

## **Submission - Alliance Française Jersey – 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

I'm writing to you regarding the Work Permit Holder Welfare Survey in my capacity as Director of Alliance Française Jersey.

We are a locally based charity whose aim is to advance the Education of the public of Jersey in the French language and to promote a better knowledge of French and Francophone cultures. It was created in 1996 and is part of a wide network of 850 Alliances Françaises throughout the world. We are a team of 6 motivated and qualified Teachers.

We work closely with the Government of Jersey and the Education Department as well as local Institutions such as Art House Jersey, Société Jersiaise and Maison de la Normandie et de la Manche.

I am not a permit holder myself as I was living on the island before Brexit.

First of all, the Work Permit/Visa process has changed drastically the recruitment process. We need to hire native Teachers with a French as a Foreign Language Master's Degree or equivalent which is at least 5 years of study. You understand that this is hard to find on the island. Every time we have a vacancy, we advertise it on Gov.je website and we never find any local person for the job.

We therefore have to recruit elsewhere which implies paying for a work permit, a B1 english language exam (only valid for 2 years!) and a Visa. The cost of the combined processes is around £1130 per employee. As we are a charity, we have an exemption of the salary threshold meaning instead of £30,000, *"the minimum £20,000 for any charity that supports Jersey's cultural links to another country and requires the employee to hold a Master's degree or equivalent."*

It is also a very long and tedious process. You understand that this annual salary is not enough for our staff when they have to pay their rent and because of the inflation of the cost of living in Jersey.

The Alliance Française sadly can't afford to pay their teachers more than that as our finances dropped a lot during Covid and the stopping of the Primary school Language Assistant program in 2019 (-23% of revenue).

Since Brexit, we have to hire qualified and experienced staff for every position but the conditions are not good enough for them to stay even though they love Jersey and are really integrated in the island life and community. On the other hand, we can't hire local people because they are not qualified enough.

So we are losing great assets and French Language & Culture Ambassadors which is a shame.

I hope this gives you a view of our conditions with work permits. I know we are not the only sector in this case.

I would be more than happy to discuss it further with you.