

Project description sheet issued by a federal administration

This description sheet is issued by a federal administration. It describes the nature of the project it wants to implement, the tasks that should be attributed to a scientific team yet to be selected, the budget and timing devoted to the scientific team. It also describes the way the public institution will implement the end result of the scientific team both in terms of integration in its own functioning as in terms of dissemination of valuable information for researchers and the public at large.

Practical information

Name of the public institution who has issued the project: Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism ("The Centre") – Observatory for Migrations
This project will be conducted in collaboration with the Aliens Office

Name of the project: Research possibilities on the trajectories of ex regularisation applicants.

Timing of the scientific tasks to be accomplished: 24 months

Deliverables and valorisation activities by the scientific team (not foreseen in the project description below):

- *International seminar (beginning of the project, state of the art concerning the data/work to perform) ;*
- *report* exposing the way the data concerned by the project could make international/European comparisons or harmonisation possible by the public authority;
- *Valorisation activity by the end of the project:* the team will make a proposal in this respect in its submission form.
- Deliverables from the research contract with federal Science Policy Office: *project description* (max. 25 lines in French, Dutch, English and German for the Web site of the Science Policy Office), *summary of the project* in max. 10 pages in F/D/EN/G for the web site of the Federal Science Policy Office, *a document in max. 40 lines* destined to the AGORA Newsletter at the end of the project in F/D/EN, *interims reports* (max. 2 pages, issued every 6 months destined to the financing of the project), *reports for the users' committee* (see below); *Description sheet of the database* (in English, French and Dutch) ;

All these activities are to be financed within the allocated budget.

Working of the project:

The public authority steers and manages the project and collaborates closely with the team and the federal Science Policy Office (which form the technical committee of the project). The project is followed up by a users' committee who comes together at least three times in the course of the project (at the beginning, in the middle and at the end). Its role is to give a positive input to the team and the public authority in the management of the project. It is composed by representatives of other public administrations and by other researchers. The scientific team is in charge of preparing the documents for this committee, the public institution is responsible of the agenda and the minutes of the meetings.

Date of the information session with a delegate of the public institution (inscription at least a week in advance by e-mail – naji@belspo.be . without mark of interest, the meeting will be cancelled):
17 January, Federal Science Policy Office, 10 a.m.

The project

1. Name of the Public institution

Centre for Equal Opportunities and Opposition to Racism ("The Centre") – Observatory for Migrations

This project will be conducted in collaboration with the Aliens Office (referred to as the Office des Etrangers du SPF Intérieur)

2. Name of the project

Research possibilities on the trajectories of ex regularisation applicants.

3. Acronym

ROUTE

4. Description of the project and situation within the framework of the institution

The Centre's legal mission is "to inform the public authorities about the nature and extent of migration flows". Within the context of this mission, the Observatory for Migrations attempts, through the use of analyses and research, which it carries out or coordinates, to define both legal and illegal contemporary migratory flows.

The Centre is also mandated by law "to monitor the fundamental rights of foreigners". By means of a permanent dialogue with the authorities (local, regional and federal) and with the other, relevant public services, it is charged with the task of ensuring that these rights are respected within all the areas affecting the situation of foreigners...: asylum, regularisation of residence, marriage and family reunification, visas, registration in the communes, discrimination on the basis of residential status, access to employment and professions, access to nationality... This mission implies knowledge of the actual situations experienced by foreigners, as well as of the political and legal context that defines these situations.

Within the context of this work on actual migrations, the Centre is proposing a research project with the aim of creating a database in order to improve awareness of the economic and social profile of people who have been granted a residence permit for humanitarian reasons (so-called "regularised persons"), after a permit has been obtained. Once an individual alien obtains a residence permit, this has a decisive impact on both the personal and professional reality of the person who has requested for regularisation as well as on his/her experience as a subject of law.

The project and its main axes are detailed below. The Observatory for Migrations worked alongside the Office des Etrangers in the AGORA project developed hereby. It is based on the coupling carried out recurrently between, on the one hand, certain data that has been collected within the Regularisation cell of the Office des Etrangers and with the IT Department of the FPS Interior (data that allows those people to be identified who have obtained a positive regularisation decision, as well as the nature of residence permits, which have been granted to them since the positive decision) and, on the other hand, certain data, which have been collected by the Crossroads Bank for Social Security¹ (BCSS) data relating to the socio-professional path of these people.

5. Tasks to be accomplished

a. by the research team:

¹ The Crossroads bank has a database composed of individual data of people known to the social security offices. This database is loaded every three months and serves scientific purposes. This "Datawarehouse Labour Market and Social Protection" is describe (in Dutch or French) on : http://www.ksz-bcss.fgov.be/fr/statistiques/stats_1.htm. See also the description of the AGORA project with made this unique database possible: <http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fedra/proj.asp?l=nl&COD=AG/DD/001>

The survey aims to collect and analyse objective, checkable and pertinent data for all candidates for regularisation, whatever the criterion of humanitarian nature, on which they have based their regularisation request. The survey does not include the so-called “technical” regularisation decisions aimed at allowing a foreigner to move between legal statuses.

The scientific team’s first task will be to define the subject of the study and to identify all of the basic data required to tackle the question of how to deal with the fields contained in the non-exhaustive list below. It must be able to translate the request made by the Centre for consumption by the relevant departments within the Office des Etrangers, so that all the aspects of this request are correctly identified and extracted from the mass of data that they have collected.

The following fields will be studied in depth for the people who have obtained a positive decision, with specific attention paid to the extent of the type:

- 0 Nationality, sex and date of birth, when the request is tabled
1. Participation in the world of work (sector, activity, profession...)
 - before the request for regularisation is tabled
 - before a temporary residence permit is obtained
 - before a definitive residence permit is obtained
2. Composition and size of household (stages of family reunification or the composition of the household and sex of the relevant person(s)]
 - before the request for regularisation is tabled
 - before a temporary residence permit is obtained
 - before a definitive residence permit is obtained
3. Geographic mobility (changes of address)
 - before the request for regularisation is tabled
 - whilst the request is being examined;
 - after a residence permit has been obtained.
4. Nature of residence permits and the granting of Belgian nationality (including statement regarding original nationality)
- 5 Status as former asylum seeker or not, plus, if relevant, the year the request for asylum was made
- 6 Main reason for the regularisation decision (if information is available)

NB: “temporary residence permit” means the certificate of entry into the register of foreigners issued under set conditions and for a defined period of time. “Definitive residence permit” is defined as the unconditional and open-ended certificate of entry into the register of foreigners.

To do this, we must be able to cross-check the data supplied by the Office des Etrangers against that collected by the Banque Carrefour de la Sécurité sociale (BCSS). This cross-checking is possible using the national registration number of the relevant persons. During the Agora project, we must look at what data will have to be collected to carry out the cross-checks with the BCSS, if the identified variables are the most suitable ones to illustrate the socio-economic situation of those involved and how to deal with this material.

The scientific team must be able to analyse whether the results of the cross-checking are reliable and to be able, as far as possible, to avoid coming up with results that are in danger of not being corroborated by the reality of individual situations. It must, therefore, ensure that the information gleaned from the cross-checking of existing data is verified. Finally, it must identify the pertinent data that the database is likely to throw up regarding the relevant section of the population. It will make use of the comparison made possible by the various cohorts of regularisation that will make up the database over the course of time – assuming that the coupling could take place every year.

b. By the public institution:

- 1) *As a preliminary to the scientific work*

In collaboration with the scientific team, the Centre will request the data from the Office des Etrangers and the BCSS. To this end, the Centre will organise at least one working meeting beforehand with the Office des Etrangers and the Banque Carrefour de la Sécurité sociale.

2) During the realisation of the project

The Office des Etrangers, as the owner of the database, must:

- Be able to provide the list of those persons who have requested a residence permit in accordance with article 9.3 of the Law of 15/12/1980 and who have received a positive decision during the reference year, as well as the individual pieces of information that will enable them to be properly identified and found in the National Register (surnames, first names, dates of birth)
- Be able to identify, from those persons who have requested a residence permit in accordance with article 9 of the Law of 15/12/1980 during the course of a reference year, for whom a positive decision has been taken, as well as the individual pieces of information that will enable them to be properly identified and found in the National Register (surnames, first names, dates of birth)
- As far as possible, indicate the type of residence permit that was issued following the positive regularisation decision
- Be able to indicate the main justification, on the basis of which a positive regularisation decision has been taken

NB: We should stress that we will never need to have access to the records of the Office des Etrangers – only the database that relates to those records.

The Centre will

- Support and direct the research work in collaboration with the Office des Etrangers
- In collaboration with the scientific team, prepare the way for request for a cross-check to be carried out with the BCSS during the Agora project

6. Final product to be delivered:

a. By the research team:

Report on both pre-existing databases (BCSS and OE) and the coupling methodology used, its characteristics, its potential and its constraints.

Report on the database created by cross-checking the existing databases, its characteristics, its potential and its constraints.

Report on the possibilities of processing the data obtained by accessing the database of the Office des Etrangers and by cross-checking it with those of the Banque Carrefour.

A final analysis report illustrating the potential of the database to establish the profile and trajectories (over a minimum of three years in the first instance, to be decided by the Observatoire subsequently) of those persons who have obtained a residence permit decision in relation to the afore-mentioned aspects. The report will also contain the elements of comparison between the trajectories of persons regularised in a given year and those regularised in subsequent years.

b. For the public institution

On the basis of the work realised, the Observatory for Migrations will have a new regularly updated database whose data will provide a better means to perform its legal functions: monitoring the respect of the basic rights of foreigners, providing public authorities with more information regarding the nature and extent of migratory flows, developing concertation and dialogue with all the public and private players involved in immigrant reception and integration policies.

It should, however, be noted that there is in existence no scientific or academic policy that allows us to examine recurrently, the various socio-economic profiles of the people and families within categories specific to foreigners rights, i.e. known refugees, reunified and reunifying families, migrant workers ... We hope that the experience with the instrument that we want to see developed by this project will lead to projects and models liable to meet this requirement.

The Centre will produce a report to accompany the research and their possible application for other categories of the foreign population in Belgium.

7. Valorisation of the end product

a. For the public institution: integration of the end product into its own way of working

Thanks to this cross-checking of the data, the Centre will have a better awareness of the economic and social profile of persons in non-regularised residence after obtaining a residence permit. It will be able to monitor their insertion over time and compare this with newly regularised persons. We will not only be able to analyse a cohort of regularised persons (in any given year), but also compare it with that of subsequent years. The opportunities for analysis will lead to improvements in the form-fit and quality of the recommendations made to the public authorities in this regard, as well as the improvement of public policies put in place to regularise the residence of persons not enjoying regularised status.

In addition, the results of the research and the work on this new database will be integrated annually into the team's work and, if necessary, communicated in the form of a recurrent contribution in the Centre's annual report.

Finally, the results of the research and the new database may provide support for each of the Centre's departments within the context of the implementation of the authority's general missions.

b. for the 'public': access conditions and modalities for scientific users and for the general public

The general public will have secondary information from the various bodies that will use this material within the context of their missions.

At the start of the research, the Centre will respond to requests relating to the nature and extent of the migratory flows made by the relevant public authorities.

scientific users will have access to the new database using the procedure of the two data suppliers (BCSS and Office des Etrangers).

A final report containing the processed data will be made available to all.

8. Timing, planning and allocated budget

a. timing of the activities:

1 September 2007 - 31 August 2009.

b. planning of the activities:

1) For the scientific team

The team has the task of phasing activities, whilst taking into account the time needed to obtain the data and the coupling with the BCSS. The team will tailor the financed project personnel to meet the various phases of the work.

2) For the public authority

The Observatory for Migrations and the Office des Etrangers will be closely involved in the research work.

9. Special conditions

a. Suggestions for the composition of the support committee:

The relevant public bodies: SPF Intérieur, SPF Intégration Sociale, the BCSS, the Centre.

b. Clause of confidentiality and intellectual property:

The team will respect the confidentiality rules current within the bodies with primary information (Office des Etrangers and Banque Carrefour de la Sécurité sociale)

c. Presence of the research team in the institution

The final project phases will have to include a significant transfer of the know-how accumulated by the team in relation to the database. To this end, it may be deemed useful to ensure that the researcher(s) is(are) present in the Centre.

d. Other

Important: the scientific team to be selected must have sufficient skills to translate correctly, for consumption by the relevant IT departments, the request for data as defined in concertation with those public authorities supporting the project.