

Students: the first steps towards the politicisation of immigrants

Awareness-raising among immigrant workers got off to a timid start with the Municipal Consultative Councils for Immigrants (Conseils communaux consultatifs des immigrés – CCCI) in 1968 (1971 in Brussels), designed to involve them at local level in issues that concerned them. Among the participants were a number of more politically engaged students, many of whom had fled the repressive Moroccan regime. They played a decisive role in raising awareness among immigrants.

Among these groups, the Union nationale des étudiants marocains (UNEM) mobilised students as well as other sections of the public. The Regroupement démocratique marocain (RDM) played a major role in politicising Moroccan immigrants through one of its main leaders, Mohamed El Baroudi. A pioneer in the structuring of the Moroccan community in Belgium, he was also dedicated to education, culture, women's rights and secularism in Belgium, while never giving up the fight for true democracy in Morocco.