

Association
Migrøns



Newsletter – June 2020

This year our *Invited Students Programme* has helped a group of thirty-eight exiled students (the “*invited students*”) by providing French lessons, assisting them with administrative duties, and thus helping them to resume their studies in France.

From March to June 2020 (tbc) all schools and universities were closed in France. Despite the lockdown and the isolation, the association has carried on and increased its teaching and support activities remotely thanks to our volunteers.

MigrENS action during lockdown

Continuing French for non-native speakers (FLE) classes:

The association's volunteers are providing **twenty hours of classes** (using Zoom platform) every week until the end of June. At least ten "invited students" follow classes daily and interact with our volunteer teachers so as to be prepared to take **French tests** and gain **linguistic and cultural knowledge**. We have also created a shared electronic file to allow everyone to have access to the classes. In addition, we created a WhatsApp group to communicate at any time and have been sending **individual corrections** by email.

Individual conversation classes:

The lockdown should mean physical distance, not social isolation. We have implemented **conversation time-slots** of an hour and a half, so that our "invited students" can keep **practicing French regularly**. These classes, taken individually or in small groups, consist either of informal talk about news or **DELFL and TCF mock oral exams** (spontaneous interview, argumentation exercises, practical role-playing). Eight of our teachers give these lessons and are helped by **newly enrolled volunteers**. These classes are held daily, and students can enjoy them as much as they want (indeed, some of them have signed up to these classes almost every day)!

English classes

In March, one of our volunteers launched an **English class** which combines a **refresher course** with an acquisition of **specific skills for English at university and job-hunting level**. She has been providing 90-minute classes two times a week, as well as written exercises. From March to early June, she tirelessly continued her teaching, and for that we thank her warmly.

Our 2020-2021 projects

Serenely preparing the exams: a chance for everyone

During our General Assembly, held on 15 May 2020, we voted for a **6-month extension of our program**, which usually lasts two years. Because of the **digital divide**, some “invited students” could not study properly, and have therefore not been able to study French since March as much as they were able to before, if not at all. What’s more, we have not been given precise information from the ENS school about reopening next September. After months of disrupted classes for some and a lack of continuous pedagogical help, we have decided that these “invited students” should not take their French test this summer. Hence, we postponed **our yearly recruitment** (usually in May) in order to be able to continue to help our current students whose learning has been disrupted.

Anticipating the resumption of studies

Because of the closing of schools and universities, “invited students” cannot attend classes as **auditors**, which has always been a very efficient way of resuming one’s studies in France. To overcome the absence of that, we have set up a **new weekly class that deals with resuming studies**, from a **practical and methodological perspective**. Every Friday, we work on taking notes, writing techniques, CV and cover letter creation... Thanks to these classes, the students can **familiarise themselves with these tools and build their own university curriculum**.

Provide refresher courses

We are encouraging ENS students to create targeted **refresher courses** that could benefit the “invited students”. The idea is to offer refresher courses (individual or in small groups) during the summer which would **facilitate entry into a university** at the start of the academic year.

Prepare university insertion

Several volunteers have researched data to write a **brochure** about the resumption of studies. Many impediments lie on the path to admission into university or other diploma programs. We have therefore gathered **available and useful data** into a pamphlet which describes the different university programs in the Île-de-France area. We are collecting information on various subjects, such as **scholarship opportunities, professional courses, or French language diplomas**. The brochure will be available in **September**.

Continuing our mission: accompanying

We are in regular contact with the *binômes* (mentors who help the “invited students” individually) in order to follow up on the expectations of each student and how they are managing with distance learning. These *binômes* are our preferred intermediaries as they liaise directly with each invited student for administrative procedures and can also check if that they have suitable learning conditions. **Indeed, in this time of sanitary crisis, people in exile meet heightened obstacles:** housing that is barely hygienic, protective actions that are hardly followed because of overcrowding, delays in benefit attribution, poor access to healthcare services. We remain at our invited students’ disposal to answer their questions and direct them to appropriate associations.

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