

Report says France's immigration language test designed to exclude foreigners

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Paris, February 16 (RHC)-- France's newly-imposed language proficiency tests for foreign residents and citizenship applicants have sparked widespread criticism, with many arguing that they are intentionally set

up to ensure failure—even for native French speakers.

An investigative report by French media revealed that the test’s difficulty level is so extreme that even well-educated French citizens struggle to pass. To prove this, ten French volunteers -- including a literature student with five years of higher education -- were subjected to the same test required for nationality applicants.

The results of the test, by FranceInfo, were shocking: five failed the written test but managed to pass the oral exam, while two were unable to reach the language level supposedly necessary to obtain their own nationality.

Previously, foreigners seeking residency in France only had to sign an “integration contract” and commit to learning French. However, under the new law, applicants must now prove a language proficiency equivalent to that of an 11- to 15-year-old French student.

Those applying for long-term residence permits or citizenship will face even stricter language requirements.

These excessively difficult tests, which cost applicants around ?100, are part of a broader anti-immigration law passed last year. The legislation also includes harsher border controls and more aggressive policies to expel migrants.

A report presented to the upper house of parliament, the Sénat, estimated that over 330,000 people would be subjected to the new regulations in the first year alone. Shockingly, about 60,000 are expected to fail the language tests, leading to the revocation of their right to remain in the country.

The law, cynically labeled as a measure to “control immigration and improve integration,” was orchestrated by former Interior Minister Gérald Darmanin and forced through in January 2024.

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