Francophone, but we become more and more so".

La Francophonie, as the report says, is future, variations, polycentrism. In a nutshell, it reflects a multifaceted aspect of the world.

La Francophonie represents the future, as it draws its energy from the demographics of an African continent that, like La Francophonie, is moving towards its youth. The French language is therefore more than ever the language of Africa, of its schools, of its literary production, of its research, of its thoughts. It also knows how to become the lingua franca of its streets, of its markets, of its ever more rapidly growing cities.

The French-speaking world welcomes, again and again, the variations and varieties that continuously occur in the abundance of cultures that it gathers around the language they share. It thus composes a living circle of which we

can say "its center is everywhere and its circumference nowhere", paraphrasing the old medieval image.

Polymorphic and polycentric, La Francophonie is at one with the plural of the world. Its credo is that a plural world is not only a fact but a value that must give it direction. La Francophonie is therefore the continuous promotion of linguistic pluralism and its virtues, in the world and within it. Among these, first of all, the ability to think from language to language, which is also the ability to decentralize and open up.

This is why this report insists on "the danger of unilingualism" in general, within institutions and international relations in particular. It is not a question of daunting or imposing on oneself a language that would be more "universal" than the others, but then again of understanding that in a multicultural world and idioms, which are as many faces of humanity, it is at the end of the encounter of languages, of their dialogue which can be difficult, of their setting in relation which certainly does not go without misunderstandings, that is found the common, the universal that it is necessary to achieve together. Which can only be, according to the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "lateral" or "horizontal" and not "of overhang".

Out of this necessarily multilingual (multi)lateralism, La Francophonie is the herald and the manifestation.

Souleymane Bachir Diagne  
Columbia University



# FOREWORD

This 5th edition of *The French Language Worldwide* drops us into the heart of the different francophonies that have been born and flourished as the French language has travelled for several centuries. With **321 million speakers**, the French language remains the 5th most spoken language in the world (after English, Chinese, Hindi and Spanish).

Through a series of surveys and analyses based on academic research, documentation and statistical analyses of demolinguistic developments, interviews and testimonies, the book gives an account of the presence and use of French in the great diversity of sociolinguistic contexts in which it evolves.

It is permeated by the fact that the majority of French speakers and children learning French for the first time reside on the African continent.

To understand this, we are invited to explore the "francophone galaxy" in the first part of the book, which reveals the number and distribution of francophones in the world, but which above all describes the reality of the uses and levels of appropriation of this language that millions of speakers use, modify and enrich every day in contact with other realities and other languages. The presentation of the results of a year-long field survey in ten countries in sub-Saharan region and the Indian Ocean allows us to address the issue of French varieties in depth and without taboos.

Among the many stakes related to the global nature of the French language and the diversity of its contexts of use, we were particularly interested in examining the question of multilingualism in international organizations. In particular, we have considered the impact of the "watch, alert and action mechanism" initiated in 2020 by the Secretary General of La Francophonie, Mrs. Louise Mushikiwabo, who declared in an interview she gave us, that "Multilingualism, an essential condition of multilateralism, is a common asset and a value to be defended".

The second part of the book is a coalmine of accurate information on the situation of learning French in nearly 160 countries. Measuring global evolutions and presenting progress and setbacks, monographs devoted to each territory

are completed by a more comprehensive analysis of the levers that favor plurilingualism in the educational systems. It is also an opportunity to take stock of the various activities supported by La Francophonie to help the more than **93 million students** who have French as one of their schooling languages.

As a foreign language, French is the second most learned language in the world by more than **50 million people**. Promoting the advantages of French training for professional use makes it possible to go beyond the traditional image of an academic or elitist language towards a function favorable to employability, professional and student mobility. We shall also notice that the demand for French is important and that the number of its learners is growing significantly in certain parts of the world (Africa, America, Asia), even if the regression observed in Europe is weighing and leading to a global stagnation.

The third part begins with an update of figures for the presence of the French language on the Internet, which confirms its **4th position** (after English, Spanish and Arabic), while proposing an original approach highlighting the notion of "cyber globalization of languages" that shows the extent to which English and French are detached from other languages.

Next comes an unprecedented review of the new question of the "discoverability" of online cultural content, which confirms – if needed – the importance of the issues related to the digital transition and the questions raised by the "platformization" of the cultural sectors, particularly the audiovisual and music sectors. At the same time, by reporting on the 1st World Congress of French-speaking writers, held in 2021 and on the General Assembly of French-language books in the world, we are reminding ourselves of the extent to which the French-speaking book and reading space reveals both the richness of cultural universes and the imbalances that still need to be corrected.

Alexandre Wolff  
*Head of the French Language Observatory*

## PART 1

# PRESENCE AND USES OF THE FRENCH LANGUAGE IN THE WORLD



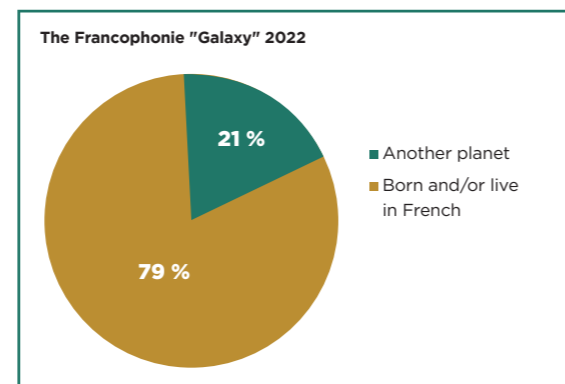
The increase in the number of French speakers in Africa has been a constant for several years, and the distribution of French speakers has changed profoundly, as have the uses of this language in the essentially multilingual contexts that characterize the African continent. The modes of acquisition of the French language passing through essentially formal learning processes (but not exclusively), the practice of French, more or less intense according to the countries concerned, is added to that of one or several other languages in less formal contexts, for instance outside the school environment or official institutions. In addition, these new speakers, for whom French was not their first language, in most cases, do appropriate it on the basis of other linguistic skills. This multiplies the opportunities for interaction between French and national languages, the result of which takes various forms: creation of new words, transposition into French of expressions or forms from other languages, emergence of languages different from standard French... As Richard Marcoux, the director of the ODSEF<sup>1</sup>, says, "we are born less and less Francophone, but we become more and more so".

### ENUMERATION AND GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF FRANCOPHONES

With an estimated **321 million French speakers**<sup>2</sup> worldwide in 2022, the French language remains in the group of the 5 most spoken languages on a global scale (after English, Chinese, Hindi and Spanish<sup>3</sup>). In four years, 21 million more people speak French, an increase of 7% since 2018. The growth that has been observed for several years now is continuing at a good pace, even if a slight slowdown is to be noted. Indeed, on the same perimeter, the number of French speakers had grown by nearly 10% between 2014 and 2018.

As our readers have become accustomed, our reflections take into account the various contexts in which the French language flourishes. For reasons that are both methodological and pragmatic, and that avoid losing touch with reality, we

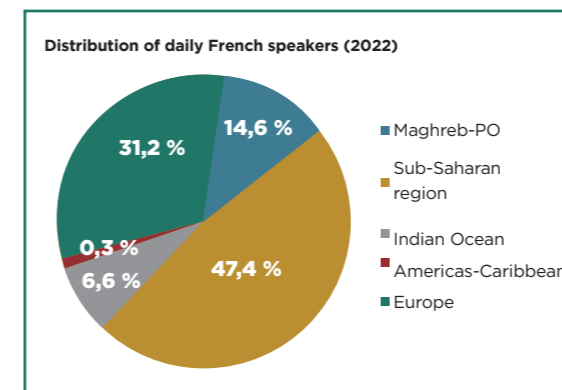
have chosen to distinguish between La Francophonie of everyday life (within the planet "Born and/or living in French") and La Francophonie that expresses itself in environments where French is exclusively a foreign language (cf. graph "The Francophone galaxy in 2022"). The 36 countries<sup>4</sup> concerned, in addition to the fact that they alone concentrate nearly 80% of the world's French speakers, constitute a decisive group for the future of the French language. Certainly, the importance of the dynamics linked to the learning of French as a foreign language is indisputable and its inflections say a lot about the capacity of the French language to remain attractive and useful in a world where plurilingualism is progressing. Nevertheless, as the statistics and studies we have been collecting for more than 10 years show, the future of the French language is being played out on the African continent.



In fact, not only is the growth in the number of Francophones on the planet "Born and/or living in French" slightly higher than that recorded for the world as a whole (+1 point<sup>5</sup>), but it also represents 95% of the observed increase. Thus, more than 19 million of the "new Francophones" live in this area, whose main component is African.

<sup>4</sup> Algeria, Andorra, Belgium (including the Wallonia-Brussels federation), Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada (including Canada-New Brunswick, Canada-Ontario and Canada-Quebec), Comoros, Congo, DRC, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, France (and its overseas territories), Gabon, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Haiti, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Monaco, Morocco, Niger, Central African Rep., Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Switzerland, Chad, Togo, Tunisia, Vanuatu

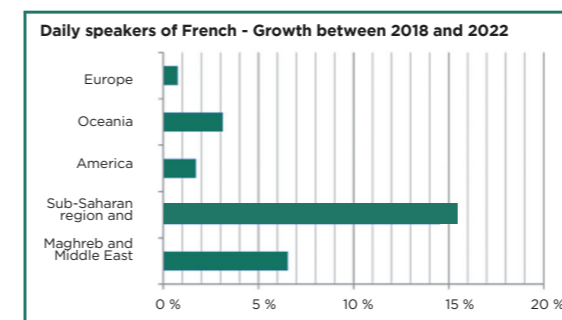
<sup>5</sup> This is actually a little higher, but the downward revision (compared to 2018) of the total population of some territories where French speakers weigh more than 80% (Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Polynesia and Wallis & Futuna) has mathematically slowed it down.



By gaining 2.5 percentage points compared to 2018, the African continent confirms both its central place in the daily Francophonie and the dynamics that distinguish it from other spaces.

If we refine our observation a little, we can see that this African dynamic is mainly due to Sub-Saharan countries representing more than 80% of the Francophone growth in this space. In these countries, with a few exceptions, growth rates are indeed much higher than in the others. While the number of daily French speakers grew by 8% between 2018 and 2022, it jumped by more than 15% in Sub-Saharan region and Indian Ocean (SS-IO).

Regarding this positive development, two things should nevertheless be noted: the increase is everywhere slightly lower than that seen between 2014 and 2018 and it covers clear disparities between countries.



### ■ Is growth slowing down?

By country, it is important to note first of all that, whatever comments we will present below, the increase in the number of Francophones in Sub-Saharan region and in the Indian Ocean is always at least equal to that of the total population over the same period.

Nevertheless, if we take a global view, we can see that all the continents of the planet "born and/or living in French" are marking time in the progression of the number of French speakers. The growth is indeed still less strong than the one recorded during our last estimate. The difference is 1 percentage point in Europe and Oceania, 2 points in the Americas and in Sub-Saharan region-Indian Ocean, but 10 points in the Maghreb-Middle East.

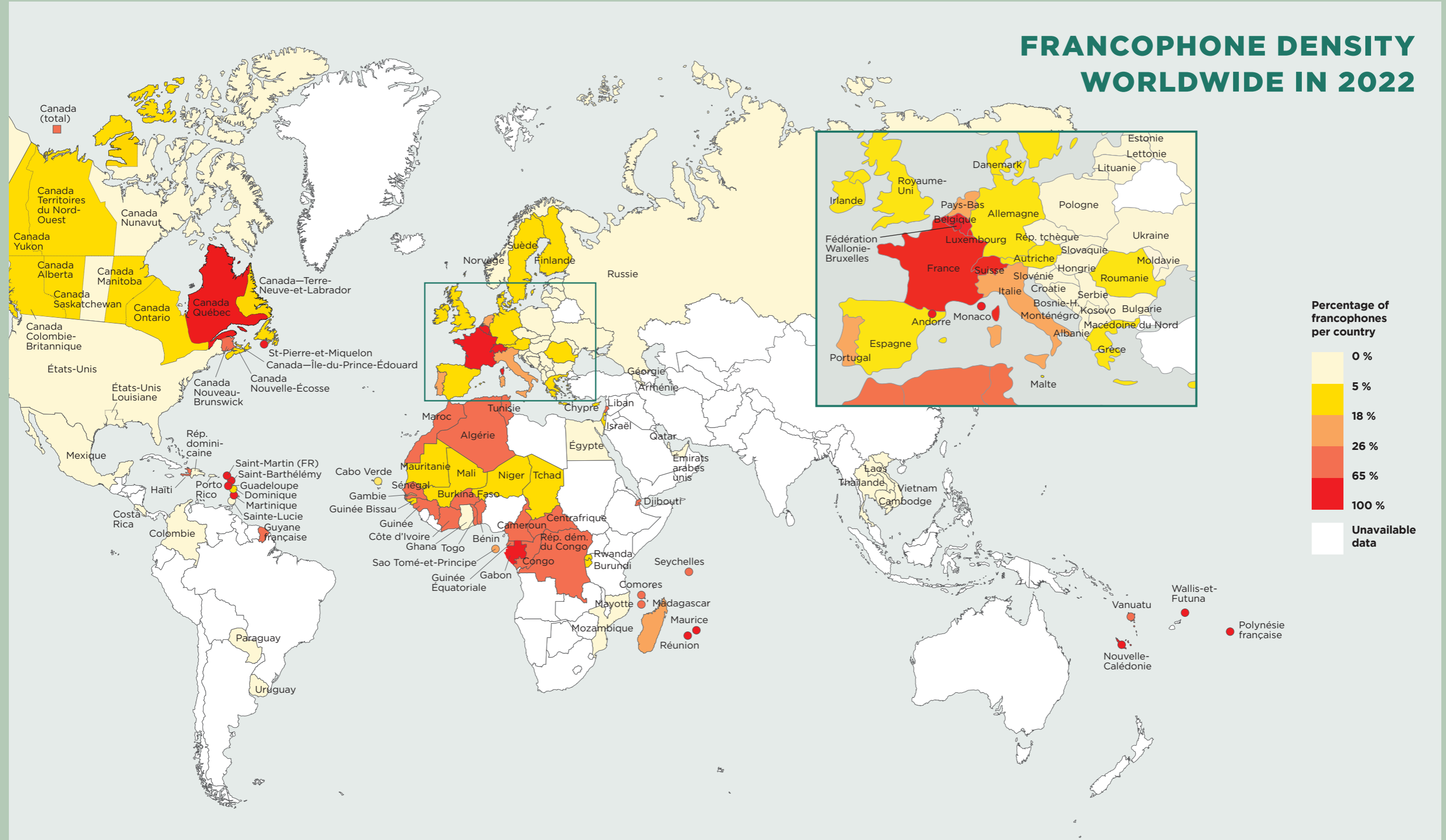
An indicator that is perhaps less sensitive to the vagaries of the calculations we make every four years - and undoubtedly more important when we want to take a step back and consider the question over a longer term - is to be found in the changes that have occurred in the percentage of the population considered to be French-speaking<sup>6</sup> in each of the countries of this planet "Born and/or living in French".

Thus, no country in the African space has experienced a significant change in the percentage of its French-speaking population in relation to its total population. Since 2010, we find the same countries in the same sections, mostly below 50%, with the exception of 5 or 6 countries that had already exceeded this threshold or were very close to it. This could be seen as what futurists call a weak sign, foreshadowing a less optimistic scenario than the one used in the excellent forecasts (see p. 10) made by our partner at Laval University (the Demographic and Statistical Observatory of the Francophone Area, ODSEF).

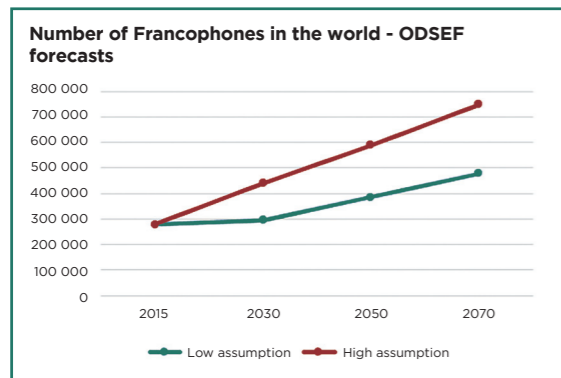
<sup>6</sup> Here again, it would be risky to present percentage changes by country, between 2010 and 2022 for instance, without multiplying the warnings concerning the changes in the sources used and the long technical explanations on the effects of demographic structures. We therefore choose the overall view.



# FRANCOPHONE DENSITY WORLDWIDE IN 2022







We know that small variations are not necessarily revealing, but we can nevertheless venture to make a general proposition.

In the first place, and whatever the methodological precautions taken, it does not seem possible to conclude that these countries have deepened their Francophone roots. The French language maintains its presence, but it does not seem to be widening its lead. If, in the long term, the share of French speakers is undeniably growing, we must note that it seems to have reached a sort of threshold, albeit rather quickly (in about twenty years). Starting from a very low base, because, it should be remembered, the colonial period contributed very little to the spread of the French language among the population, the level of French-speaking people has increased spectacularly, thanks to the school. With the progress of schooling, it has continued to rise slowly yet. This confirms our repeated warnings since 2010 concerning the conditions necessary for the future of La Francophonie on the African continent.

**As a conclusion**, it appears that the challenges to be addressed in terms of quality education in French are more urgent than ever. In this regard, the latest results of the PASEC<sup>7</sup> study on 14 countries<sup>8</sup> member of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the States and Governments of La Francophonie (CONFEMEN) are not very reassuring. Indeed, at the beginning of the cycle<sup>9</sup>, more than 55% of

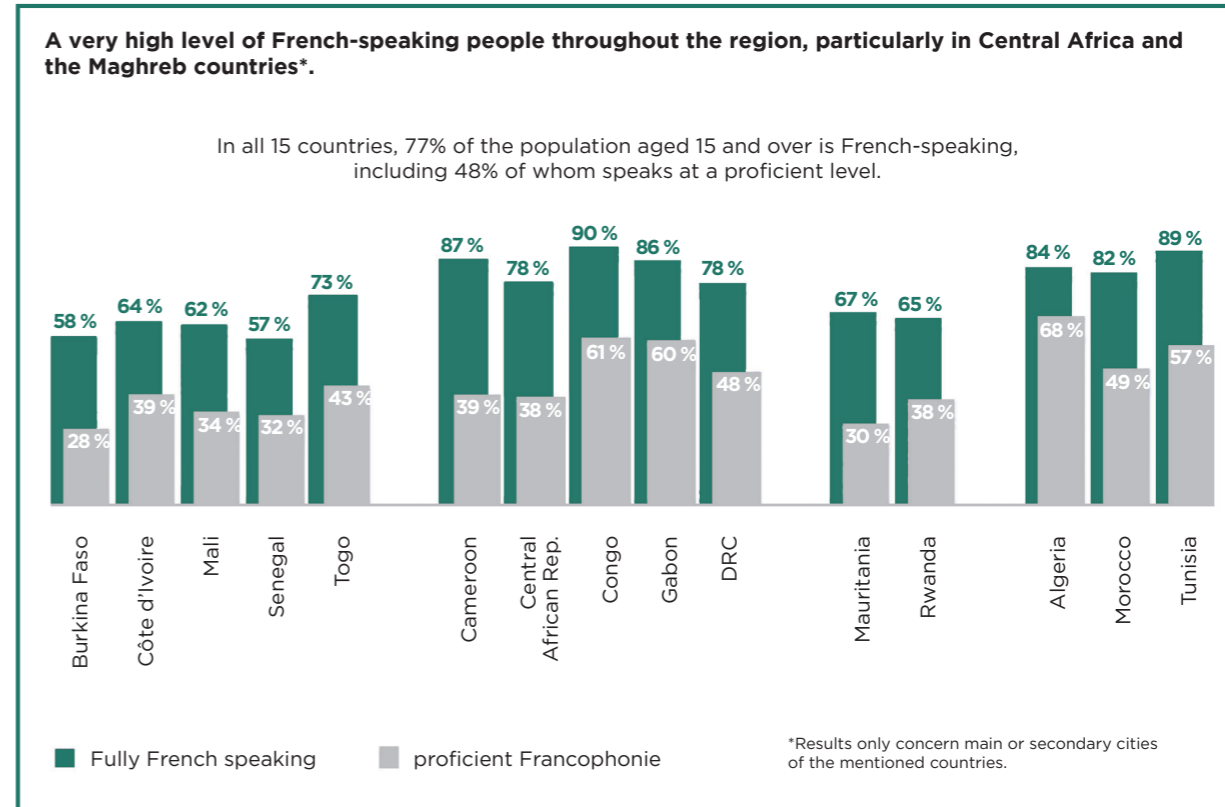
students, on average, have not reached a "sufficient" level in language. Similarly, at the end of the school year, in reading, more than half of the students (52.1%) are below the "sufficient" level of competence. The PASEC2019 report notes that the results are, on average, better than those observed during the previous evaluation in 2014, even if some countries are stagnating or even regressing.

Sociolinguistic realities reveal some common features, but they are also often different from one country to another. This is particularly true for the **use of French, which varies significantly, depending on the place**, occupied by a widely shared **national language** (see the graph "Level of Francophonie" below), but also according to urban dynamics.

### A POLYCENTRIC VISION OF FRENCH

The latest Kantar Institute surveys, whose results were exploited by us, covering cities in 15 countries<sup>10</sup>, took place during the second quarter of 2020 and the first quarter of 2021. They reveal a significant but variable knowledge of French in all the countries in the sample. The majority of the population declares itself to be French-speaking: between 57% (in Senegalese cities) and up to 90% (in Congolese cities), but the real proficiency of French concerns a smaller number of people. According to an indicator established by Kantar defining a "proficient Francophonie", the range extends from 28% (Burkinabe cities) to 68% (Algerian cities).

From the point of view of evolution, we can note a relative stability in the levels of Francophonie declared by the populations. Since the oldest surveys in our possession date back to 2008, a certain amount of hindsight allows us to make some observations. If a majority of the countries concerned do not seem to have undergone any significant change, either in the total number of declared Francophones or in the number of people considered as having a "proficient French language", we can note some particular cases.



Thus, residents of Gabonese and Moroccan cities show a clear increase in the "proficient Francophonie" as well as in the total number of Francophones. The "proficient Francophonie" is also up sharply in the Ivorian cities, while the level of general Francophonie does not change. Malian and Tunisian cities also show an increase in the number of people declaring themselves to be French-speaking between 2010/2011 and 2020/2021 (respectively +17 and +18 points). On the other hand, while the overall proportion of francophones is stable in DRC cities, the proportion of speakers with the best command of the French language falls by 7 points between 2009 and 2020/2021. Senegalese cities show an opposite trend, with the number of confirmed Francophones remaining stable, but the total number of Francophones decreasing (-5 points between 2009 and 2020/2021).

#### ■ A profile dominated by young people

The majority of Francophones in sub-Saharan region and the Maghreb are in the 15-24 age group. This reveals a strong growth potential for La Francophonie. Indeed, results show that these young people are relatively more

numerous to master the French language than their elders. With the exception of Mali, Rwanda and Togo, and to a lesser extent Congo and the DRC, the proportion of young urban dwellers who master the French language is much higher than that of other age groups. The average gap is 6 points, but in some cases (4 countries) it is 10 or 20 points! This is of course a guarantee for the future of French, which we have already noted in other studies that showed a greater use of French by the younger generations.

In addition to their relative youth, the majority of urban Francophones are people who have had a minimum of education (at least primary, but especially secondary and higher education) and are in the more affluent categories of the population. This reflects the importance of schooling, access to which is in part conditioned by income level, which in turn is linked to the individual's social status, and thus to his or her social interactions, cultural consumption, and professional environment, all of which are more or less conducive to the frequency and quality of use of French.

<sup>7</sup> PASEC2019. Quality of Education Systems in Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa. Performance and teaching-learning environment in primary education. Voir QR code.

<sup>8</sup> Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.

<sup>9</sup> Assessments cover primary education only.

<sup>10</sup> Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania, Central African Republic, Togo, Rwanda, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, DRC, Gabon, Mali, Burkina Faso, Congo



■ **A recognized place for the French language**

These links between proficiency of the French language and the opportunities it allows to seize are perfectly expressed in the answers concerning the importance of this language in relation to various subjects. Thus, French is very often unanimously appreciated for its ability to:

- Getting a job (between 67% and 97% of opinions)
- Studying (between 68% and 98%)
- Getting information (between 49% and 98%)
- Doing research on the Internet (between 53% and 97%)
- Accessing other cultures (between 55% and 96%).

■ **French, a second language**

Measurement of the use of French by context is done through questions asked to classify the languages used at home and at work by distinguishing the one whose use is the most frequent (main language) and the others, in order of importance.

**At work**

French is present in all cases. It is even in first place ("main language") in the cities of Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Congo, Gabon (where it is even the only language cited) and the DRC. In all other countries, with the exception of Burkina Faso (where Mooré and Dioula are more widely used) and Rwanda (after Kinyarwanda and English), French is the second most commonly used language at work in the cities.

**At home**

The frequency of use of French in the home is still lower than in the workplace - sometimes even disappearing, as in the cities of Senegal and Mauritania - but its position in the language hierarchy remains relatively stable. French is even in first place in the urban areas of Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Congo and Gabon. In the cities of several countries, it is the second most used language: Algeria, Mali, Central African Republic, DRC and Togo. Finally, in Morocco, Tunisia and Rwanda, its place is marginal and it is, at best, only the second or third "other language" that can be used as a medium of communication in families, but it is present.

→ All Francophones in these territories are multilingual and their first language is rarely French;  
 → The acquisition of the French language requires efforts and its knowledge, without speaking about a complete proficiency, is shared only by a part of the populations;  
 → The official status of French and its quality as a schooling language do not in themselves guarantee a generalized dissemination, neither of its proficiency, nor of its use;  
 → This unique place (without comparison with other foreign languages or other transnational or even national languages) occupied by this language within societies qualifies it as an African language, owned by its speakers; and  
 → Certain markers of its lasting establishment and its potential progression (youth of its speakers, proven presence in homes and economic activities) deserve particular attention.

■ **Sociolinguistic variations of French**

Another question, at the crossroads of modes of acquisition, uses and knowledge of French and other languages, merits a more detailed approach. The reader will also be able to benefit from the results of a recent survey conducted in ten African countries<sup>11</sup>, highlighting the observations made concerning the varied uses of French. The interview given to us by Professor Bernard Cerquiglini, linguist and president of the scientific committee of the Dictionary of French Speakers (DDF<sup>12</sup>), shows the extent to which this issue has become a major concern.

The Observatory of the French language initiated this first exploratory study<sup>13</sup> on the issue of the sociolinguistic variation of French, the perception of its speakers and the uses made of it, particularly in the educational sphere. Researchers were also invited to explore ways of a possible "concerted management" of the French language, which is



<sup>11</sup> Algeria, Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Lebanon, Morocco, Madagascar and DRC

<sup>12</sup> Voir QR code.

<sup>13</sup> "Pratiques et représentations socio-langagières des français en Francophonie" (PRESLAF). The complete report and the results of the study can be consulted at the following address. Voir QR code.

considered to be the legitimate property of all its speakers, whether they live in Paris, Dakar or Kinshasa. On the basis of a documentary review, questionnaires, interviews and direct classroom observations, researchers' work has made it possible to identify a few trends.

**French language** is perceived, by its non-native speakers, essentially as a functional tool, in a relationship marked by pragmatism and utility. This is also the case for **national languages**, whose uses and accompanying declarations only marginally reveal a militant approach. It is also interesting to note that, although present in the minds of speakers, historical origin of the arrival of the French language on the African continent and in the Indian Ocean (colonization), gives rise to very few expressions of hostility towards it. Even if its compulsory, even "imposed" character can be noted, the reservations it could generate would be expressed against national policies, which, sixty years after independence, seems quite logical. This does not mean, however, that citizens do not perceive the interest for the French-speaking countries of the North, and particularly for France, to maintain and increase the presence of the French language at an international scale. However, they insist above all on the leverage that mastery of this language represents. Finally, the very frequent recourse to French, which seems to be confirmed, does not diminish the multilingual practices that are indisputably a characteristic of the francophone sociolinguistic contexts of the South.

**The challenge for the promoters of the French language, including the institutional Francophonie, would therefore be linked to their capacity to support and value plurilingualism while promoting the usefulness of French.**

**As for the varieties of French**, they are not denied, but they do not seem to be claimed either. In the end, few speakers acknowledge their use for themselves, whereas they readily attest to their presence and use in general. In addition to difficulties, they encounter in defining the contours of this category of language - as well as the researchers who publish on these issues - there is clearly a widespread reluctance to claim it. However, the statements concerning them, including their consideration in learning processes, reveal the feeling of a need to understand the issue and to "make a place" for the varieties of French. This place is not non-existent in schools, even if the majority of teachers give

priority to so-called "standard" French in their classroom practice, while occasionally resorting to different forms of French (as well as to national languages) insofar as they promote interaction and the acquisition of the knowledge to be transmitted. At the same time, they have serious doubts about the validity, and especially the relevance, in terms of results, of the use of varieties of French for student success. There is obviously a subject to be seized in order to support teachers, where the need exists, by identifying "good practices" that would no longer be "taboo", provided that they guarantee quality teaching...

**FRENCH LANGUAGE AND MULTILINGUALISM IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

■ **The danger of monolingualism**

Reports from both the international organizations themselves and external observers all agree in deploring the drift in language practices towards a lack of respect for multilingualism. Significant imbalances are reported in favor of English to the detriment of the other official or working languages in all the work of these organizations, and in particular, in the recruitment process, in external communication and in calls for tenders or projects.

United Nations' Secretary General latest report on multilingualism highlights the recurrent difficulties of some of these structures to implement multilingualism. English remains the language of choice at the UN both for recruitment - 98.7% of job offers require knowledge of English, while French has seen a 1.2 point decrease since 2017 (to 10.4%) - and in internal communication: 98% of the content of the intranet sites of Secretariat entities is available in English (a 23 point increase since 2018), compared to 16% in French.

The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the UN system<sup>14</sup> points out in its latest report the lack of significant progress and the need for governing bodies to take measures to ensure the right balance between the effective implementation of multilingualism and the allocation of necessary resources. In the European Union, the situation is not much better for

<sup>14</sup> The report includes an in-depth review and quantitative and qualitative analysis of data from collected documentation, responses to questionnaires and interviews (more than 100 interviews with representatives of UN agencies based in Geneva, New York, Paris, Rome and Vienna and in two field locations: Brussels and Nicosia).



multilingualism: only between 3.7% (in the European Commission) and 12% (in the European Parliament) of the documents produced are in French as a source language, a continuous decline over the last twenty years, when this proportion was 34% (in 1999).

It would be all the more important to put an end to these drifts since, according to surveys, only 25% of European citizens are able to understand a newspaper article or audiovisual information in English<sup>15</sup> and since the United Kingdom's exit from the EU, less than 1% of the population of the member countries has English as its mother tongue...

Observations made for the UN and the European Union are more or less the same for other regional or international organizations, as shown in the latest follow-up document to the IOF's vade mecum of La Francophonie, which also deals with the African Union, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe.

■ **Towards an operational system with three components: monitoring, alert and action**

Determined to "reverse the decline of the French language", the Secretary General of La Francophonie, Mrs. Louise Mushikiwabo, has initiated a large reflection with the representatives of States and governments within a working group on "French language" she has set up and regularly chairs.

A "monitoring, alert and action mechanism in favor of the French language and multilingualism in international organizations", supported by the French-speaking States and governments, has been activated in order to make operational the exchange of information, the coordination of the initiatives deployed and the mobilization of French-speaking networks. A network of national focal points has been established to participate in monitoring and alerting activities concerning proven violations of the language regime of international organizations.

**Political Advocacy and Mobilization of States and Governments**

Since its Headquarters in Paris and through its external representations<sup>16</sup>, particularly those working with

international organizations, the IOF is involved in advocacy at various levels, as well as through numerous activities, including the coordination of the Francophone Ambassadors' Groups (GAF) and networks of international civil servants. For her part, the Secretary General constantly advocates at the highest level with heads of state and government, heads of international organizations and even the United Nations Security Council.

Thanks to the support of the IOF's External Representations, several meetings and initiatives have made it possible to strengthen the role of the GAFs and their actions in favor of multilingualism. The IOF has also provided them with a digital application to integrate them into a global network by the beginning of 2022.

■ **The support of the IOF Cooperate with international and regional organizations (IROs)**

IOF's close cooperation with IROs to support multilingualism has resulted in concrete initiatives such as: the launch in May 2021 of a technical training cycle in French for African Union officials; the development in 2021 of a module in professional communication and legal French for the International Criminal Court; the publication of two calls for expressions of interest in 2021 aimed at strengthening the French language skills of civil servants and linguistic mediation (9 projects selected; 8 IRO beneficiaries).

**Training and capacity building**

In order to strengthen the capacities of States or national training institutions in the definition and implementation of training plans in French for (future) civil servants and diplomats, the IOF is deploying programs that aim to increase the number of managers and experts in the targeted administrations who have a sufficient level of French to express themselves in French in their professional context. Within this framework, nineteen national governments or institutions have signed Cooperation Agreements (National Francophone Initiatives and Francophone Establishment Initiatives - IFN and IFE) with the IOF for the period 2019-2022. More than 1,200 agents - at least 70% of whom are women - are trained each year.

**Provide tools and resources**

In 2020, IOF continued to support TV5MONDE in the production of 42 news programs ("7 jours sur la planète"), 1,080 self-study exercises and 262 educational sheets. For independent learning, certain collections have met with great success, such as "Le français des relations internationales", intended for people preparing for the French diploma in international relations (DFP-RI) of the Paris-Île-de-France Chamber of Commerce and Industry, or "Objectif diplomatie", for an introduction to the French of international relations in formal or informal contexts. In March 2020, TV5MONDE launched the "Learn French with TV5MONDE" application, which contains the 3,000 exercises on [apprendre.tv5monde.com](http://apprendre.tv5monde.com).

Since 2017, IOF has also partnered with Hachette FLE to publish Objectif diplomatie level 1 new edition, a book dedicated to learning French for diplomats. In December 2019, the offer was enriched with a digital course of 150 self-correcting exercises and, at the end of 2021, Objectif diplomatie.lab level 1, an open digital tool made available to teachers, was put online.

**A specific "peace and security" component**

To strengthen the presence of francophones in UN PKOs (estimated at 27% in January 2021, while the majority of missions are deployed in the francophone space), the IOF is carrying out actions, several of which have produced tangible results. Among these initiatives is the IOF-UN-France pilot project to strengthen the French language training system for MINUSMA<sup>17</sup> military personnel (May 2021-ongoing).

As part of a partnership developed by IOF with the UN Police Division, two regional seminars have been jointly organized since 2018 in Paris and Bamako, with the support of the Francopol police training network to improve the quality of applications submitted by Francophones. An increase in the number of French-speaking police officers has been noted: from 28% in 2012 to 80% of the workforce in 2021.

Other examples of Francophone training include: the first Francophone training course for mission leadership, which until now has been conducted only in English; the first Francophone course for female military officers; and the

development of a French-language training course for gender equality advisors in PKOs.

Another notable success was the launch in 2021 of a platform for the Réseau d'expertise et de formation francophone pour les opérations de paix (REFFOP), now integrated into the Boutros-Ghali Peacekeeping Observatory website. This network aims to enhance the Francophone expertise and potential of peacekeeping training schools and centers in Africa, North America, Europe and Southeast Asia. French peacekeeping training resources<sup>18</sup> are available online.

**French, official language of the Olympic and Paralympic Games**

For each edition, the IOF provides the Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games with French-speaking personnel specialized in translation assigned to the linguistic services and to the media, who contribute to the translation and the elaboration of the contents in French. Since 2004, a person has been designated by the Secretary General of the Francophonie to ensure compliance with Article 23 of the Olympic Charter<sup>19</sup>. The mission of Grand Témoin de la Francophonie for the 2020 edition has been entrusted to Thierry Marx, world-renowned gourmet chef.

■ **Towards more multilingualism ?**

**Progress at the UN**

In 2020, the UN Office of Human Resources completed the UN Framework for Languages, which aims to strengthen the coherence of learning and assessment of language skills in the six official languages<sup>20</sup>. Its implementation has allowed for the redefinition of language course curricula for the different levels and contexts of use. Ultimately, it is expected that the Framework will improve the determination of language requirements for recruitment.

The UN Secretariat has announced other initiatives to support multilingualism in 2022, such as the development of a **strategic and coherent policy framework** for mainstreaming multilingualism in the work of the United

<sup>15</sup> Special Eurobarometer 386, 2012

<sup>16</sup> Addis Ababa, Brussels, Geneva, and New York, as well as Antananarivo, Bucharest, Dakar, Hanoi, Libreville, Lomé, Port-au-Prince, Quebec, Tunis, and soon Beirut.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali



<sup>18</sup> Voir QR code.

<sup>19</sup> Article 23 of the Olympic Charter: 1. The official languages of the IOC are French and English. 2. At all Sessions, simultaneous interpretation shall be provided in French, English, German, Spanish, Russian and Arabic.

3. In the event of any discrepancy between the French and English texts of the Olympic Charter and any other IOC document, the French text shall prevail unless expressly provided otherwise in writing.

<sup>20</sup> Voir QR code.



Nations. IOF is supporting the development of this framework through the provision of a contribution aimed at bringing in high-level expertise.

**An ongoing debate in the European Union**

Since the Brexit, the dominance of English in the institutions is felt to be all the more unjustified. Many voices have been raised<sup>21</sup> to denounce the majority use of a language that is now official, alongside the national languages, in only two member countries: Ireland and Malta. The debate on multilingualism in the EU has also been rekindled by the health crisis, which led the European institutions to make unprecedented use of video-conferencing tools to organize, for the first few weeks, virtual meetings in English only at all levels, including Council meetings. As of May 2020, the European Commission has set up the Interaction platform, which allows the use of up to 32 languages. Finally, the French presidency of the European Union in the first half of 2022 should be an opportunity to debate new proposals for a rebalancing in the use of official languages.

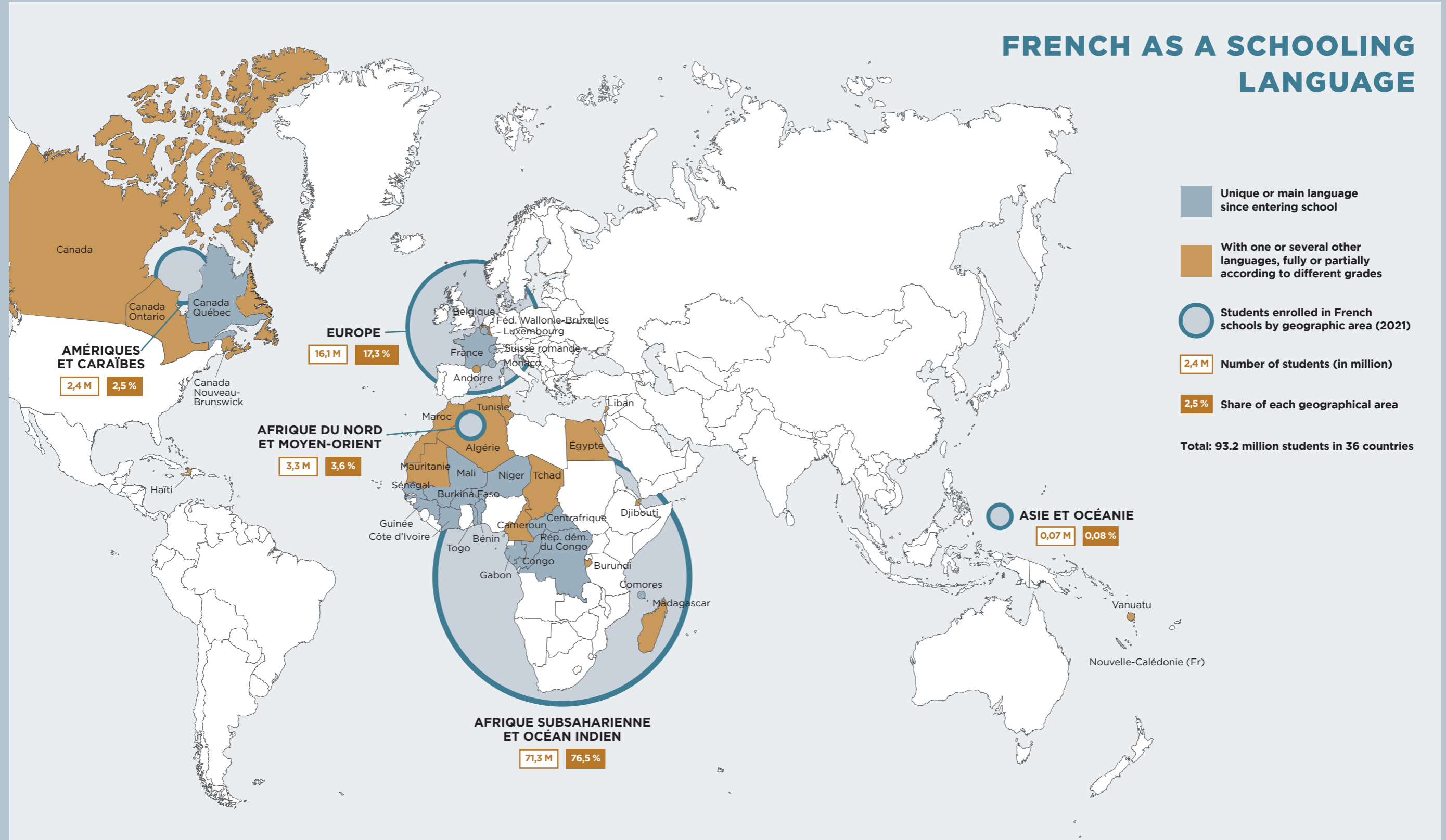
<sup>21</sup> One example is the initiative of a group of French-speaking European civil servants, dubbed "Carré bleu", who sent an open letter to the President of the Commission in September 2019 demanding the right to work in French.

## PART 2

# LANGUAGE POLICIES AND TEACHING (IN) FRENCH WORLDWIDE



# FRENCH AS A SCHOOLING LANGUAGE



## FRENCH AS A LANGUAGE OF SCHOOLING

French is the language of schooling in the educational systems of 36 states and governments around the world (24 of which are in the Africa-Indian Ocean and Middle East zones), either alone or alongside other languages; 80% of students enrolled in French schools are concentrated on the African continent, where French is generally used as a language of instruction, but also as a means of communication between populations (whose first language is one or more other languages, sometimes transnational, in territories that are characterized by great linguistic and cultural diversity).

■ **Language policy choices and State-led actions** Les States and governments of the French-speaking countries of the South - especially in Sub-Saharan region and the Indian Ocean - need public policies that take into account their sociolinguistic realities, and must therefore make language planning choices responding to various issues: linguistic democracy and respect for the rights of minority languages; bi-multilingual quality education and training; employability and development; social cohesion and intergenerational transmission; access for all to information and rights in their mother tongue, etc.

Mr. Jean-Marie Klinkenberg, professor emeritus at the University of Liège (Belgium), indicates that "language policies are a factor of personal development as much as of collective development" when they aim to "harmonize the language market and the job market, to increase competence in the use of expression tools (...); to be linked to the training policy, to the policy of protection and promotion of the worker (by acting on the language of contracts, work, equipment), to the policy of consumer protection (instructions manual, safety), to the policy of contacts between the citizen and the public authorities (simplification of the administrative and legal language, etc. ), equal opportunities policy (feminization of job names), research and development policy, particularly in the digital field, and policy on citizen access to contemporary information and communication technologies.

Many resolutions and texts in favor of linguistic diversity already include elements of language policy at the national level in several African countries (e.g., South Africa) or recall the need to integrate a bi- or multilingual approach in educational systems in order to improve early learning (e.g., Mali, Burundi). There is indeed a high-level international

consensus to protect all languages and actions are taken to meet the challenges of "eco-linguistic protection". However, the reality on the ground shows that only minimal language policies are applied, and that they most often only deal with the status of languages (whose implications often remain implicit, and whose effects are often little or poorly measured). Moreover, when texts are produced and programs are financed by States and partners in the field, they are almost exclusively concerned with the introduction of certain languages into the educational system and with literacy, mainly in the primary cycle. Moreover, language policy issues are generally dealt with by the States at the national level, without taking into account territorial specificities, and dispersed among bodies under the responsibility of ministries that differ from a country to another.

It is in this context that La Francophonie supports member states and governments through programs and initiatives dedicated to language and educational policies, capacity building of teachers, evaluations and learning for the benefit of bi-multilingual education (in particular through its program School and National Languages in Africa - ELAN).

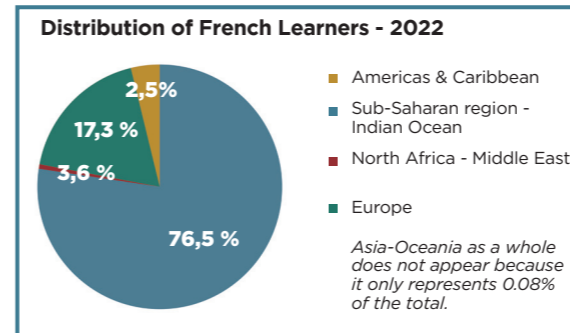
### ■ Current situation by region and country

Approximately **93 million pupils** and students are being taught in French around the world: figures that are slightly increasing and that confirm, first of all, that French has not lost its status as a language of schooling anywhere, and that the educational systems of countries where the number of children attending school is increasing (in the South) are taking in a growing number of them (even if not all of them are enrolled).

Naturally, countries where French is the only official language that carry the greatest weight in the world as a whole and, among them, the overwhelming majority of French learners reside on the African continent, including countries where it is not an official language (for instance Maghreb region).

Europe comes in second place, thanks to France (91% of European students are taught in French), but also to the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, French-speaking Switzerland, Luxembourg and Monaco.

If North America owes its third place to Quebec and Canada in general, we must not forget the role played by Haiti, even if the latest available statistics concerning this country are outdated (2015-2016).



Finally, it is Lebanon that dominates the French school landscape in the North Africa-Middle East zone, even if the place of this language as a medium of schooling is far from negligible - although not precisely quantified - in the Maghreb countries.

As for the Asian part, the low volume of learners in New Caledonia and Vanuatu makes it difficult to see in relation to the total mass.

## FRENCH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The evolution of the number of students learning FLE differs according to the region or country, and is largely due to the will of national authorities to make the teaching of a second foreign language (or even more) mandatory in their educational systems. Outside of English-speaking countries, it is often observed that public policies only leave room for English as the only linguistic and cultural otherness in the construction of young citizens.

The attractiveness of the French language to young people, their parents and schools is also due to the perspectives it can offer in terms of employability, opportunities to study abroad, to access jobs related to tourism, international organizations or to evolve within a company or an administration.

Political action is a determining factor in the construction of educational systems and multilingual societies that can promote the employability of young people, training and professional development throughout life. It is also the one who must deal with the difficulties faced by many educational systems, sometimes under pressure because of overcrowding, and teachers of and in French who are increasingly in short supply: teachers retiring (which is sometimes enough to eliminate the offer of French in the school), crisis of vocations to teach languages (including French), which are moreover often optional as a second foreign language.

### ■ Learning French as a marker of multilingual educational policies

Educational and linguistic policies play a major role in learning foreign languages, not only by the obligations set by school curricula, but also by the means that are devoted to them. Reevaluation of the teaching profession, renewal and training of young teachers, decentralization outside of large cities and democratization of multilingual training offers are among the challenges that will allow educational systems to respond to the demands of populations in favor of plurilingual societies.

Similarly, national policy choices, in line with plurilingual perspectives in favor of national and transnational languages at the country level, have an influence on the degree of openness of educational systems, towards international mobility for example.

It is in this context that some countries make reform choices and establish multilateral or bilateral Cooperation Agreements in favor of the renewal and mobility of teachers, the strengthening of their linguistic and didactic skills, the implementation of language assistant programs, student mobility, etc.

### ■ Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in favor of learning the French language

Agreements signed with France are often decisive in strengthening the teaching of French. As part of its bilateral policy, France conducts and supports cooperation actions with local authorities through national or regional funding such as the **FSPI** (Solidarity Fund for innovative projects, civil societies, La Francophonie and human development), an instrument that makes it possible to finance initiatives, particularly in the fields of culture, French, higher education and research.

French cooperation includes the **Label FrancÉducation** and the program for language assistants in France and abroad. France also mobilizes the expertise of its local teaching teams and its operators - notably France Education International (FEI) - to strengthen the French language in public or private schools in the national educational systems and in French schools approved in the countries.

In 2020, **the French Language Fund** also supported 29 projects led by the Alliances françaises and Instituts français, including the Franco-Brazilian French Meetings on Tourism, a



regional forum Génération LabelFrancÉducation in Bulgaria, and the "Les petits penseurs" project in the United States, aimed at school audiences.

In addition to its 98 locations in 95 countries, the **French Institute** runs the IFprofs platform, which brought together 42,000 professionals from 105 countries (20,000 shared resources) in 2021. The resources of its Culturethèque platform (digital library) benefited more than 500,000 users in 2021 (i.e. a doubling compared to 2019).

It should be noted that the attendance of FLE courses within the network of 832 **Alliances françaises** present in 131 countries, with 490,000 FLE learners worldwide in 2019 (including 111,000 learners in FLE courses in companies or institutions) has evolved by +3.4% since 2018. Madagascar, India, the United States, Mexico and France being the top five countries where French is learned in the Alliances françaises, followed by China, Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Zimbabwe. While French courses for the general public remained stable in 2019, courses for businesses and institutions increased significantly over the year (+16%).

The Latin American region is in first place with 130,000 learners enrolled in a network of 172 Alliances, and Europe, the leading continent for the establishment of Alliances françaises in the world with its 236 Alliances.

For its part, the IOF has three **regional centers for the teaching of French (CREF)**: centers of excellence that offer high-level training engineering facilities providing training and seminars for all professional categories of French language teaching in educational systems. This initiative, which was first tested in 1993 in Asia-Pacific (CREFAP), was extended in 2005 to Central and Eastern Europe (CREFECO) and, starting in 2021, to Africa and the Middle East (CREFA).

The program targets more than 50,000 teachers and more than 4 million learners of French.

#### ■ Official certification of French language skills

Among FEI's assessment tools for teachers, the APPRENDRE Ev@lang test - supported by FEI and AUF - was launched in 2021 in its training version, to assess the level of French language skills of teachers in the educational systems of 26 French-speaking countries.

Even within the context of the pandemic, the official French language certifications have gathered a large number of

candidates, especially for young people, with 214,121 candidates (including 108,376 in the context of the DELF scolaire and therefore official language assessments within national educational systems) in 2021, out of a total of 381,597 candidates for the DELF-DALF. The number of candidates has been steadily increasing, and will reach its peak in 2019 with 318,474 young candidates (including 163,121 enrolled in a DELF scolaire) out of a total of 519,611 DELF-DALF candidates, confirming the interest of students in certifying their competencies in French with an official diploma, mainly in secondary schools.

The DELF scolaire is particularly attractive in Italy (22% of all registrants in 2019) and especially in Germany (28% of registrants).

#### ■ Development and deployment of tools for learning FOS/Vocational French

In the field of bilateral cooperation for French, the place occupied by training courses leading to a diploma with a professional aim deserves special consideration. This category of learners of French "for specific purposes" (FOS) is in fact indicative of a dynamic that underlines the very concrete usefulness of knowledge of French, as many of these courses are provided in higher education through so-called "professionalizing" masters programs.

In all countries of the world, they concern the following fields: applied foreign languages, culture and language of European organizations, conference interpretation, translation and specialized terminologies, intercultural communication strategies (literary and linguistic), modern languages and international communication, teaching French, language technologies and automatic translation, etc.

The French language is also often found as one of the necessary components of training related to public administration, international relations, diplomacy, or defense and security issues (mainly in Africa).

In Europe, North Africa and, to a lesser extent, Asia, disciplines concerned go well beyond the sectors directly related to languages: architecture, agriculture and agribusiness, journalism, medicine and health, management, industrial systems engineering, tourism, marketing and sales, finance and control, international law (public and private), economics and management, mathematics and computer science, chemical and biochemical engineering, international logistics and transport, political science, etc.

Other programs and tools such as the **Professional French Diplomas** (DFP) designed and developed by the French Business Center of the Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry, hereinafter referred to as "FDA-CCIP" - specializing in the training of trainers, developing training programs and certifications in FOS/Professional French - make it possible to enhance the proficiency of French, more particularly in the business, international relations, and tourism/hotel business/restaurant sectors through training in French that has been deployed internationally.

According to **FDA-CCIP**, request for training in vocational French has not diminished despite the health crisis that has affected language centers as the establishment of a distance learning offer has also made it possible to deploy training adapted to new needs.

Among the signs of a growing interest in professional French diplomas (DFP), we can note the evolution of requests for approval of language centers to organize sessions of the professional French diploma (increasing from 30 in 2018 to 70 in 2020) and the interest in organizing trainers' training in evaluation and preparation for certification in vocational French.

Out of more than 23,000 candidates who took one of the DFPs between 2016 and the first half of 2021, 72% were taking the Business DFP; 13% were taking the Secretarial DFP; 6% were taking the Tourism, Hotel business, and Restaurant DFP; and 5.5% were taking the International Relations DFP. Eighty percent of the candidates came from Switzerland, France, Italy, the United States, Egypt, Algeria, Spain, Lebanon, Austria, Russia and Belgium.

The main trends observed reveal that the European continent remains far ahead in the requests for training and certification in vocational French. Interest is also observed in Kenya, India and Mexico. The request remains stable in North America, and very low on the Asian continent where the link between proficiency of French and professional competence seems to be in need of repair.

Among the measures for teaching FOS that have also been developed, we can note the launch of the **Clés du français pro** in March 2021 by the FDA-CCIP and the French Institute, to support the network of French language centers by accompanying the development of a course offer in Vocational French.

**TV5MONDE's** offer has also been enriched with educational material covering different professional sectors (business, tourism, hotel and restaurant, fashion and design, international relations and diplomacy), and educational sheets for vocational French courses (hotel business, sales, tourism) produced by TV5 Québec Canada with the financial support of the Office québécois de la langue française. A project is underway to develop educational resources on the building trades and heritage restoration, in partnership with the future Cité internationale de la langue française in Villers-Cotterêts (France).

The vitality of FOS or vocational French training abroad, or at least its potential, is therefore beyond doubt, given the dynamics of the training and certification systems observed by FDA-CCIP, the opportunity for diversification of the public that this represents for language and training centers, and above all the emergence of new publics "driven by a real need to work in French" - to quote Mrs. Florence Mourlhon-Dallies, who also specifies: "We have (...) fewer high-level learners, but much more request for intermediate qualifications and manual trades."

#### ■ Status and trends by region and country

As in 2018, the number of French learners worldwide slightly exceeds **51 million** individuals for students in public and private schools, colleges, high schools, and higher education institutions, as well as enrollment in foreign language institutes or centers outside the school system. The predominance of the North Africa-Middle East region continues with 44% of FLE learners in educational systems, followed by Sub-Saharan region-Indian Ocean (25%), Europe (19%), Americas-Caribbean (9%), and Asia-Oceania (3%).

Overall, the number of FLE learners has very slightly decreased by 0.1% since 2018, mainly reflecting a sharp decline in French learning observed in Europe (-10%). The other regions of the world, on the other hand, are experiencing an average increase in the number of French learners.

The weight of the **Maghreb** alone is considerable, since Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia alone account for more than 17 million FLE learners. A significant proportion of the students counted are in fact being taught in a way that is largely similar to that described in other educational systems as "bilingual", or even "in French" for certain subjects and at certain levels of study, but the qualifier "foreign language" applied to French in these countries is thus respected.



"Non-French-speaking" Africa still represents 25% of the total enrollment, with countries playing the Francophonie card to a certain extent (whether or not they are members of the IOF) in a perspective of interregional cooperation. Cameroon (for its English-speaking part), Mozambique and Ghana are among them, along with Uganda, Angola, South Africa and Kenya. In sub-Saharan region, growth over the period studied seems to have been driven by Angola, Ethiopia (before the crisis), Sao Tome and Principe and the Seychelles.

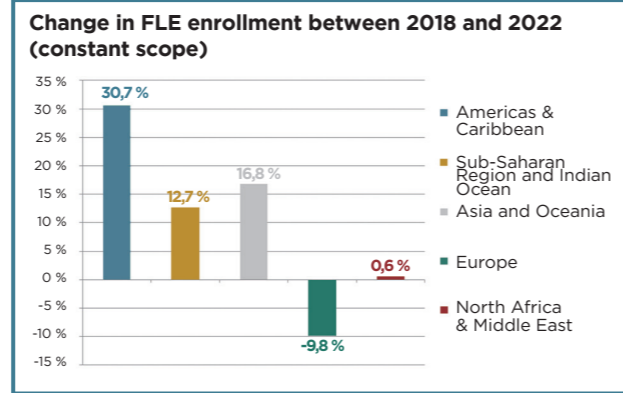
Europe remains a bastion of French language learning with Italy and Romania in first place (by volume), along with Germany, Spain, the non-French speaking parts of Belgium and Switzerland, the Netherlands, Greece and Portugal. The English-speaking countries (United Kingdom and Ireland) with French as their first foreign language also gather more than 0.5 million FLE learners.

Outside the English-speaking countries, when only one foreign language is mandatory, English wins (when it is not directly designated as mandatory by the educational authorities, which is often the case), and the possibility of abandoning one's foreign language early in one's schooling, as in the United Kingdom, has contributed to a decline in the number of FLE students.

In the highly competitive linguistic landscape of European countries, cultural affinities, geographical proximity, the greater or lesser difficulty attributed to the different languages present "on the market" and the credit given to them - as much as the more or less voluntarist policies of the educational authorities - orient the choice of pupils, their parents and students. When a second (or third) foreign language is not mandatory, the competition is sharpened between, mainly, French, Spanish, Russian, German and Italian... and French does not always win.

The American continent and the Caribbean occupy third place in terms of FLE, with Canada (excluding Quebec) and the United States of America, followed by Costa Rica, Brazil, Mexico and Argentina, among others. The total number of learners has increased by 31.7% in the region, which has benefited from a significant increase in French language learning in Costa Rica and Chile.

Asia-Oceania region has the fewest number of FLE learners, although some countries in the region, such as Australia, India, China, Laos, Cambodia, Azerbaijan and Vietnam, have significant numbers of learners (around 50,000), although these numbers are modest in relation to the total number of learners. Cambodia,



China, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vanuatu have boosted overall growth and offset some of the declines in Japan and Kazakhstan, for example.

## PART 3

# FRENCH LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND DIGITAL WORLD



## THE PLACE OF FRENCH ON THE WEB

### Summary of developments

The model used in the previous edition has been improved in some aspects (better source of demo-linguistic data, cancellation of one of the main biases of the study thanks to the access to data of second language speakers by country, better taking into account of the multilingualism of individuals<sup>22</sup> and continuation of the systematic analysis of the biases, inevitable in this kind of work, and the search for ways to overcome them) and the dataset has been updated in May 2021.

Although French remains in fourth place<sup>23</sup> on the Web:

- It is now accompanied, and perhaps already surpassed, by **Hindi**, which is showing a spectacular rise; and
- Its lead over the following languages (currently: Portuguese, Russian, Arabic, German, Japanese and Malay) has been **considerably reduced**, as a consequence of the combination of the following two facts:

1. The Internet connection rates of French speakers in industrialized countries are close to saturation (an average of 85%), leaving little room for growth; and
2. The digital divide in francophone African countries is much slower to close than the average growth in connectivity worldwide.

It appears that this relative decline in French, which had already been observed in partial measurements carried out in 2019 and 2020, is the result of an excessively large differential between the average global growth in connectivity rates per country and that of several French-speaking African countries. This gap is also extremely wide with Asian countries and, to a large extent, Arab countries, which show connectivity rates that tend to approach Western rates.

In the long term, the demographic growth forecast for Africa will indirectly favor the presence of French on the Web. However, if the digital divide continues to be so pronounced in Francophone Africa, the presence of French on the Web could be affected in the short term.

**THE DEFINITIONS OF THE MACRO-INDICATORS PRODUCED BY THE MODEL REMAIN THE SAME AND, IN PARTICULAR, WE RETAIN THE "POWER" INDICATOR WHICH CORRESPONDS TO THE AVERAGE OF SIX INDICATORS:**

<b>INTERNET USERS</b> = global percentage global percentage of presence	<b>TRAFFIC</b> = of connected speakers of traffic to the language sites in the (obtained by weighting the Web (obtained from platforms and applications connectivity data from applications that	<b>USES</b> = (e.g. percentage by country with data reporting the distribution of subscribers to the various demolinguisitic) of traffic per country) social networks)
<b>INDEX</b> = transformation of global percentage measurement of its presence rankings of countries in one of web pages as interface language	<b>CONTENT</b> = wide variety of indicators to applications or of the information society as a language of	<b>INTERFACES</b> = (e.g. quality of online translation. e-government) in percentages per language

This indicator integrates all the parameters that mark the **presence** of the language on the Web.

The set of parameters (corrected for existing biases in the sources) obtained at the output of the model gives the following general ranking:

RANK	LANGUAGE	PRESENCE
1	English	25,00 %
2	Chinese	15,00 %
3	Spanish	7,00 %
4	French	3,50 %
4	Hindi	3,50 %
6	Portuguese	3,00 %
6	Russian	3,00 %
8	Arabic	2,50 %
8	German	2,50 %
8	Japanese	2,50 %
11	Malay	1,80 %
12	Italian	1,40 %
13	Turkish	1,20 %
14	Korean	1,20 %
15	Bengali	1,20 %
	REST	25,70 %

### The advantages of the French language in the digital world

The two most significant indicators of the French language in this context are:

1. The **(L1+L2)/L1 ratio**, a marker of the relative frequency of

use of a language as a second language, for which French is the fifth language in the world; and

2. The **number of countries where there are speakers** of a given language, for which French is second only to English<sup>24</sup>.

This makes it possible to fill in a new indicator: **the degree of globalization of a language (DML)**. It is defined as follows:  $DML = (L1+L2)/L1 \times \text{percentage of countries where the language is spoken}$ .

This new indicator makes it possible to classify countries by combining the two criteria that mark the geographical and demographic area of the language: this combination produces a value whose translation into percentage expresses a hierarchy and underlines the differences. The DML, by construction, is independent of the presence of the language in cyberspace.

The languages whose ratio  $(L1+L2)/L1$  is greater than 2.5 are, in order, Dioula, Swahili, English, Bamanakan, French, Urdu, Malay, Northern Sotho and Thai. And the languages that are spoken in more than 35 countries are English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

Multiplying the value of a language's degree of globalization (DML) by the percentage of connected speakers yields the language's **degree of cyber-globalization (DCL)** ( $DCL = DML \times \% \text{ Conn.}$ ), an indicator that synthesizes the globalization strengths of languages in the digital world. By adding the dimension of average connectivity to the Internet, the DCL corrects the value of the DML by taking into account the presence in the Internet of each language.

The vision in percentage distribution allows us to measure the differences and to see that English and French have a clear lead over the rest of the languages, according to this criterion which indicates how well the language is inserted in the current globalization movement (DML) and in the march towards multilingualism which is carried by Internet (DCL). The values indicated in percentages show the distribution of the two indicators among all the languages considered: thus, English and French together cover nearly 25% of this distribution, with a significant margin of distance ahead of German, Russian and Spanish, followed by Arabic, Malay, Italian and Chinese.

LANGUAGE	DML	DML%	DCL	DCL%
English	2,51	12,68 %	1,61	14,24 %
French	1,69	8,52 %	1,09	9,66 %
German	0,48	2,45 %	0,42	3,75 %
Russian	0,40	2,01 %	0,31	2,76 %
Spanish	0,37	1,90 %	0,27	2,40 %
Arabic	0,30	1,51 %	0,18	1,56 %
Malay	0,33	1,69 %	0,17	1,51 %
Italian	0,22	1,13 %	0,17	1,50 %
Chinese	0,25	1,27 %	0,16	1,46 %

### The place of other languages

The most connected languages to Internet are the following (practically unbiased data), compared to the percentage for French which is 65.5%:

Languages	Percentage of connected speakers
Norwegian	97,87 %
Danish	97,83 %
Swedish	93,49 %
Japanese	92,62 %
Dutch	92,02 %
Luxembourgish	91,90 %
Swiss German	91,56 %
Catalan	90,50 %
West Flemish	90,43 %

### The case of English

As far as English is concerned, its relative place continues to shrink and goes from 30% in 2017 to 25% in 2021, even if the media, relying on highly biased results, for lack of serious consideration of multilingualism, continue to announce figures beyond 50%. Indeed, the Internet has changed considerably in the last ten years with a massive entry of Asian languages and Arabic! As for the global percentage of connected English speakers (L1+L2), it was estimated by the Observatory of Linguistic and Cultural Diversity on the Internet in 2007 at 32%, and it has now dropped to 15%.

<sup>22</sup> In 2018, a 25% range of multilingualism level model was assumed, and the results for first plus second language (L1+L2) were therefore based on a percentage of 125% to account for multilingualism. In this new 2022 edition, thanks to the Ethnologue data, the multilingualism factor increases to 43%.

<sup>23</sup> Out of 329 languages with over 1 million speakers

<sup>24</sup> Calculated for the 329 languages with more than 1 million L1 speakers, with September 2021 connectivity data, based on 215 countries (or territories) selected in the model.

## FRANCOPHONE CULTURAL CONTENT ONLINE: STAKES AND CHALLENGES OF DISCOVERABILITY

In spite of their great diversity, the cultural and artistic contents and expressions of the French-speaking space are little present and accessible on the Web<sup>25</sup>. The platformization of the diffusion and distribution of culture has disrupted traditional patterns in the relationship between supply and demand, particularly for the benefit of GAFAM<sup>26</sup>. This small circle of global players is taking advantage of technological advances to control and concentrate cultural supply, threatening the guaranteed **discoverability** of French-language cultural content.

### ■ Main trends in the cultural and creative industries<sup>27</sup>

Today, CCIs make a significant contribution to employment and the global economy. Their digital transformation affects all countries and goes hand in hand with technological changes and the evolution of the uses of populations that are increasingly equipped and connected. Despite significant differences between regions, a large part of the world's population now accesses CCIs through digital channels.

The cinema, music and audiovisual industries have been turning to digital technology for several years. Major international players have positioned themselves. They dominate the market and capture a large part of the audience.

On La Francophonie side, initiatives in favor of diversity are emerging (TV5MONDEplus launched in September 2020, La Francophonie TV5MONDEplus Fund, launched in March 2021), or have existed for many years (the Image Fund of La Francophonie).

## WHAT IS DISCOVERABILITY?

This relatively new concept, created and developed since 2016 from Canada/Quebec, describes a process of encounter between content and audience in the digital environment. It includes :

- the intrinsic characteristic of any content available online easily located or found by any user who search engine queries;
- the fortuitous dimension of discovering content that one did not expect and/or did not know existed;
- la recommandation d'un contenu culturel sans requête de l'utilisateur.
- the recommendation of a cultural content without any request from the user.

Discoverability therefore encompasses, concerning cultural content, needs :

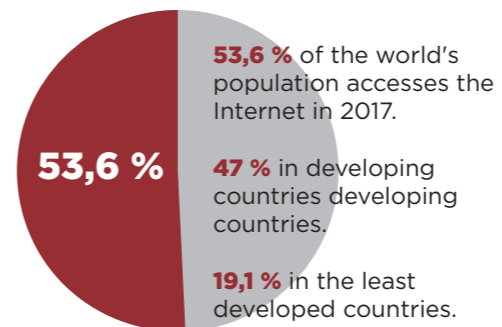
- discoverability (referencing and indexing) ;
- availability (development and provision of an adequate offer) ;
- recommendation (enhancement and promotion of visibility).

### ■ Technical processes of systemic discoverability

The advent of Web 3.0 has facilitated the emergence of structured, standardized and computer-readable data. Today, machines link, structure, exploit and share information that is more visible and better reusable. Two mechanisms promote the discovery of online content: **Data**, the nerve of the war and for which each category has its specifications; **algorithms**, at the heart of the recommendation system.

Quality and interoperable metadata (that can be transmitted and exchanged between different systems) are a fundamental issue for the online discoverability of cultural content.

### Share of the world's population with access to the Internet



Source : The World's Cultural and Creative Industries in the digital age, Post Advisors study, June 2021

### CCIs, a major sector of the global economy

**2,250 billion dollars**  
annual contribution of the creative industries to the world GDP, i.e. **2,6 %**.

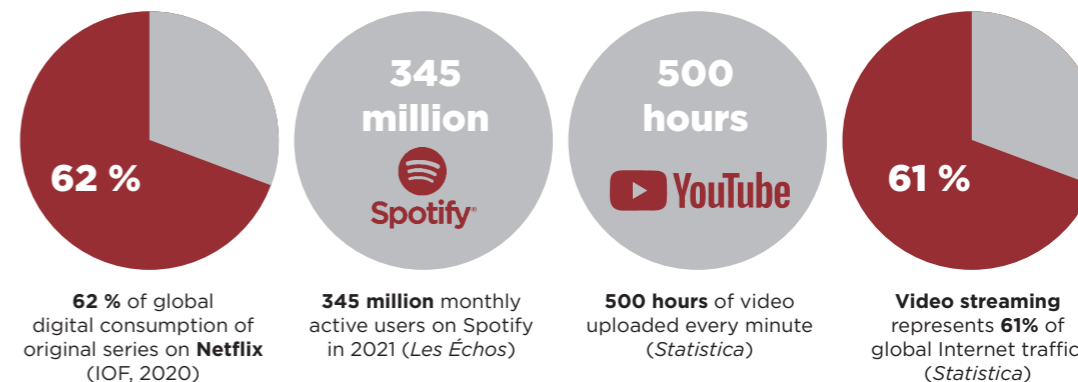
**30 million jobs**  
worldwide, including in the informal sector.

**20% of young people**  
20% of employees in the CCI sector are between 15 and 29 years old.

**45% are women**  
45% of CCI employees are women.

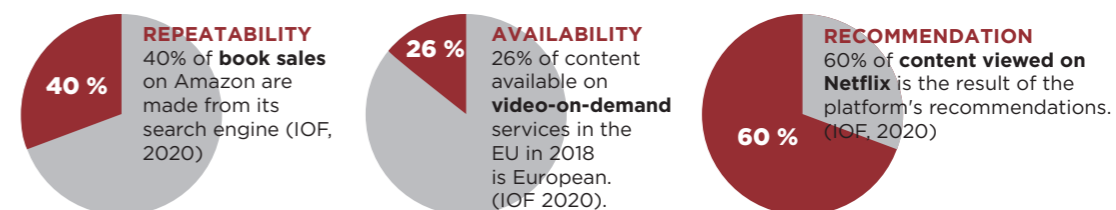
Source : The World's Cultural and Creative Industries in the Digital Age, Post Advisors study, June 2021

### Video and music streaming figures



Source : The World's Cultural and Creative Industries in the Digital Age, Post Advisors study, June 2021

### The challenges of discoverability in a few figures



Source : The world's cultural and creative industries in the age of the digital, Study, post Advisors, June 2021



<sup>25</sup> State of the art of discoverability and access to francophone cultural content on the Internet, 2020. Voir QR code.

<sup>26</sup> Acronym often used built from the initials of large groups: Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple, Microsoft, etc., to which we can add Spotify, Deezer, etc.

<sup>27</sup> Cultural and creative industries in the world in the digital age, Study carried out for the IOF by Post-Advisors, June 2021. Voir QR code.

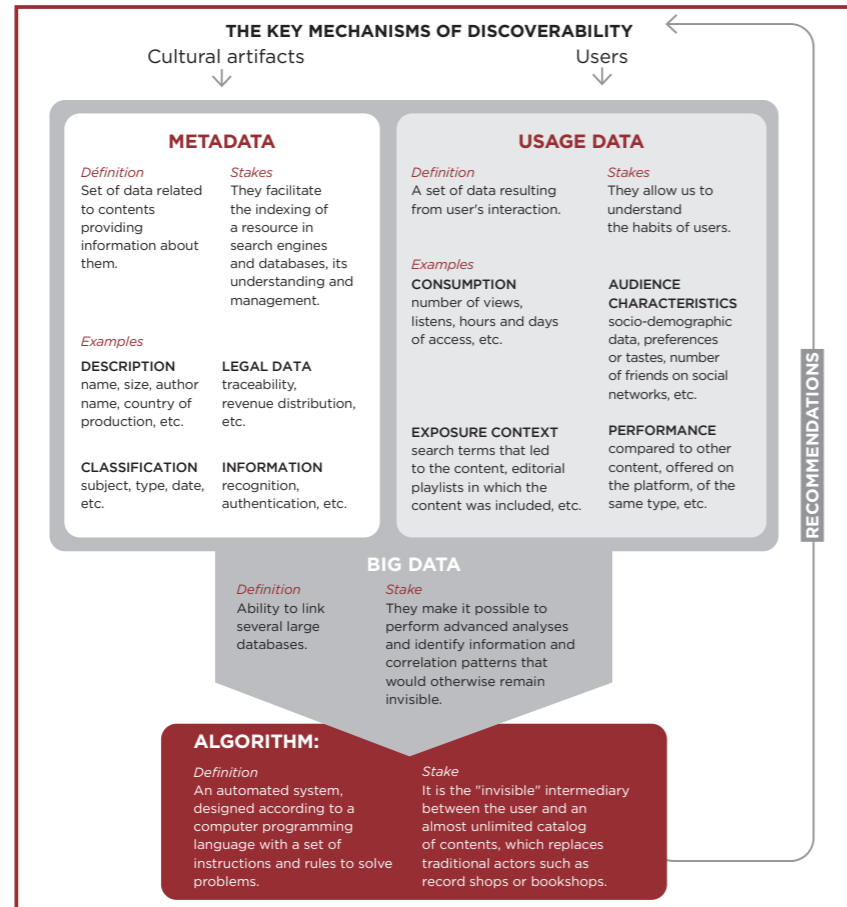
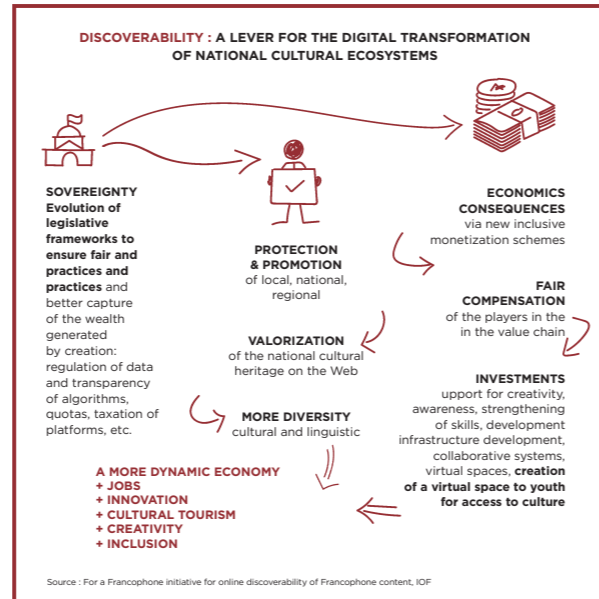


■ **Discoverability, a question of state sovereignty and multi-actor management**

The risks of standardization of cultural consumption and the loss of economic benefits essential to the development of each society are now significant.

Discoverability encompasses various issues related to the sovereignty of States: preservation of cultural identities; promotion and access to international markets for local and national digital cultural productions; capacity of State actors to intervene through the implementation of adequate political strategies (regulations). The Strategy of the Digital Francophonie 2022-2026 adopted by La Francophonie in December 2021<sup>28</sup> takes into account the multidimensional challenge it poses.

Member states and governments of La Francophonie, industrialists, operators and private actors, civil society actors and organizations, and international organizations are all concerned by the issue of discoverability.



<sup>28</sup> Voir QR code.

**FRENCH-LANGUAGE BOOKS AND AUTHORS**

Literature is, undoubtedly, one of the best places for francophone cultural diversity to flourish. At the heart of the issues of creation, inventiveness and vitality of the French language, the book, in all its forms, including digital, is also the product of what is known as a cultural industry. Under these two aspects, cultural and economic, observations have been made for a long time and they reveal a landscape agitated by contradictions, sometimes tensions, although very rich and full of promises.

■ **General Meeting of French Language Book worldwide**

The General Meeting of French language book worldwide was held on 23–24 September 2021 in Tunis. They brought together (on site or remotely) more than four hundred participants - authors, actors in the book chain, political or institutional leaders - from all over the Francophone world. Co-organized by France and six states or governments (Côte d'Ivoire, the Republic of Guinea, Quebec, the Swiss Confederation, Tunisia, and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation), as well as the International Organization of La Francophonie, they involved nearly 1,000 book stakeholders in 45 different countries and resulted in the identification of ten priority proposals to be implemented (out of the 50 previously identified<sup>29</sup>).

Echoing these recommendations, and already taking up some of them, nine<sup>30</sup> ministers in charge of culture and books, representing their state or government, adopted a joint declaration at the end of the work, which notably mentioned the promotion of access to books and reading, support for creation by ensuring fair remuneration for creators, French-language translation, improving the circulation of works and authors, and strengthening the missions of libraries.

As a prelude to the General Meeting, several studies were conducted to better understand the characteristics of the French-language publishing market and to anticipate future developments: seven regional overviews<sup>31</sup> of the French-language publishing market conducted by the Bureau



<sup>29</sup> For a new dynamic of the French language book in the world: Book of proposals and 10 priority recommendations, 2021. Voir QR code.

<sup>30</sup> Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, France, Madagascar, Quebec, Switzerland, Tunisia, Vietnam and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation

<sup>31</sup> Voir QR code.

international de l'édition française (BIEF) and a prospective study by the firm BearingPoint, entitled "The French-language book in 2030 and 2050"<sup>32</sup>.

The findings of these studies have given reason to the participants of the General Meeting who insisted on several points: securing the legal framework, facilitating the circulation of raw materials and books themselves, the need to improve mutual knowledge and communication opportunities between professionals. On this last point, the establishment of a digital network of actors of the book in French language<sup>33</sup> by the IOF constitutes a progress. The opportunity to also recall the programs developed by the IOF which intervenes at several levels of the "book chain": creation, production, distribution and promotion. It also highlights its support for public reading policies in countries through the networks of reading and cultural activity centers (CLACs) present in some twenty countries in the South, as well as the Prix des cinq continents de la Francophonie, which each year rewards a French-speaking author and allows him or her to shine internationally through real "literary tours" throughout the world.

■ **The Congress of French Language Writers**

Initiated in 2019 by Leïla Slimani and the late Michel Le Bris, the World Congress of French-speaking writers also took place in Tunis on 25 - 26 September 2021 with the support, among others, of the IOF. At the invitation of the Literary Committee composed of Leila Slimani, Fawzia Zouari, Laurent Gaudé, Yanick Lahens, Felwine Sarr and – until January 2021 – Michel Le Bris, about thirty authors from five continents participated, on site or via video conference, in the form of literary cafes, meetings, major interviews and round tables.



<sup>32</sup> Le livre en langue française en 2030 et 2050, Prospective economic study, Bearing Point. Voir QR code.

<sup>33</sup> Voir QR code.



## ***IOF REPORT*** ***French language worldwide 2022***

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