



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

**TOWARD A NEW ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL
LANGUAGES AND BUILDING NEW MOMENTUM
FOR IMMIGRATION IN FRANCOPHONE MINORITY
COMMUNITIES**

**Report of the Standing Committee on
Official Languages**

**Hon. Denis Paradis
Chair**

DECEMBER

42nd PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

has the honour to present its

THIRD REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(3)(f), and the motion adopted by the Committee on Wednesday May 4, 2016, the Committee has studied the Roadmap and immigration in francophone minority communities and has agreed to report the following:

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACUFC	Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie
AFFC	Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne
AFO	Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario
AFY	Association franco-yukonnaise
CÉCS	Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan
CEDEC	Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation
CIC-FMC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada – Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee
CNFP	Commission nationale des parents francophones
EDSC	Employment and Social Development Canada
FAJEF	Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law
FCFA	Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada
FMCs	francophone minority communities
FNCSF	Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones
HRMAF	Horizontal Results-based Management and Accountability Framework
IDF	Inclusive Definition of Francophone
OLMCs	official language minority communities
OLS	Official Languages Secretariat
PCH	Canadian Heritage
QCGN	Quebec Community Groups Network
QESBA	Quebec English School Boards Association
RCCFC	Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada
QCGN	Quebec Community Groups Network
RDÉE Ontario	Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de l'Ontario
RDÉE Canada	Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité du Canada
RESDAC	Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences
TB	Treasury Board
TBS	Treasury Board Secretariat

TOWARD A NEW ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AND BUILDING NEW MOMENTUM FOR IMMIGRATION IN FRANCOPHONE MINORITY COMMUNITIES

INTRODUCTION

In summer 2016, the Department of Canadian Heritage undertook a nationwide consultation to develop the Government of Canada's next action plan for official languages. In this context, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages (the Committee) analysed the *Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013–2018: Education, Immigration, Communities* with the assistance of the witnesses who appeared before it. The Committee's objective was to identify Canadians' priorities with regard to official languages and, more specifically, those of official language minority communities (OLMCs), in order to make recommendations for the development of the new action plan.

Immigration figured in the last two Roadmaps and remains a priority issue for the vitality of OLMCs. The Committee therefore examined the federal government programs and tools that encourage immigration in OLMCs, specifically francophone immigration in francophone minority communities (FMCs). The Committee's objective is to make recommendations that will help to improve the ability of FMCs to recruit, receive and integrate immigrants.

This report presents the common themes that emerged from the evidence the Committee received¹ during its public hearings. The first part of the report summarizes the evidence regarding the Roadmap 2013–2018. The second part focuses on immigration in OLMCs, particularly FMCs.

PART ONE: TOWARD A NEW ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

During its series of consultations on official languages, the Department of Canadian Heritage (PCH) met with a number of groups and stakeholders to discuss OLMC priorities. When she appeared before the Committee in late October, the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage, presented the broad themes that emerged from the consultations: immigration; community and school infrastructure; media in OLMCs in the digital era; and the minority language education continuum, from early childhood to the post-secondary level.²

Although much has already been accomplished in preparation for the next official languages action plan, the Committee wishes to highlight the issues that were identified

1 Please see the list of witnesses in appendix.

2 House of Commons, Standing Committee on Official Languages [LANG], *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 October 2016, 0905 (Hon. Mélanie Joly, Minister, Canadian Heritage).

during its study in order to support the work of PCH. The first of these issues concerns **governance** of the Government of Canada's Official Languages Program.

A. Governance of the *Government of Canada's Official Languages Program*

Unlike the *Action Plan for Official Languages 2003–2008* and the *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008–2013: Acting for the Future*, the 2013–2018 Roadmap did not have a Horizontal Results-based Management and Accountability Framework (HRMAF). A number of people noted that there was no framework, including the Commissioner of Official Languages, who made a recommendation in this regard in his 2012–2013 annual report.³ The Commissioner considers his recommendation to have been implemented because there now is an HRMAF, but he noted that it is difficult to evaluate performance regarding the official languages if the framework is not publicly available.⁴

Without access to the HRMAF, it is hard to understand how the Roadmap functions and how it works with other components of the Government of Canada's Official Languages Program:

The current roadmap is essentially a presentation of funding that was increased in the early 2000s and that, to a large degree, has been preserved. In many cases, it has been preserved by programs that ... have been amended and improved over the more than 10 years these action plans have been in existence. The reality is that the roadmap's funding existed before the roadmap itself and has been maintained by the government, which has turned it into its roadmap.⁵

The 2013–2018 Roadmap does not constitute the federal government's entire Official Languages Program. It is used to identify the government's official language priorities over five years. All federal institutions have obligations under the *Official Languages Act* and they must take positive measures to foster bilingualism in Canadian society and support the development of OLMCs.

However, the Roadmap highlights the work done by only 14 federal institutions. By profiling the activities of a small number of institutions, the Roadmap has the unfortunate effect of overshadowing the work of other federal institutions regarding the official languages:

Many official languages initiatives that are taken are introduced under the authority of the roadmap and the departments concerned. However, many other things go beyond what is set forth in the roadmap, at Radio-Canada, the National Film Board, Telefilm Canada, and others. All these institutions do a great deal to interconnect the country's two majority cultures, anglophone and francophone, but also to support cultural production in the

3 "The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that, as part of their respective responsibilities, the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages and the President of the Treasury Board: develop a new horizontal management and accountability framework for the *Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018: Education, Immigration, Communities* by October 31, 2014; ensure rigorous accountability and coordination of the 2013-2018 Roadmap; and continue to have an open dialogue with groups targeted by the investments in the 2013–2018 Roadmap and inform Canadians of the results." Source: Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Annual Report 2012–2013*, Ottawa, 2013, p.95.

4 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, [Status of Annual Report Recommendations from 2006–2016](#).

5 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 October 2016, 1005 (Hubert Lussier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship, Heritage and Regions, Department of Canadian Heritage).

minority communities. These are things that these institutions do not highlight probably as obviously as those that are part of the roadmap, but they are nevertheless fundamentally important in achieving official language objectives.⁶

In terms of accountability, it can be a challenge to identify official languages expenditures and their source. The difficulty lies in the fact that there is no central agency responsible for official languages, and each department is responsible for managing its own official languages programs and budgets. However, as the Association franco-yukonnaise (AFY) stated, governance and accountability are closely connected:

There is one other thing that we feel is extremely important. All federal departments must be included in the plan and all must fulfil their obligations in terms of official languages. We must keep in mind that Canadian Heritage is not the only department responsible for implementing official languages measures. Who is to ensure that the money identified for OLMCs is spent for and by OLMCs? How do we avoid the roadmap's errors in that respect?

Should we identify a federal body to coordinate a new plan with genuine, effective accountability mechanisms, not only for the communities but also for all of the departments involved? The action plan must be one of the mechanisms that support the full implementation of the Official Languages Act, not a little Band-Aid to put on little boo-boos. We must avoid having to start again in two years, only to find that we are at the same level.⁷

Like the AFY, the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) believes it is necessary to "centralize authority to monitor the implementation of the official languages strategy."⁸ The QCGN makes a clear connection between the existence of a central agency and the federal government's ability to achieve a high degree of transparency and accountability in official languages:

When there was a centralized oversight mechanism, back in the action plan days – it was the PCO at the time, the Privy Council – the horizontal framework for official languages, because of its critical nature to the federation and to Canada as a centre, was taken care of at PCO. That was the oversight.

I think there should be given some consideration to regaining that oversight in a very special spot in the Government of Canada, where there would be clout. There's no question that other departments see PCO as the clout place.⁹

A central agency would clearly provide oversight for the various elements of the government's Official Languages Program and improve accountability in official languages.

As for the availability of financial data, we note that information on programs and expenditures is not compiled or presented consistently. As a result, it is impossible to obtain a

6 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 October 2016, 1045 (Hubert Lussier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship, Heritage and Regions, Department of Canadian Heritage).

7 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesse, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise)

8 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0855 (James Shea, President, Quebec Community Groups Network).

9 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 1000 (Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General, Quebec Community Groups Network).

comprehensive view of federal activities to promote the official languages and develop OLMCs.

Treasury Board (TB), which is responsible for parts IV, V, VI and VIII of the *Official Languages Act*, and PCH, which is responsible for Part VII, prepare annual reports on implementation of the Act. These reports are prepared using the reviews on official languages produced by federal institutions concerning their implementation of the Act. However, as of 2011, institutions submit their official languages review according to a three-year cycle. As a result, the annual reports prepared by PSC and TB do not give a comprehensive view of accomplishments throughout the federal public service.

It should be noted that the reviews take the form of short or long questionnaires, which have been developed jointly by PCH and the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS). Moreover, they are self-assessments and do not usually contain financial information.

According to TBS, the reviews constitute public documents since the institutions must submit a copy to the clerks of the two parliamentary committees on official languages and the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. This requirement is set out in the preliminary pages of the questionnaire.

However, federal institutions do not seem to be required to share the reviews with the general public. The instructions regarding OLMCs state as follows: “Federal institutions are responsible for communicating their results regarding the implementation of Part VII of the OLA to the various community stakeholders (e.g., the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA) and the Quebec Community Groups Network.”¹⁰ The words “are responsible for” implies that sharing information on Part VII with OLMCs is at the institutions’ discretion.

Accountability is further complicated by the fact that there are no specific requirements for the type of information that must be included in reports on plans and priorities or departmental performance reports. The Policy on Results, which is the government’s basic framework for results management, does not include any requirements regarding accountability for official languages. Federal institutions are therefore not required to include information on their programs and spending related to the official languages and to OLMC development.

It is also worth noting that some official languages programs concern areas of shared jurisdiction between the federal government and the provinces and territories. These programs are covered by bilateral agreements. Their specific governance and accountability criteria are set out in the framework agreement and related bilateral agreements.

One such example is the *Protocol for Agreements for Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction, 2013–2014 to 2017–2018*. Three organizations – the Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones (FNCSF), Commission nationale

10 *Annual Report on Official Languages, 2014–15*, p. 3.

des parents francophones (CNPFF) and Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA) – recently prepared a brief entitled "Objectif 2018/2023," in which they called for changes to the next protocol, such as greater transparency and improved accountability:

Today, 35 years after section 23 of the charter [*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*] was adopted, the protocol still fails to meet the needs of communities or shed light on how federal funding is spent on French minority-language education in the country. After all, knowing who is handling the money and what it's being used for is important.¹¹

The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) has similar concerns:

Yes, there is some funding that is coming, and something perhaps particular to our province is that there is a lack of accountability ... but approximately \$75 million comes to the province in terms of Entente Canada-Québec funding. A certain portion of that is then directed toward public education and those funds, yet we don't manage those funds. They don't come directly to our directors general or our school boards in an effort to manage and assist us in taking care of our communities. They are funnelled through the provincial government, where we know that there is no accountability for us to use the funds to the best of our ability or to dictate where those funds are going in an effort to support our community to continue to grow.¹²

Plans, spending and results for the 2008–2013 and 2013–2018 Roadmaps can be tracked using the horizontal initiatives database on the TB website. Although this information is available, Canadian Heritage concedes that there is room to "improve the way that [it] is presented."¹³

Proper accountability ensures that programs meet the needs of OLMCs:

Transparency is important for both the government and us. We do not just ask that money be invested in official languages. We want that money to be transformed into effective measures that are taken by our communities and by the government itself. If we cannot determine whether those measures are effective, we will not be able to prepare coherent midterm reports. We will not be able to take corrective action either or establish a constructive dialogue to determine how we can adjust and improve the way we do things.¹⁴

B. Support for the development of official language minority communities

OLMCs are a fundamental part of Canadian society. Vibrant and committed, they are in the vanguard of language rights in Canada. However, a number of witnesses told the Committee that the partnership between the communities and the federal government has been weakened because government efforts in recent years to advance official languages and develop OLMCs no longer seem to be guided by the concept of "by and for."

11 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0855 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

12 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 1000 (Jennifer Maccarone, President, Quebec English School Boards Association).

13 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 October 2016, 1045 (Hubert Lussier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship, Heritage and Regions, Department of Canadian Heritage).

14 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0915 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

1. "By and for": Re-establishing official language minority communities as the focus of government action

Community representatives are calling for the next official languages action plan to re-establish OLMCs as the focus of the government's official languages activities. To do this, the government must ensure that program development and delivery is guided by the concept of "by and for," in other words, by the communities and for the communities. In particular, support for official languages must go beyond delivering minority language services and help to build strong, prosperous communities.

Implementing "by and for" is a priority for FMCs as well as English-speaking communities in Quebec. However, the political situation facing the anglophone minority is different from that of FMCs. As the QCGN explained, "by and for" in Quebec refers more to the community's ability to maintain governance of these institutions:

Le par et pour in Quebec is not the same as *le par et pour* elsewhere in the rest of Canada. Our institutions have become bilingual. We have integrated. Our institutions are not by and for us, the English-speaking community. Our institutions are by and for the Quebecers.... The institutions of the English-speaking community are more and more integrated into the fabric of Quebec.

What we need for *le par et pour* is to be sure that the services that we should be able to give, train our youth to give, in English and in French can be continued. We need to have the governance of our institutions, so we worry when, for example ... the jobs in our institutions are not taken, are not offered to English-speaking Quebecers. You will all understand that in the rest of Canada when the francophones speak of *le par et pour*, it's because the governance of their institutions is by the francophones. They don't give over their governance to the Anglophones.... [T]he governance of the institution is by the English-speaking community or by people in the English-speaking community who understand very clearly what it is to be in a minority language community¹⁵.

2. Strengthen the capacity of OLMC organizations, institutions and networks

In practical terms, "by and for" involves strengthening the capacity of organizations, institutions and community networks within OLMCs.

2.1. Increase funding

Over time, OLMCs have developed the institutions, real and virtual forums, networks and areas of expertise to provide minority language services. However, a number of witnesses told the Committee that federal funding for most programs to advance official languages and develop OLMCs has not increased in more than 10 years.

According to the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario, the closure of cultural centres in smaller communities is one of the consequences of this situation. These centres

15 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 1030 (Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General, Quebec Community Groups Network).

are essential tools for the advancement of the French language and culture.¹⁶ Communities with growing populations, like those in Alberta, do not have the resources to increase their services and meet the demand:

The francophone population is increasing, but we cannot provide services due to a lack of financial resources. We have a lot of people who have skills and could benefit our communities, but we do not have adequate resources, and that is really unfortunate.¹⁷

The federal government clearly needs to increase financial support to OLMCs to guarantee a return on past investments and help build strong and prosperous OLMCs.

The Government of Canada has the same responsibilities toward English-speaking communities in Quebec as it does to FMCs. That being said, Quebec's unique linguistic and cultural characteristics mean that federal organizations are restricted in the support they can give to anglophone communities, particularly in areas of shared jurisdiction. The Quebec government has demonstrated a degree of openness toward the anglophone communities, but the QCGN stated that a fundamental problem still exists: "Quebec does not recognize us [anglophone communities] as a minority."¹⁸

In terms of programs and spending, federal institutions must allow for quid pro quos for work that cannot be done in Quebec.¹⁹ Quebec's English-speaking communities state that they did not receive an equal share of programs and funding in the last two Roadmaps. The Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages noted the low level of support to English-speaking communities in Quebec under the 2008–2013 Roadmap:

... only six of the 16 departments that fall under that government strategy have adopted measures that deal specifically with Quebec's English-speaking communities. A number of witnesses were critical of the fact that some investments under the Roadmap (2008-2013) were limited to French-speaking communities; this was the case in relation to immigration, literacy and early childhood.

The figures provided to the Committee by Canadian Heritage indicate that about 13 percent of the total amount under the Roadmap (2008-2013) was allocated to English-speaking communities over five years, that is, slightly more than \$145 million out of the \$1.1 billion budgeted for the next five years.²⁰

In all areas of the Official Languages Program and in the development of the next official languages action plan, it is important for federal institutions to evaluate the support for OLMCs. In areas of shared jurisdiction, federal institutions should strengthen intergovernmental relations and find innovative ways to meet their commitments to OLMCs.

16 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 4 October 2016, 0900 (Denis Vaillancourt, President, Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario).

17 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 6 October 2016, 0930 (Jean Johnson, President, Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta).

18 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 1010 (Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General, Quebec Community Groups Network).

19 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0915 (Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General, Quebec Community Groups Network).

20 Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, [*The Vitality of Quebec's English-speaking Communities: From Myth to Reality*](#), October 2011, pp. 81–82.

2.2. Review funding models

2.2.1. Core funding for OLMC organizations, institutions and networks

OLMC organizations, institutions and networks have been underfunded because, in recent years, the federal government has used a service- and project-based funding model that overlooks the community aspect.

As a result, OLMCs have not had access to multi-year core funding. This type of funding is essential to ensuring the sustainability of community networks, agencies and institutions that provide minority language services on behalf of the federal government. As an official from the Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne (AFFC) stated, most OLMC agencies and institutions cannot allocate human resources to seek out funding without hampering service delivery: "Our resources are mostly eaten up by funding research work, while we would do better to use them to provide direct, high-quality services."²¹

Communities cannot implement long-term projects without multi-year core funding. As the AFY stated, "a basic core amount [is required] in order to allow organizations ... to hire qualified and committed people so that we are able to aim for long-term results."²²

Community networks developed through federal assistance have also gone without core funding. The Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law (FAJEF) stated that the lack of funding for networking activities under the justice component of the 2013–2018 Roadmap had "a significant negative impact"²³ on the network of associations of French-speaking jurists:

It [the Roadmap] ended up eliminating the funding for activities meant to strengthen the ties between the legal community, the organizations in the legal community – the bar associations and the law schools – between the francophone community and the legal francophone community, and between provincial governments and other organizations of the francophonie.

Those activities, which were developed under the previous roadmap, had helped revitalize the AJEF network and the FAJEF. In Ontario, for instance, they also helped create a positive climate of co-operation between the francophone legal community and the Government of Ontario. As a result, major projects were born, but they no longer fall under mandatory funding in the roadmap ending in 2018.²⁴

21 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0845 (Blandine Ngoga Tona, President, Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne).

22 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesse, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise).

23 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0845 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law).

24 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0845 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law).

As the representative from the FAJEF stated, "Creating a solid network between the various community stakeholders makes it possible to better use each other's strengths and to identify effective synergies."²⁵

According to English-speaking communities in Quebec, they also have a limited ability to represent their stakeholders' interests nationally:

Number three is financing national level representation for community sector organizations and providing resources to develop and maintain sector policy expertise where gaps exist. English-speaking Quebec is trying to engage in the national discussion with both hands tied behind its back.²⁶

Clearly, networking activities require human and financial resources. The Government of Canada must therefore recognize and support the work done by OLMC networks.

2.2.2. In support of "by and for" funding

In 2009, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in *DesRochers v. Canada (CALDECH)*²⁷ that the federal government must take the necessary steps to ensure that francophones and anglophones contribute equally to the definition and provision of services. This ruling has consequences for all federal institutions. Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) analyzed the decision, together with the Department of Canadian Heritage, "to ensure that federal government programs and services complied with the principle of substantive linguistic equality in the delivery of services."²⁸ TBS developed an evaluation grid in regards to the principal of substantive equality and a supporting document for federal institutions in response to these new requirements.

Nevertheless, OLMCs have had to compete in recent years against majority-language agencies and organizations when responding to calls for proposals. Funding for some projects has been awarded to anglophone organizations proposing to offer services in French, even though there was already a francophone organization with the necessary experience and expertise to do the work. As the FCFA explained, francophones are forced into anglophone or bilingual environments:

If you tell people they have to go to an anglophone centre to get French-language services, and if they are told they have to register for soccer with an anglophone organization, even if their matches are played in French, that is tantamount to telling them to go where they will experience the effects of assimilation, and they will probably decide to speak English since it will be simpler that way.²⁹

25 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0845 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law).

26 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0850 (James Shea, President, Quebec Community Groups Network).

27 *DesRochers v. Canada (Industry)*, 2009 SCC 8.

28 Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Annual Report on Official Languages 2009–2010*, Ottawa, 2010, p. 16.

29 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0920 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

The Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences (RESDAC) participated in a call for proposals to fund literacy development initiatives. However, the department "did not specify that services in French had to be provided by francophone groups. As a result, anglophone groups outside Quebec received funding to provide literacy services in French."³⁰

The practice of awarding contracts for to anglophone or bilingual organizations to provide French-language community services causes OLMC agencies and institutions, which are already seriously overstretched, to build relationships with their anglophone counterparts. They do so for two reasons. First, they want to ensure that services in French are indeed offered and are of good quality. Second, they want to ensure that the anglophone organizations promote the francophone community to the service recipients; otherwise, they will remain in the anglophone community network.

It is debatable whether a funding model that does not reflect the concept of "by and for" truly supports the development of OLMCs.

2.3. Allow greater programming flexibility

It goes without saying that public funding must be accompanied by performance objectives and measures. However, OLMCs told the Committee that the structure of some programs is too inflexible and stifles innovation:

Flexibility and creativity are needed for our official languages to flourish. We cannot anticipate all contingencies when planning for a two- or three-year period. Unplanned actions must be taken in response to sociopolitical developments and current events. Accomplishments under the action plan must not be judged solely as outcomes measured against initial objectives. An "every relevant action" box should be provided for the purpose of reporting results that are achieved outside the little box. That is often where the best results are achieved because that is where the creativity is. I have achieved my best results by breaking rules and venturing off the beaten path.³¹

Flexibility also enables programs to be tailored to the specific circumstances of each OLMC. The Committee was told that it needs to:

find ways to make support for Canada's English and French linguistic minority communities flexible and responsive to the unique needs of each community. One size does not fit all.³²

2.4. Respect the community "architecture"

To deal with the various levels of government, communities have formed local, provincial and national organizations, and designated certain organizations to represent their interests on the issue of enhancing their vitality.

30 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0920 (Donald DesRoches, President, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences).

31 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0855 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

32 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 9 mars 2016, 1555 (Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General, Quebec Community Groups Network).

In order to support OLMCs, it is important to respect the existing community structure, especially the key role of organizations that represent OLMCs. Otherwise, “that weakens our services and community. In many instances, we feel the processes and decisions made undermine the community by excluding certain sectors of the community from the discussions, in particular its representative organization. We are there to support and encourage the empowerment of our community organizations.”³³

C. Priority areas for action

Communities have also defined their objectives and priorities through community development plans. These plans are required by the federal government and are a means of ensuring that government programs reflect community needs. When appearing before the Committee, OLMCs reiterated the importance of aligning the next official languages plan with community development plans.

The next section highlights the objectives, priorities, concerns and emerging issues that were presented during the Committee’s hearings.

1. Support the expansion of community facilities

A number of witnesses emphasized the importance of funding community facilities, both virtual forums and actual infrastructure.

1.1. Improving infrastructure

According to the FCFA, “the current challenge for the communities is to focus their energies on developing and building our infrastructure.”³⁴ It seems that “there are deficiencies in many areas... and French-language services and activities are too often offered using makeshift resources in inadequate facilities.”³⁵

This situation has repercussions, given that there is a direct link between the quality of community facilities – meeting rooms, theatres, community centres, daycare centres, etc. – and people’s interest (and especially newcomers’ interest) in using these facilities and even associating with the community.

The QCGN also noted that access to infrastructure and the quality of the infrastructure have an impact on the social cohesion of English-speaking communities in Quebec. Rural regions are at a greater disadvantage than urban areas:

If you go into Quebec City, there is an infrastructure. There's a hospital. There are services. They are only 2% of the population, but the population is incredibly strong, very

33 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 6 October 2016, 0925 (Jean Johnson, President, Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta).

34 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0900 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

35 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0850 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

representative on *tables de concertation*. They are within the fabric, while retaining their identity.

That was interesting for us, because in the Townships there seems to have been a loss of civic engagement. While there are a lot of volunteers, they're not attracting enough people. The conclusion of the academic research was that there was more social cohesion infrastructure in Quebec City, and therefore more attraction.³⁶

Like various other stakeholders, the FCFA highlighted the need to "modernize or improve" OLMC infrastructure.³⁷ Budget 2016 allocated \$168.2 million over two years, as of 2016-2017, to the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund for the renovation and construction of arts and heritage facilities. In addition, as part of the 150th anniversary of Confederation, the federal government plans to award regional development agencies \$150 million over two years, as of 2016-2017, to support initiatives to renovate, expand and enhance existing community and cultural infrastructure across the country, including projects to promote a clean growth economy. A portion of this funding could be set aside for OLMCs.

1.2. Supporting the digital transformation

With the advent of information technology, OLMCs, like other members of Canadian society, have created virtual spaces that overcome borders and distances to create forums for discussion, communication, education and expression.

Community media and their needs was one of the themes that emerged during consultations by the Department of Canadian Heritage.³⁸ During her appearance before the Committee, Minister Joly highlighted the importance of investing in digital transformation, particularly in terms of media development in OLMCs.³⁹

A significant part of federal support for OLMC media is in the form of buying advertising space. However, in recent years, the federal government has decreased its advertising spending in traditional media (television, radio and print newspapers) in favour of social media. This choice has an impact on the survival of community media and on communities' ability to access local and regional information. OLMC media are therefore asking for support to shift to digital technology.

The digital transformation raises other concerns for OLMCs. According to the FCFA, some communities do not have access to digital service, or this service is not reasonably priced.⁴⁰

36 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0925 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

37 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0855 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

38 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0855 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

39 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 October 2016, 0905 (Hon. Mélanie Joly, Minister, Canadian Heritage).

40 Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, Brief, 17 November 2016.

2. Minority-language education

As ACSAQ put it so eloquently: "[E]ducation is a cornerstone of any society as the key element for the vitality and the longevity of minority language communities."⁴¹ The Committee is focusing on education for this reason and because the federal government supports the provinces and territories by helping to fund minority-language education and second-language learning.

2.1. "By and for" in education

As stated previously, the FNCSF, CNPF and FCFA are calling for changes in the management of the next *Protocol for Agreements for Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction*.

These organizations believe that the current protocol and related provincial/territorial agreements are not fully compliant with section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the Charter) and with related case law regarding school management. Firstly, they are asking for the next protocol to be a tripartite agreement between the federal government; the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada; and the FNCSF.

According to the FNCSF, a tripartite protocol "would give a real voice to the communities when it comes to the management of federal funding for French first-language education in K-12 schools in minority communities."⁴² It would also enable communities to work with provincial and territorial governments to identify priorities for minority language education.⁴³

School boards do not currently have a place at the negotiating table, and the provinces and territories are not required to consult francophone communities. As the FNCSF noted, this situation does not respect the right to school governance that francophone communities fought so hard to achieve:

[O]nce the protocol determines how the process will work, the action plan is created. In some cases, the province, through the ministry of education, will choose to review the board's strategic plan and, without asking the school board any questions, determine how best to help it, and all the other school boards. Those determinations then become the priorities laid out in the action plan.

Does the action plan reflect school boards' priorities? Far from it in many cases. The action plan has to go to Canadian Heritage, but, sometimes, that happens six months later. There's a problem when it comes to determining school boards' priorities for language and cultural education.⁴⁴

41 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0905 (Jennifer Maccarone, President, Quebec English School Boards Association).

42 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0855 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

43 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0900 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

44 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0905 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

Secondly, the FNCSF, CNPF and FCFA are calling for French first-language education to have its own protocol, given that the current protocol also covers second-language learning. In some cases, the protocol enables the provinces and territories to transfer funds between these two language objectives.

ACSAQ summed up the concerns of anglophone communities regarding education:

Any weakening of the level of federal support in future Canada-Quebec education accords, any lessening of the community's strong consultative role in decisions on the allocation of funds under those accords, or any structural shift that would weaken or remove federal oversight over transferred funds for minority language education in Quebec would be a real and present concern to us.⁴⁵

Francophone and anglophone minorities clearly have the same issues when it comes to education: they need increased funding and want to fully exercise their right to school governance.

2.2. The minority-language education continuum

Section 23 of the Charter guarantees that rights-holders can receive primary and secondary school instruction in the minority official language. Education is a continuum, and OLMCs want other stages of this continuum, like early childhood, to be protected under section 23 of the Charter or at least integrated into the next protocol for agreements for minority-language education. The same applies to post-secondary education.

2.2.1. Early childhood and language of choice

Early childhood has been a top priority for OLMCs for several years. Extensive research supports the claim by mothers and fathers who are raising their children in minority communities that early childhood is a priority for ensuring the vitality and future of their communities. That is why early childhood must take its rightful place in the continuum of minority-language education. On 3 October 2016, the Commissioner of Official Languages echoed the opinions of many stakeholders in his report entitled *Early Childhood: Fostering the Vitality of Francophone Minority Communities*.

Despite the importance that early childhood holds for OLMCs, some witnesses told the Committee that FMCs face significant challenges regarding access to early childhood services in French. The Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan (CECS) stated that two or three years ago, there was a waiting list of 400 children for spaces in a French-language daycare centre.⁴⁶ Clearly, FMCs want to be able to open new daycare centres and create spaces in existing centres to meet the growing demand for services in French.

In addition, support is needed to train teachers in the minority language, and steps must also be taken to increase the linguistic proficiency of education professionals and of

45 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0905 (Jennifer Maccarone, President, Quebec English School Boards Association).

46 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0925 (Robert Therrien, Executive Director, Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan).

specialists (speech therapists, psychologists, etc.) so that they can communicate with children and parents in their language of choice.

Another factor to consider is the production of minority-language teaching materials. Francophone minority post-secondary educational institutions are ideally placed to remedy shortcomings in French-language training and in the production of early childhood teaching materials.

Anglophone communities in Quebec share the FMCs' interest in early childhood development and consider this stage to be part of the education continuum. According to ACSAQ, the Quebec government has made early childhood a priority. As a result, "[O]ne of the changes that we've recently seen in our schools across the province is school starting at four years old. We are bringing our children into our school system earlier. That is wonderful news for us because it gives us an opportunity to work on our graduation rates."⁴⁷

Similar to francophone communities, stakeholders in the education field understand how important early intervention is to the vitality of English-speaking communities in Quebec. They need support in this regard as well: "From a minority community perspective, it does give us an opportunity to assist in the growth of our communities, so funding that would help us to support that by attaching them to our schools would be welcome."⁴⁸ The Committee wishes to emphasize that one of the priorities of the anglophone community in Quebec is to ensure that children are bilingual when they start school.⁴⁹

The Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada (RCCFC) and a number of other witnesses believe that early childhood is the foundation for the future of Canada's francophone communities because it is the stage at which a sense of identity is formed and a feeling of belonging to the francophone community develops.⁵⁰ It is also a critical stage in the development of language security.

That is why access to early childhood services in the minority language is critical to the development of minority-language educational facilities. "If we worked on identity-building starting in early childhood and established strategies for reducing language insecurity, more students from minority communities would be able to study in French at the college level."⁵¹ In fact, children who spend their early years immersed in their language are more likely to choose to continue their education in French at the secondary and post-secondary levels.

Although education is important for all family members, the AFFC emphasized the significance of French-language early childhood services for women in particular. First, proper

47 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 1015 (Jennifer Maccarone, President, Quebec English School Boards Association).

48 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 1015 (Jennifer Maccarone, President, Quebec English School Boards Association).

49 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 1040 (Jennifer Maccarone, President, Quebec English School Boards Association).

50 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0925 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

51 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0855 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

infrastructure and programming enable mothers to involve their community in passing on the French language and culture to their children.⁵² Second, infrastructure and programming allow for “the confident participation of women in the labour market, thereby giving them the right to fully contribute to the development of their regions and to grow professionally.”⁵³ According to the AFFC, it is very often women, and immigrant women in particular, who stay home to care for their children in French when services are inadequate or unavailable.⁵⁴

In his report on early childhood, the Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that the government provide adequate funding for early childhood initiatives in FMCs. Budget 2016 set aside \$500 million for early childhood initiatives across the country. A portion of these funds should be earmarked for OLMCs.

The best option would be for federal funding for early childhood services in OLMCs to be integrated into the next tripartite protocol for agreements for minority-language education. According to the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, Mr. François Boileau, this measure “would allow for greater weight to be placed on the early childhood component in negotiating the next agreement.”⁵⁵

2.2.2. Minority-language education and immersion programs at the post-secondary level

Commissioner Boileau was one of many witnesses who believe that post-secondary education in French is part of the French-language learning continuum:

At the post-secondary level, education in French protects, transmits, and most importantly preserves the French language and culture. This makes a major contribution to ensuring the continued growth of the Franco-Ontarian community.

Colleges and universities are an integral part of the education continuum and play an essential role in training future bilingual and francophone professionals. In doing so, they contribute in the longer term to the welfare of the province, and on a broader scale to the competitiveness of the Canadian economy.⁵⁶

Access to post-secondary education in French is inadequate in some provinces and territories. For example, the 21 colleges and universities belonging to the Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie (ACUFC) offer 900 programs, while more than 16,000 programs are offered on the English-language side.⁵⁷

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- 52 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0850 (Blandine Ngoga Tona, President, Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne).
- 53 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0850 (Blandine Ngoga Tona, President, Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne).
- 54 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0850 (Blandine Ngoga Tona, President, Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne).
- 55 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 0915 (François Boileau, Commissioner, Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario).
- 56 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 0915 (François Boileau, Commissioner, Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario).
- 57 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0935 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

The situation is worse in some regions than in others, particularly in the Northwest Territories (NWT). According to the RCCFC, the NWT's *Education Act*⁵⁸ provides for only one college in the territory.⁵⁹ As a result, "if francophones wish to study in the Northwest Territories, they may do so but will not receive diplomas; they will take a course but will not receive a diploma because the college is not recognized."⁶⁰ As the RCCFC explained, the *Education Act* will have to be amended to promote French-language post-secondary education in the NWT.⁶¹

To address problems accessing post-secondary education in French, Commissioner Boileau and others believe that French-language post-secondary education should be included in the next protocol for agreements for minority-language education.⁶²

Difficulty accessing French-language programs has also affected the ability of francophone minority post-secondary institutions to attract and retain graduates of French immersion programs. The ACUFC estimates there are 380,000 students in French immersion programs across the country. In 2014-2015, however, only 4,000 of them chose to continue their education at one of the network's member institutions.⁶³

This is a problem because it could jeopardize students' second language retention. As the ACUFC explained, "There's enormous investment in immersion schools, but after that, the students are forgotten. If few students study in French at the post-secondary level, and they only pursue such studies 10 to 15 years later, it should not be surprising that more than half of them say they are no longer bilingual at that stage."⁶⁴

With more support, the ACUFC and its member institutions could take such measures as increase the availability of programs and establish an infrastructure of specialized services to support students coming from immersion programs and schools: "There's extraordinary potential on the immersion side, for example. Indeed, many people can adopt a linguistically dual lifestyle, and represent the way we want ourselves, and our country, to be."⁶⁵

Teacher mobility is an important consideration in efforts to improve access to French first-language education and to French second-language and French immersion programs.

58 NWT, [Education Act](#), S.N.W.T. 1995, c. 28, ST-003-96.

59 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0940 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

60 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0940 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

61 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0940 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

62 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 0915 (François Boileau, Commissioner, Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario).

63 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0945 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

64 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 1005 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

65 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 1005 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

Although teaching jobs in urban areas are filled quickly, some regions, particularly rural areas, are chronically short of francophone and bilingual teachers. PCH is looking into this problem:

We also know that many school boards despair that they are unable to meet more of the demand.... We spoke about teacher mobility, the ability to recruit qualified teachers to teach in the minority language, in this case French. This is a challenge that we address in the discussions we have with the provinces and territories when we fund second language instruction. We agreed with the provinces that we wanted to focus resources on this in an attempt to break the deadlock. The challenge is enormous.⁶⁶

Exchange programs and other incentives are interesting possibilities for encouraging teachers to work where the need is present. The RCCFC would like to see the next action plan focus on measures to encourage interprovincial/territorial mobility for students and graduates, particularly in the area of education.⁶⁷

2.2.3. School infrastructure

In addition to funding and structuring issues related to minority language education, OLMCs spoke of problems with school infrastructure in some provinces and territories. The FNCSF explained that infrastructure issues affect the vitality of the school system and of the francophone minority in general:

... a parent could notice that the French-language school was in terrible condition, unlike the English-language school. Let's assume it's an immersion school, since English-language schools are the ones providing immersion programs. The parent might conclude that their child could learn French at the English-language school, which is in much better condition and has better facilities. After comparing the two schools, a parent has to exhibit real fortitude when choosing to enrol their child in a French-language school.⁶⁸

The situation in Yukon described by the AFY is particularly troubling:

In terms of space, you need to know that the francophone school in the Yukon was built for a maximum of 190 to 200 students from kindergarten to grade 12. Today, we have more than 240 students. The secondary level is disappearing because there is not enough space. Students are quitting because they are in portable classrooms or they are sharing space with four-year-old kindergarten kids. It is a real problem for our community.⁶⁹

The state of the school infrastructure clearly does not promote the development of the minority-language education system and, thus, the development of Canada's Francophonie.

66 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 October 2016, 1040 (Jean-Pierre Gauthier, Director General, Official Languages Branch, Department of Canadian Heritage).

67 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0850 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

68 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0915 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

69 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesse, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise).

2.3. Adult literacy and acquisition of basic skills

For many stakeholders, adult literacy and the acquisition of basic skills is part of the minority-language education continuum. As RESDAC stated, "In a world where the flow of information has become constant and technological transformations are accelerating at lightning speed, there are major challenges in essential skills. This has a direct impact on the country's economic, social and cultural development."⁷⁰

According to international studies, Canadians' literacy and numeracy levels and computer proficiency are not impressive, and the results in francophone minority communities are even more worrisome.⁷¹ Why is this so? As the official from RESDAC explained, we have to look back to a time when minority education rights were not guaranteed:

As for your example of a 45-year-old francophone, we mustn't forget that they may have never had access to education in French because, at the time, that right was not enshrined in the Charter. Even if that individual is 45 years old today, if their parents are rights holders, according to our legal advisers, there is a constitutional obligation to provide them with services.

It's not their fault if they dropped out of school at the age of 15 or 16 or did not have access to a French-language school in their community. That's really the cause of their current literacy problem. The services were not provided when they were supposed to be. According to our legal advisers, there is a constitutional obligation under section 23 to ensure that those people have access to services.

So far, literacy and skills development have been seen as something that is nice to have, if there is funding for it. However, it is not handled with the seriousness shown toward elementary education and high school education, which are protected under the charter.⁷²

The Committee was struck by the fact that RESDAC is the only national organization dedicated to adult literacy and skill development still operating in the country. It has not received core funding since 2013.⁷³ Employment and Social Development Canada's Office of Literacy and Essential Skills has apparently decided to stop giving core funding to national agencies and provincial coalitions. In addition, its funding is to be allocated solely for initiatives targeting labour market requirements, whereas agencies such as RESDAC focus on literacy and basic skills in a family and community context rather than an employability context. "The office currently really has a different approach that we don't fully understand. It operates sort of like a private business that wants to choose its partners and operate solely on the basis of developing the labour market."⁷⁴

70 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0905 (Donald DesRoches, President, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences).

71 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0905 (Donald DesRoches, President, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences).

72 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0935 (Donald DesRoches, President, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences).

73 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0920 (Donald DesRoches, President, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences).

74 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0930 (Gabrielle Lopez, Acting Director General, Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences).

Representatives from anglophone communities did not have an opportunity to speak at length on literacy and essential skills in their communities, but the QCGN fully supported the testimony of the RESDAC:

We are asking for ... community-based literacy to be invested in again. Literacy in general must be approached in the widest possible way, and certainly beyond workplace skill development.⁷⁵

If agencies such as RESDAC were to disappear, there would be a loss of valuable expertise in the complex issue of literacy and basic skills acquisition, particularly with regard to OLMCs.

3. Economic development in official language minority communities

Economic development is definitely a key factor for ensuring the vitality of OLMCs. As the Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan explained:

We believe that economic value is the basis of all other development. In other words, economic development is the main driver of everything that happens in culture and even education. If there were no jobs or viable and vibrant businesses in the communities, there would be no population and it would be unnecessary to have schools in our small communities where there is a francophone presence.⁷⁶

In recent years, both anglophone and francophone OLMCs have carried out significant initiatives with the help of federal funding. The Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité du Canada (RDÉE Canada) and the Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC) developed the first *Canadian Plan for Economic Development of Official Language Minority Communities, 2015-2020*. The purpose of the plan is to help small and medium-sized enterprises in Canada develop new business partnerships, and to facilitate domestic and foreign trade. In 2015, a framework was created for the plan.

The economic development of OLMCs also relies on the Réseau d'action économique, a joint initiative involving Employment and Social Development Canada, RDÉE Canada and CEDEC:

The network has two main objectives: to support the creation of innovative, growth-oriented companies, and to ensure the availability of skilled, productive workers. These objectives have been documented in our Canadian Plan for Economic Development of Official Language Minority Communities. The economic action network is a space for economic leaders in government and the private sector to develop innovative, practical initiatives that stimulate interprovincial partnerships and commercial opportunities for businesses. This is an unprecedented opportunity for the Government of Canada to invest in a truly national,

75 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0850 (James Shea, President, Quebec Community Groups Network).

76 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0850 (Robert Therrien, Executive Director, Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan).

collaborative venture that is drawing on the strengths of Canada's official language minority communities while contributing to the reinforcement of their economic future.⁷⁷

To benefit fully from existing planning, federal initiatives to support innovation and economic development need to include OLMCs so that these communities are "full participants and partners in building Canada's prosperity into the future."⁷⁸ CEDEC highlighted the need to

link the official languages action plan to other government programs. These important sources of investment should be equipped to actively enable and support the unique linguistic, economic, social, and cultural contributions that OLMCs can make to Canada's future dynamism and prosperity.⁷⁹

CEDEC would also like community economic development to be a central part of the economic components in the government's Official Languages Program and the next official languages action plan. The community economic development plan is described as follows:

It involves mobilizing citizens to take full advantage of the unique linguistic, cultural, social, and economic assets of their milieu. Collaborative community economic development strengthens and expands unique community capacities and assets, makes communities more attractive and productive in an increasingly global economy, and as a result, contributes to improving the quality of life and the sustainability of these communities.⁸⁰

RDÉE Canada, the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de l'Ontario (RDÉE Ontario) and CEDEC also told the Committee that emerging issues could be reflected in programs to support OLMC development, such as the next official languages action plan. RDÉE Ontario called for the creation of a special digital fund so that OLMCs can "benefit from optimal use of new virtual platforms, mobile applications, to promote our areas of activity and to be more competitive."⁸¹

RDÉE Canada and CEDEC would also like the federal government to create a capital fund to invest in OLMC businesses with a high growth potential. "This fund should be community-managed and self-sustaining, with an initial investment from the Government of Canada and private partners."⁸²

Francophone and anglophone communities would like to see resources allocated to an economic development strategy for youth. Like majority communities in the regions and in

77 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0855 (John Buck, Chief Executive Director, Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation).

78 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0855 (John Buck, Chief Executive Director, Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation).

79 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0900 (John Buck, Chief Executive Director, Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation).

80 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0855 (John Buck, Chief Executive Director, Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation).

81 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 4 October 2016, 0955 (Annick Schulz, Director of Communications, Marketing and External Relations, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Ontario).

82 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0900 (John Buck, Chief Executive Director, Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation).

urban areas, OLMCs are experiencing negative net migration, as young people leave the regions because they cannot find work commensurate with their skills. To encourage skilled, bilingual post-secondary graduates to contribute to the economic growth of their communities, OLMCs must be able to stimulate the labour market.⁸³ RDÉE Ontario as well as QCGN and CEDEC suggest that the federal government introduce a special fund for youth to finance initiatives such as programs to foster an entrepreneurial culture among young people.⁸⁴

4. Access to health care services in the official language of choice

According to a number of witnesses, progress is being made in ensuring access to health care in the official language of choice. In recent years, Health Canada has been working closely with OLMCs on two priorities: training health professionals and establishing networks. Thanks to various community and government partnerships, networks are being created and are coordinating the delivery of minority language health care services.

The Committee was told about several successes in the area of health care, including the creation in 2003 of the Consortium national de formation en santé (CNFS). According to the ACUFC, the CNFS helped create 68 new French-language post-secondary health programs and enhance 32 existing programs.⁸⁵ In addition, 6,700 professionals capable of providing health services in French have been trained, with 94% of them working in FMCs and 91% in their home province.⁸⁶ Francophone colleges and universities have developed expertise in actively offering French-language health services and have produced a framework for modelling that active offer.⁸⁷ Four ACUFC member colleges offer a post-diploma college program in community health services management.⁸⁸

However, the ACUFC states that there are still gaps in access to health care training programs in French and that "the number of programs we have represents a mere 7% of the number offered in English."⁸⁹

The ACUFC also hopes that the next action plan will provide ongoing support for the active offer of health services in French. The organization has been a leader in this area since 2008:

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- 83 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0900 (John Buck, Chief Executive Director, Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation).
- 84 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 4 October 2016, 0955 (Annick Schulz, Director of Communications, Marketing and External Relations, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Ontario).
- 85 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0905 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).
- 86 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0905 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).
- 87 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0905 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).
- 88 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0905 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).
- 89 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0945 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

As language is a health issue, we have developed genuine expertise in actively offering French-language health services and have produced a framework for modelling that active offer. We believe that model can be transferred and adapted to other essential service areas in the official language minority communities.⁹⁰

Mr. Boileau, the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, echoed the ACUFC's proposals and suggested that the next action plan include a strategy to promote the active offer of health care services in French.⁹¹

New health care priorities have also been identified. Witnesses representing francophone communities stated that there is a need for mental health services in the language of choice, particularly among newcomers and refugees.

Data on the health of FMCs that is needed for research and informed decision-making by the federal government is not available or does not exist. Despite significant advances in recent years, the lack of evidence on the use and delivery of French-language health services is a major barrier to planning appropriate solutions. Resources have been stagnating for more than a decade. The cumulative effect of inflation means that networks and society have in practice suffered cuts to their budgets for more than 10 years.

Representatives from anglophone communities did not have an opportunity to delve into health care, but the Committee wishes to emphasize that these communities also have difficulty accessing health care services in English, particularly in regional areas.

5. Access to justice in the official language of choice

As Commissioner Boileau stated, "Another sensitive area is access to justice in both official languages, which is central to many issues relating to federal, provincial, and territorial legislation."⁹²

Much has been accomplished in this area, but there are still difficulties accessing the justice system in both official languages. Currently, a trial in French outside Quebec generally takes longer and costs more, even for criminal cases. It is important to remember that criminal law is under federal jurisdiction, but the courts are administered by the provinces and territories. While civil law is under provincial jurisdiction, access to civil justice in French depends on the language regime of the province or territory and language rights related to justice.

When a province or territory does not grant the right to access the civil justice system in French, associations of French-language lawyers work hard to ensure that federal language requirements in the criminal law system are respected. "Once this base exists, they will be

90 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0905 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

91 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 0915 (François Boileau, Commissioner, Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario).

92 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 0915 (François Boileau, Commissioner, Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario).

able to provide other types of services. We build on the minimum required under the Constitution, and the provinces are gradually increasing the services they offer." ⁹³

Associations of French-language lawyers are involved in the intergovernmental coordination necessary to provide services in French, as illustrated in the following statement:

AJEFO has extensive ties with the federal network and it has a direct working relationship with all the departments involved in justice, be it the attorney general, the solicitor general or Public Safety Canada. A consultation table has been set up at the provincial level for all those working in the justice sector to meet and identify the community needs. Community groups are added to this focus, such as the CALACS [Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel/ sexual assault crisis centres] for women who need services, child services or anything justice-related.

So it's an example of a project where someone is able to have ties in the community and this dynamic can be created. ⁹⁴

This example illustrates the importance of a national network, in this case the FAJEF, to disseminate and introduce similar models for intergovernmental collaboration elsewhere in the Francophonie.

The Committee noted that there are no associations of French-language lawyers in francophone communities in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and the three territories. Some provinces and territories also do not have legal assistance centres serving francophones. The government needs to support the introduction of these centres in all provinces and territories to facilitate access to the justice system in French and, on a broader level, ensure OLMCs have the full range of institutions they require.

The low level of bilingualism among judges has an impact on the workload of francophone and bilingual judges. Sought after for their language skills, they are often called upon to hear cases outside their judicial district, which causes delays in administering cases in their own district.

The limited bilingual capacity of other stakeholders in the system. As a result, it is a priority to develop French-language programs to train people for careers in the legal system and increase access to language training for people already working in the system. As the FAJEF told the Committee, it is important to have access to bilingual services throughout the justice system: "It is also important to note that, even when the judge and the lawyers are bilingual, if the other players in the courtroom – the clerks and police officers – are unable to speak French, the judiciary cannot operate in a fully bilingual way." ⁹⁵

93 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0900 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law).

94 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0900 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law).

95 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0850 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law).

According to the ACUFC, "In the justice field, we need to multiply the program offering by four so that services can be offered in both official languages."⁹⁶ The FAJEF supports this statement and is calling for increased multi-year funding in the next official languages action plan to expand the availability of training in legal French and of professional, college and university training in French for legal professions.⁹⁷

On a different note, the Committee realizes that more and more people are choosing to represent themselves in legal matters. Individuals must be able to use their language of choice and benefit from an active offer to ensure access to such services. However, as in health care, there must be an active offer of service in French, as people's inability to proceed in their language of choice could have serious consequences.⁹⁸ As the ACUFC stated, an active offer needs to be developed in both the justice system and the health system because "an individual who needs health care or is dealing with the justice system is in a very vulnerable position. In such situations, people want to express themselves in their language."⁹⁹

PART TWO: BUILDING NEW MOMENTUM FOR IMMIGRATION IN FRANCOPHONE MINORITY COMMUNITIES

Part Two of the report summarizes the key issues related to francophone immigration in OLMCs. The Committee wishes to help the federal government better manage immigration, especially francophone immigration, and thereby achieve its francophone immigration objectives and ensure that francophone minority communities are full partners throughout the immigration process.

A. Improve management of immigration in minority communities

1. The legislative framework

In 2002, language provisions were added to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*. Subsection 3(1)(b.1) provides that, with respect to immigration, one of the objectives of the Act is to support and assist the development of official language minority communities in Canada. Again under the heading "Objectives and Application," it is provided that the Act must be construed in a manner that "ensures that decisions taken under this Act are consistent with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, including its principles of equality and freedom from discrimination and of the equality of English and French as the official languages of Canada" and "supports the commitment of the Government of Canada to enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada."

96 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0945 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

97 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0855 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d'expression française de common law).

98 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 0915 (François Boileau, Commissioner, Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario).

99 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 1010 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

Section 3(1) of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* declares that it is the Government of Canada's policy to:

[...](i) preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada;

(j) advance multiculturalism throughout Canada in harmony with the national commitment to the official languages of Canada.

Furthermore, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations* take into account knowledge of official languages in that the selection grid awards more points to new workers with proficiency in English and French.

2. The current francophone immigration strategy

In March 2002, the department set up the Citizenship and Immigration Canada – Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee (the CIC-FMC Steering Committee). This was a joint committee made up of community representatives, senior departmental officials and representatives of other federal and provincial departments. The Steering Committee was mandated to oversee the establishment of the conditions necessary to increase the number of francophone immigrants in minority communities and to facilitate their intake.

In November 2003, the Steering Committee released its *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*.¹⁰⁰ The framework had several objectives, including increasing the number of French-speaking immigrants; implementing measures to ensure the economic, social and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants; and improving the capacity of Francophone minority communities to take in Francophone newcomers.

A subsequent *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities* was released in 2006. It was a long-term plan to work toward achieving the overall objectives established by the federal government. The plan proposed three major directions: improving the integration of immigrants who have already settled in the communities; recruiting new immigrants; and integrating new immigrants into the communities, helping them become established, and retaining them¹⁰¹.

In 2014, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) created an Official Languages Secretariat (OLS) to coordinate the department's official languages obligations.¹⁰²

100 Citizenship and Immigration Canada – Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee (CIC-FMC Steering Committee), *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*, Ottawa, November 2003.

101 CIC-FMC Steering Committee, *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*, 2006, p. 7.

102 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada and Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, *Time to Act for the Future of Francophone Communities: Redressing the Immigration Balance*, Joint Report, Ottawa, November 2014, p. 13.

The OLS is a corporate secretariat that operates under the Deputy Minister's Office (IRCC national headquarters).

The department also replaced the CIC-FMC Steering Committee with the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and Francophone Minority Communities Committee (IRCC-FMC Committee). Coordinated jointly by the FCFA and the OLS, it has 15 members: 7 representatives from IRCC, 7 representatives from the communities, and 1 representative from the provincial and territorial governments. The committee's goal is to ensure a joint implementation of departmental and community initiatives to foster francophone immigration to minority communities. The committee aims to reach a goal of 4.4% of French-speaking immigrants in FMCs by 2023.¹⁰³

In 2013 the FCFA also announced the creation of a National Community Table on Francophone Immigration. Its mandate is to align the efforts of francophone communities in the nine provinces and three territories to attract, recruit, welcome and support the integration of francophone immigrants.¹⁰⁴ To do so, it selects the community representatives who sit on the IRCC-FMC Committee and acts as an advisory body. It meets in person at least once a year and holds at least three teleconferences annually. Decision-making is by consensus.

3. State of affairs

Despite the funds invested and the many programs and initiatives implemented over the last decade, it is clear that francophone minority communities have received little benefit from francophone immigration to Canada. The "proportion of French-speaking economic permanent residents admitted to Canada outside of Quebec has remained at 1.4% of the national total, far from that 4% target."¹⁰⁵

The Committee believes that the federal government must build new momentum for francophone immigration. To do so, it must develop an official policy on francophone immigration and establish a central agency within IRCC that would be responsible for implementing it.

4. An official policy on immigration to francophone minority communities

No policy exists to support IRCC in implementing the provisions in the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* with the objective to enhance the vitality of OLMCs through immigration.

While IRCC is taking steps to increase the number of francophone immigrants, it has adopted a program-by-program approach. This approach merely carves up the issue of francophone immigration. Furthermore, it would seem the principle of real equality is not

103 Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, [CIC-FMC Committee](#).

104 Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, *Immigration francophone : une table de concertation nationale au service des immigrants, de leurs familles et des communautés qui les accueillent*, News Release, Ottawa, 15 October 2013.

105 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0920 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada).

always applied because some programs still lack a “francophone lens” and some officials do not understand that francophone immigration is part of the plan to strengthen FMCs:

When we talk to the immigration department about a similar project for society, its officials tell us they are concerned about immigration issues. Consequently, we have to make them understand and work with us so that this tool, which is immigration, is used to develop communities and a project for society. This falls somewhat outside their usual role, and I understand that. However, if we are unable to break that impasse and make it so the department becomes a support in achieving that objective, then we will go round in circles and wind up with the figures we expect and our percentages will not increase.¹⁰⁶

The Committee therefore believes that the federal government must develop an official policy on francophone immigration in FMC. The policy must ensure that the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* is read and implemented in light of the *Official Languages Act*, a quasi-constitutional act in letter and spirit that makes linguistic duality and the development of OLMCs a society-building project.

The Committee is aware that section 95 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* gives the federal government and the provinces/territories concurrent legislative powers over immigration. The policy proposed by the Committee would not infringe on provincial powers.

5. Create a central agency within IRCC

It is clear that the federal government must create a central agency within IRCC responsible for the departmental, interdepartmental and intergovernmental coordination of immigration to OLMCs.

As mentioned earlier, in 2014 the IRCC created the Official Languages Secretariat (OLS) to coordinate the department’s official languages obligations.¹⁰⁷ With the proper human and financial resources, the secretariat could be called on to implement a future official policy on francophone immigration to OLMCs.

B. Intergovernmental collaboration on immigration

The federal government and the provincial and territorial governments have concurrent legislative powers over immigration. To find common ground and share responsibility for immigration, IRCC concludes collaboration agreements with the provinces and territories. These framework agreements provide the basis for intergovernmental collaboration on immigration issues. In addition, the federal governments and provincial and territorial governments may enter into various agreements, for example, on work permits for foreign students or hiring foreign students after graduation; temporary workers; the *Provincial Nominee Program*, etc.

106 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0945 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

107 Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada and Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, *A Time to Act for the Future of Francophone Communities: Redressing the Immigration Balance*, Joint Report, Ottawa, November 2014, p. 13.

In the past few years, some provinces have taken steps to promote francophone immigration and, in some cases, have been at the forefront of what is being done at the federal level. This is the case in Ontario. In 2009, the province adopted an Inclusive Definition of Francophone (IDF).¹⁰⁸ By changing the variable on which the definition of francophone is based, the province adopted a definition that promotes the inclusion of immigrants and reflects the cultural diversity of Franco-Ontarians. It seems IRCC is following suit. In its appearance, IRCC officials explained that the department had revised its definition of “French-speaking immigrant.” From now on, the department will base its definition on the criterion of “first Canadian official language of usage.” According to the department, this definition is “more inclusive than the previous definition, and enhances the identification of the principal source countries of French-speaking immigration.”¹⁰⁹ As well, in 2012, Ontario adopted a new immigration strategy,¹¹⁰ which sets a target of 5% francophone immigration.

New Brunswick has also taken key steps to support francophone immigration. First, the provincial government “has established an action plan to promote francophone immigration with a target of attracting 33% francophone economic immigrants by 2020.”¹¹¹

Second, the province has tried to offset the shortfall in federal funding for francophone immigration by fully funding some service points (settlement centres) providing services in French:

Thanks in large part to funding under the first roadmap [2008-2013], New Brunswick has 13 service points for newcomers to the province as a whole, nine of which provide bilingual or French-language services to those newcomers.

[...]as a result of federal funding cuts under the roadmap 2013-2018, three of the nine centres providing French-language services no longer receive federal funding and are funded entirely by the province. It should be noted that those three centres are located in rural areas.¹¹²

New Brunswick also decided to add a francophone lens to its Express Entry component:¹¹³

The provinces have been saying since 2012 that express entry should include a francophone lens. However, every province also has its express entry component. We have included a

108 “The IDF estimates the number of persons whose mother tongue is French, plus those people whose mother tongue is neither French nor English (allophones) but who speak French. The variable is calculated based on three questions in the census concerning mother tongue, the language spoken at home and knowledge of the official languages.” Source: Government of Ontario, Office of Francophone Affairs, [Francophone Population Re-Defined: McGuinty Government Responds to Ontario's Changing Demographics](#), 4 June 2009.

109 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0920 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada).

110 Government of Ontario, [A New Direction: Ontario's Immigration Strategy](#), Toronto, 2012.

111 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1030 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

112 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1005 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

113 Under the New Brunswick Provincial Nominee Program, the federal government allocates 625 basic nominations in addition to the 425 nominations under Express Entry. Source: LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1020 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

francophone lens in it in New Brunswick. Consequently, there is priority processing. We omit certain selection criteria in order to encourage French-speaking immigrants to come in under express entry.

[...] a francophone lens should be included in express entry, but, as I just said, every province has control over its express entry program and can create a francophone component if it so wishes¹¹⁴

A new pilot project to promote immigration to Atlantic Canada is to be implemented in 2017. It aims to help employers experiencing chronic labour shortages. New Brunswick has already indicated that a francophone lens will be applied to the project.¹¹⁵

Furthermore, New Brunswick has worked in partnership with “its school and post-secondary institutions on recruitment to offer a continuum of service to families interested in relocating to New Brunswick, facilitated immigration for international students once their studies were completed, and gave settlement centres a chance to promote their services and regions as part of promotional activities such as Destination Canada and Canada Week.”¹¹⁶ The province has also “developed and implemented Destination Acadie, which is a recruitment activity involving stakeholders in immigration, tourism, economic development, studies, the francophone community, and culture, together with the other Atlantic provinces.”¹¹⁷

In July 2016, the provincial and territorial premiers gathered at the Council of the Federation meeting called on the federal government to increase its target of francophone immigration outside Quebec to 5%.¹¹⁸ It is therefore essential that IRCC build on the commitment made by the provinces and territories to build new momentum for francophone immigration.

IRCC must work with the provinces and territories to ensure that provincial/territorial francophone immigration strategies, plans and programs are aligned with the IRCC’s. To do this, framework agreements and other bilateral agreements must reflect the commitment of both levels of government toward the development of FMCs.

As mentioned previously, FMCs have development plans at the community, provincial and national levels. The needs and priorities of FMCs, particularly in immigration, have been clearly identified. It is therefore IRCC’s responsibility to ensure that the bilateral agreements

114 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1020 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

115 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1035 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

116 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1030 (Ms. Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

117 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1030 (Ms. Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

118 This recommendation was put forward in November 2014 in a joint report prepared by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada and the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario. Source: Joint report of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Graham Fraser, and the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, François Boileau, [*Time to Act for the Future of Francophone Communities: Redressing the Immigration Balance*](#).

also harmonize with the action plans for immigration to FMCs and their community development plans.

C. Support to official language minority communities in immigration

1. The “by and for” in immigration

The “by and for” in the heading means by communities and for communities. As in other areas of government action, it is essential that IRCC place FMCs at the core of its efforts to promote francophone immigration to Canada. The Committee was told that some francophone agencies and institutions that provide immigration services have lost their funding. As a result, francophone newcomers are redirected to anglophone or bilingual service providers that claim to offer bilingual services.

In the first part of this report, the Committee described how funding based on service delivery has had a negative impact on FMCs. According to the AFY, this is also the case in immigration:

It is worrisome to see that we are still forced to convince the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada officials in our region of the need to support francophone immigration in the Yukon.

Actually, it's always the same question of the chicken or the egg. The officials say that the funding depends on the number of eligible immigrants using our services. However, we believe that it's impossible to reach those numbers without adequate funding and services – particularly promotion and recruitment. [...]

However, our model makes it possible to have the entire continuum of services for immigrants, including promotion, recruitment and reception or social, cultural and economic integration.¹¹⁹

In the call for proposals launched by IRCC, some FMCs, including the Franco-Yukon community, have lost the capacity to offer immigration services in French:

For five years, from 2005 to 2010, the AFY [Association franco-yukonnaise] provided settlement services in French and English to the people of the Yukon.

In 2010, we lost the contract to an anglophone organization that had no obligation to provide services in French and still does not. Since 2010, the AFY has encountered much reluctance from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, whose acronym used to be CIC.

As for the legitimacy of the need for services in French for francophone immigrants in the Yukon, we have had to fight for two years to obtain some minimal funding to provide support to francophone immigrants. That funding did not allow us to hire a full-time person.¹²⁰

119 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesses, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise).

120 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesses, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise).

The Committee reiterates that the government decisions that led to the inability of FMCs to offer the full range of immigration services in French violates the objective of OLMC development in the *Official Languages Act* as well as the principle of substantive equality.

In immigration, the primary objective of FMCs is to offer services in French to newcomers to integrate them and encourage them to become full members of the communities:

Let us stress that, for welcoming francophone immigrants in minority communities, it is essential that the service be provided by the francophone community. The “by” and “for” are especially important in francophone immigration if our goal is to integrate immigrants into our community. It’s sort of the same thing as early childhood. If we do not reach out to them right upon arrival, we will definitely lose them. An anglophone organization will not direct francophones to the francophone community.¹²¹

As the Réseau en immigration francophone du Manitoba explains, “[w]hen newcomers receive French-language services from a francophone organization, it makes a difference. The act of directing them to other francophone services will also strengthen their attachment to the francophone communities.”¹²² Take the example of language training. OLMCs, both francophone and anglophone, are aware that integrating adult immigrants largely depends on employment and that fluency in the language of the majority – English outside Quebec and French in Quebec – is essential to enter the job market. As a result, OLMCs want to provide immigrants with the required language training within their institutions to create a sense of belonging to the community.¹²³

The Association canadienne-française de l’Alberta also expressed concerns about the risk of assimilation posed by the lack of services in French.

An anglophone agency will often say it offers services in French. There is a major distinction to be made here. People are welcomed in French, but the conversation switches to English shortly thereafter. People are welcomed and then all the services are provided in English. They tell these people, “No problem, we’ll look after you,” but then they are placed in an anglophone context. Can we stop doing that? I think it is really harmful.¹²⁴

Such situations exasperate community representatives:

Why fund the position of a French-speaking person? A French-speaking person in an anglophone organization is not a francophone. The position is basically limited to interpretation, but it does not create links between those immigrants and the community.

121 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesse, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise)

122 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 6 October 2016, 0930 (Salwa Meddri, Coordinator, Réseau en immigration francophone du Manitoba).

123 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 4 October 2016, 0925 (Denis Vaillancourt, President, Assemblée de la francophonie de l’Ontario).

124 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 6 October 2016, 0930 (Jean Johnson, President, Association canadienne-française de l’Alberta).

In a settlement and integration process, the community is really the sap that enables newcomers to thrive in the community. Once they become members of their own francophone community, they will also integrate into the larger majority community.¹²⁵

D. Increase funding for immigration for francophone minority communities

The federal government must take positive steps to rebuild the capacity of FMCs to offer a full range of recruitment, intake and integration services. To do this, it must increase the funding it provides to OLMC organizations, institutions and networks working in immigration and provide multi-year core funding.

The next section of the report aims to summarize the issues related to certain areas of intervention in francophone immigration, namely promotion; delivery of specialized services; socio-economic integration of immigrants; immigration in education and issues related to the French language proficiency test. Support for immigration to anglophone communities in Quebec will also be addressed.

1. Promote francophone minority communities as host communities

IRCC promotes FMCs as a destination of choice through various programs.¹²⁶ However, according to the department, “[i]t is not easy to persuade francophone immigrants that they can settle elsewhere than in Quebec.”¹²⁷ It seems they “choose Quebec because they believe it is the only province in Canada where they can live in French.”¹²⁸ If that is the case, we must ask whether the promotional initiatives for FMCs are effective.

Until recently, FMCs lacked the financial means to fully participate in recruitment activities organized by the department, including the Destination Canada job fair:

First, let us talk about international promotion. The organizations representing the communities do not have the resources to take part in events or international tours such as Destination Canada to present our communities as welcome centres that have much to offer potential immigrants.¹²⁹

However, FMCs want to be there because contact with prospective immigrants is important:

it is very important to reassure future nominees attending the fair and to tell them they will have to follow a process but that they will subsequently not be alone. They must be made to understand that an association of organizations will take it upon itself to go and pick them up at the airport, drive them to temporary accommodation, and guide them through

125 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0920 (Georges Bahaya, Executive Director, Reception, Settlement and Integration, Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du Nord de l'Alberta).

126 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0930 (Corinne Prince-St-Amand, Director General, Integration and Foreign Credentials Referral Office, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada).

127 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0925 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada).

128 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0930 (Corinne Prince-St-Amand, Director General, Integration and Foreign Credentials Referral Office, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada).

129 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0920 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

administrative procedures. They must also be told that organizations will support them in looking for a job or a family physician, in particular. They must be reassured they will not be abandoned.

We are a minority community – so be it – but together we can change things, and that is reassuring. The personal connection makes a difference. It can influence an immigration applicant's choice of province and the destination he or she may choose.¹³⁰

It also seems there is a lack of support from the department for promotional tools in Canadian embassies abroad: “We also have no support in the area of promotional tools, despite increasing demand for such tools from Canadian embassies in Paris, Berlin, and elsewhere.”¹³¹

It is clear that FMCs must be able to take part in promotional initiatives that affect francophone immigration to Canada and that additional funds must be made available to FMCs for initiatives such as Destination Canada and promotional materials for Canadian embassies.

2. Provide specialized health and legal services

According to a study cited by the Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du Nord de l'Alberta, FMCs provide only basic services in immigration.¹³² Yet immigrants must be able to access specialized services in their official language of choice.

As noted earlier, there is considerable need for mental health care services, particularly for immigrants and refugees. Yet, in Alberta, as in other regions of Canada, francophone agencies and institutions in the health sector do not have the capacity to offer this assistance:

We have to create new social services to cope with emotional and health problems. When we receive newcomers with mental and emotional health problems, for example, we have no other choice but to send them to the English-speaking system. There is nothing more frustrating than having to go through an interpreter when you are with someone who is sick and has mental health problems. It is very frustrating, the work needed does not get done. So we have to have specialized services¹³³

Access to justice in French is another area that needs to be developed:

to successfully integrate into Canadian society, new immigrants must be aware of the standards and rights in Canada in all aspects of their integration into host communities. These aspects include property rental, property purchase, consumer protection, labour standards, separation and divorce, relations with the police or relations with the various governments.

130 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 6 October 2016, 0915 (Salwa Meddri, Coordinator, Réseau en immigration francophone du Manitoba).

131 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0920 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

132 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0900 (Georges Bahaya, Executive Director, Reception, Settlement and Integration, Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du Nord de l'Alberta)

133 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 25 October 2016, 0900 (Georges Bahaya, Executive Director, Reception, Settlement and Integration, Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du Nord de l'Alberta).

Everyday life and justice intersect on many levels. These points of intersection can be sources of considerable stress for new immigrants, and can even constitute barriers to integration when the Canadian justice system differs significantly from the system in their country of origin.¹³⁴

The legal resource centres created by the FAJEF and its members provide legal services to immigrants, who have significant needs in this area: “[i]n some provinces, the immigrant population amounts to about 70% of the clients served by the legal centres.”¹³⁵ The FAJEF made note that a large proportion of women in the francophone immigrant population have many legal needs. Immigrants’ questions also go well beyond the immigration process: “immigrants ask for advice on all aspects of Canadian law. Therefore, the legal information centres are a valuable tool for both the established Canadian population and the immigrant population.”¹³⁶

There is also a need for accessible legal information “in clear and understandable language to explain the basics of the justice system to Canadians and francophone immigrants who have no legal training.”¹³⁷ The FAJEF noted that legal information must take account of cultural issues. The cliquezjustice.ca website was developed to meet this need and the number of visits it receives – close to 15,000 a month – clearly demonstrates that the need for accessible legal information exists.

The FAJEF also pointed out that francophone immigrants have little knowledge of legal careers in Canada. This is partly due to the fact that “[m]ost francophone immigrants come from civil law countries. These immigrants have inaccurate information on the nature of the legal system and on the roles of each person in the system.”¹³⁸ The prospect of a legal career tends to be less appealing to young francophone immigrants. They “don’t have models for these types of careers in their community and family. Unfortunately, they often see the justice system through the lens of a negative experience, for example with the police. Francophone immigrants are severely under-represented according to their proportional democratic weight in all legal careers.”¹³⁹

In light of the above, it is clear that the federal government’s investments in immigration in minority communities must take into account that immigrant services must include specialized services in health, including mental health, as well as legal services.

134 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0920 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d’expression française de common law).

135 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0920 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d’expression française de common law).

136 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0920 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d’expression française de common law).

137 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0925 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d’expression française de common law).

138 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0925 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d’expression française de common law).

139 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 15 November 2016, 0925 (Daniel Boivin, President, Fédération des associations des juristes d’expression française de common law).

3. Socioeconomic integration of immigrants in FMCs

As RDÉE Canada explained, francophone immigration is not only a priority for the vitality and development of FMCs, but also an engine for Canada's economic development. Francophone immigration must therefore be seen as an asset to strengthen francophone communities as well as the social and economic fabric of Canada as a whole.¹⁴⁰

3.1. Make Canadian employers aware of the benefits of hiring francophone immigrants

For immigrants, the decision to stay in a community depends largely on their ability to find work and the business opportunities available. According to RDÉE Canada, there are "some challenges currently in matching up the need for workers in Canada with the pool of potential francophone immigrants."¹⁴¹

It is therefore important to work with Canadian employers. First of all, they must be made aware of the benefits of hiring francophone or bilingual immigrants, especially anglophone employers. Second, employers need to be supported because, for many of them, the complexity of the immigration system discourages them from hiring immigrants:

We have to make employers aware of the value hiring francophone immigrants adds to their business. We have to help these employers to develop a better grasp of the immigration process. We have to help them with the management and optimization of diversity in the workplace, so that they may retain the immigrants they hire. We have to guide and support the employers in recruiting, hiring and retaining skilled francophone immigrant workers.¹⁴²

Third, Canadian employers must be given incentives. This is what *Mobilité francophone* does:

In addition when we present this other advantage and tell them that with *Mobilité francophone*, they don't have to do the labour market assessment and the process is much quicker, they get onboard with us straightaway. We promote this and we disseminate this information as widely as possible. For instance, at Destination Canada, which takes place in November in France and Belgium, we bring along Canadian employers to recruit francophone immigrants. However, they come because we have dangled this carrot. They are interested.¹⁴³

3.2. Prepare immigrants for the realities of the Canadian labour market

It is important for prospective immigrants to have a sound understanding of the Canadian labour market before leaving their country of origin:

140 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1020 (Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEE) Canada).

141 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1020 (Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEE) Canada).

142 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1020 (Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEE) Canada).

143 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1040 (Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEE) Canada).

[they] must also be informed about the business environment and about the immigration programs available to this category of immigrant. We have heard several times about the challenge of finding a new generation of entrepreneurs. Immigrants who have a good business sense can also acquire francophone businesses, rather than seeing them close and having to start all over from scratch.¹⁴⁴

The Committee is pleased that the ACUFC¹⁴⁵ and the RDÉE,¹⁴⁶ among other organizations, provide pre-departure services, which are services offered to immigrants before they arrive on Canadian soil. The goal is to prepare immigrants for the realities of the Canadian labour market, thus helping facilitate their socioeconomic integration. The Committee wishes to take note of a virtual job fair that was held:

last year, RDEE Canada organized a virtual job fair so as to use modern tools to facilitate the recruitment process, both for skilled immigrants who are in Canada or abroad, and for Canadian employers. The event attracted more than 1,018 visitors, and 68 of them received job offers. A second edition of the event will take place this winter, in 2017.¹⁴⁷

The Committee believes that such initiatives need to be supported, enhanced and incorporated into the federal government's recruitment strategies.

3.3. Facilitate international and interprovincial mobility of qualified workers

Professional orders are responsible for recognizing credentials, which fall under provincial/territorial jurisdiction. In many cases, professional orders require skilled workers who obtained their credentials outside Canada to undergo training and requalify under the standards in effect in the province or territory concerned.

These requirements, though necessary, sometimes stand in the way of qualified professionals from coming to Canada and hamper the interprovincial/territorial mobility of immigrants, and even that of Canadians.¹⁴⁸

The federal government, together with the provinces and territories, has been working for several years to facilitate credential recognition. The Committee is encouraged that IRCC is working with its provincial and territorial counterparts to facilitate the recognition of credentials of skilled immigrant workers. Progress has already been made. According to the IRCC representatives, Canada is the only country in the world to have “implemented a

144 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1020 (Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEE) Canada).

145 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 9035 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

146 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1020 (Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEE) Canada).

147 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1025 (Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEE) Canada).

148 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 0940 (François Boileau, Commissioner, Office of the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario); LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0900 (John Buck, Chief Executive Director, Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation).

standard for credential recognition.”¹⁴⁹ The standard is 12 months, but the various levels of government are working to reduce it to six months.¹⁵⁰

Nevertheless, some skilled workers come to Canada without understanding the credential recognition process. If they are unable to pay the costs to requalify, they are forced to accept jobs in other fields that do not match their qualifications. Others simply leave Canada. As Mr. Boileau, the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, explained, it is a “waste of money for the host society when it fails to benefit from the contribution these professionals can make.”¹⁵¹ Pre-departure services should include information on the credential recognition process.

RDÉE Canada is developing an innovative program to help immigrants caught in the situation described above. It is a replacement career project that:

would offer francophone immigrants the opportunity of practising other professions than the ones they were initially trained in, while allowing them to use their skills in related employment. The objective of that project, if it is approved, would be to guide these newcomers toward new careers in areas such as business, finance, administration, accounting, computers, architecture, engineering, marketing, advertising and health.¹⁵²

Such a program would allow immigrants to find a position that would use their skills, and the pay would allow them to finance the study or training programs they need to practise their profession in their province or territory.

Accueil francophone de la Société franco-manitobaine highlighted another aspect of credential recognition in which the federal government could invest: language training for professionals:

We must of course offer language training in the areas of expertise of certain newcomers who arrive here with quite high education levels. They often simply need language training that really targets their areas of expertise so they can enter the labour market.¹⁵³

This type of initiative could lead to partnerships with francophone colleges and universities.

3.4. Support temporary workers

Temporary workers are prime candidates for both the provinces and territories and for FMCs. Many come to Canada with the intention of applying for permanent residence. More importantly, interesting efforts are being made to recruit them. For example, Destination

149 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 1020 (Corinne Prince-St-Amand, Director General, Integration and Foreign Credentials Referral Office, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada).

150 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 1020 (Corinne Prince-St-Amand, Director General, Integration and Foreign Credentials Referral Office, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada).

151 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 0940 (François Boileau, Commissioner, Office of the French Language Services Commissioner).

152 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 1025 (Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation, Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDEE) Canada).

153 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 6 October 2016, 1000 (Bintou Sacko, Francophone Hospitality Manager, Société franco-manitobaine).

Canada is first and foremost a job fair, and *Mobilité francophone* is designed to encourage the recruitment of temporary francophone workers by eliminating some steps that Canadian employers find cumbersome and expensive.

However, the Committee was surprised to learn that workers recruited through *Mobilité francophone*, among other programs, are ineligible for settlement services offered by the federal government, even though the “purpose of that program is clearly to retain those workers over the long term and to help them transition to permanent residency.”¹⁵⁴

The simple act of renewing work permits seems to be a painstaking process:

Temporary workers wishing to renew their work permits, for example, face enormous administrative challenges, but there is no contact person they can speak to directly. They can only use the 1-800 number. There are agents, of course, but their answers may vary with the person who is on the other end of the line. For temporary residents, processing times for work permit renewals merely add to the other difficulties.¹⁵⁵

For the New Brunswick government, refusing to offer settlement services to temporary workers makes no sense:

these temporary workers do not have access to settlement services subsidized by the federal government until they have been granted permanent residency, which in itself is nonsensical because we are banking on their transition to permanent residency.¹⁵⁶

The Committee welcomes the recent changes to the Express Entry program. Express Entry is basically an application process for permanent residence for three economic immigration programs: the Federal Skilled Worker Program, the Federal Skilled Trades Program and the Canadian Experience Class. From now on, candidates who are already in Canada on Labour Market Impact Assessment exempt work permits (such as *Mobilité francophone*) and international students who completed their studies in Canada will earn more points as part of Express Entry. In addition, more time will be allocated to candidates to submit an application for permanent residence once an invitation to apply is received.¹⁵⁷

As a result of these changes, the Committee urges IRCC to review the eligibility criteria for settlement services, including those offered by OLMC agencies and institutions.

4. Immigration and the education sector

4.1. Francophone immigration and French-language schools

Immigration is a priority for the education sector because the enrolment of immigrant youth in French-language minority schools is closely linked to the development of the

154 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 0925 (Sylviane Lanthier, President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada).

155 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 6 October 2016, 0910 (Salwa Meddri, Coordinator, Réseau en immigration francophone du Manitoba).

156 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1030 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

157 Government of Canada, [Improvements to Express Entry on the way](#), News Release, 14 November 2016.

education continuum and the sustainability of FMCs. It appears that the right of francophone school boards to manage the admission of children is not universal in Canada:

Members of official language minority communities, through their school boards, should be able to decide, on a case-by-case basis, who should be admitted to their schools. Minority communities are much better qualified than education ministry officials to make decisions affecting the development and vitality of francophone communities. School boards should have the right to manage admissions, and that right should be protected under section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.¹⁵⁸

The same is true of admissions of young allophones to French-language minority schools.

Right now, a number of the country's school boards don't have access to allophones—people who don't speak French or English. Since they do not speak either of those two languages, why should they have to attend one school over another? We should have the right to admit allophones and provide them with the services they need.¹⁵⁹

In order for FMCs to fully benefit from immigration, minority schools must be able to accommodate immigrants whose first official language spoken is French, as well as allophones. The FNCSF also stressed the importance of promoting French-language schools to immigrants:

we have to focus more on strategies to attract immigrants to our French-language schools and our francophone communities. Right now, French-language schools are absolutely unknown to immigrants, both anglophones and francophones. It's as if we did not exist. Something needs to be done about that. If we want to attract more immigrants or new Canadians to our schools, we first have to let them know that the schools exist.¹⁶⁰

The FNCSF has requested financial support to launch an awareness campaign, so that the necessary funding is not “taken from the budgets of school board programs.”¹⁶¹

Lastly, francophone minority school boards must be able to hire professionals with cultural diversity training to effectively accommodate young immigrants in schools, facilitate their integration and help them take their rightful place in their school and in their community.¹⁶²

The federal government, in collaboration with its provincial and territorial counterparts, is able to position to support immigration in French-language minority educational institutions. In fact, such work has been initiated by the tripartite committee coordinated by the FNCSF.

158 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0920 (Mélinda Chartrand, Chair, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

159 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0925 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

160 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0925 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

161 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0930 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

162 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0925 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

This committee is made up of school boards, community organizations, the education departments of nine provinces and three territories, as well as several federal departments, including PCH and IRCC.¹⁶³ It should be noted that the FNCSF is organizing an education summit in May 2017 and immigration will be a priority on the agenda.¹⁶⁴

4.2. Immigrants and international students

4.2.1. Immigrants

Canada's francophone colleges and universities play an important role in recruiting, welcoming and integrating French-speaking immigrants. The ACUFC and its 21 member institutions contribute in a variety of ways to francophone immigration and do so in close collaboration with organizations such as the FCFA, RDÉE Canada, and Colleges and Institutions Canada (CICan).¹⁶⁵

In fact, immigrants make up a large proportion of the clientele of francophone colleges, cegeps and universities. According to the RCCFC, almost half of francophone colleges outside Quebec have student bodies that largely consist of immigrants.¹⁶⁶ To meet the needs of this new clientele, some post-secondary institutions have implemented a specific program for immigrants. Others have chosen to welcome them by opening campuses where immigrants have settled.¹⁶⁷

4.2.2. International students

International students are excellent candidates for immigration. Consequently, francophone minority post-secondary institutions are making significant efforts to recruit immigrant students. According to the RCCFC, in 2014–2015 there were 501 international students studying in French in francophone minority colleges and 2,612 in francophone minority universities.¹⁶⁸ The ACUFC, among others, helps promote FMCs to future immigrants and international students by taking part in EduCanada and Destination Canada fairs.¹⁶⁹

The Committee welcomes the fact that IRCC representatives have said they want to “encourage more French-speaking international students to remain in Canada once they have

163 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0925 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

164 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 September 2016, 0925 (Roger Paul, Executive Director, Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones).

165 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0935 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

166 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0900 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

167 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0900 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

168 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 22 September 2016, 0930 (Claude Harvey, Director General, Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada).

169 LANG, *Evidence*, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 3 November 2016, 0935 (Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General, Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne).

completed their studies, and to help them to do so.”¹⁷⁰ In fact, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship has publicly announced the government’s desire to alleviate certain rules so that international students can obtain permanent residency more quickly. In this regard, the government wants to make changes to the Express Entry program so that foreign students can earn additional points for post-secondary education in Canada. Furthermore, in June 2016, the Minister of IRCC introduced Bill C-6, An Act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to another Act. As explained in the Legislative Summary, among other things, this enactment would help international students by introducing a new way of counting time spent in Canada in order to meet the residency requirement for citizenship:

For example, a foreign student present in Canada for two years, who completes a masters’ program and subsequently becomes a permanent resident, can count the time spent in Canada as a student (up to 365 days) towards the three-year total required. Under Bill C-6, applicants must have permanent residence at the time of submitting their application for citizenship (clause 1(1)(c)).¹⁷¹

That said, the Committee heard that international students, like temporary workers, do not have access to certain IRCC services, including settlement services. These services are offered only to permanent residents (and, under certain circumstances, to candidates who are on the permanent resident track):

[I]nternational students and temporary workers are seriously hurt by the lack of funding and services. That shortage is related to eligibility criteria for settlement service and services funded by IRCC. A very large number of those international students are unfortunately left to their own devices. The demand for work permits and the transition to the job market are a concern for them. However, no assistance is offered for that purpose.¹⁷²

According to the Government of New Brunswick, this is nonsensical:

The situation is the same for international students. Although the federal government has authority to issue study permits, students do not have access to services offered at settlement centres funded by the federal government, which is also nonsensical in itself since we are banking on their transition to permanent residency.¹⁷³

Consequently, the Government of New Brunswick has opted to provide support to international students and temporary workers.¹⁷⁴

Similarly, some post-secondary educational institutions have set up their own programs to mentor and support international students in their efforts to obtain permanent status. In New

170 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0920 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

171 Julie Béchard and Sandra Elgersma, [Legislative Summary of Bill C-6: An Act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to another Act](#), Library of Parliament, Publication No. 42-1-C-6-E.

172 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 6 October 2016, 0910 (Salwa Meddri, Coordinator, Réseau en immigration francophone du Manitoba).

173 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1030 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

174 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1030 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

Brunswick, the government and secondary educational institutions have partnered to recruit, welcome and integrate international students.¹⁷⁵

Like the provincial governments and post-secondary institutions, FMCs would like to be able to offer services to international students, temporary workers, people with working-holiday permits, work permit holders and other prospective immigrants whose situation does not meet the department's criteria. They would like to support them in obtaining their permanent status, but it seems they cannot help these individuals. As explained by the AFY representative, "the IRCC criteria for eligible clients are very restrictive."¹⁷⁶

Currently, all settlement and welcoming service providers can serve only permanent residents or refugees who already have status. There are temporary workers, students and people with a working-holiday permit who we cannot serve. We can't give them any support, and we shouldn't even speak to them. That said, we speak to them in the context of other services, but the IRCC needs to broaden the clientele we can meet with.

We should also reassess the criteria for speeding up access to permanent residence for people who are already here, who have already integrated into the community and whose children are already going to school in our region. Several things could ensure that these people have access more quickly to permanent residence. We understand that we can't do everything and anything, but it would be good to consider this matter, especially in communities like those in the Yukon, where people come simply to see how it is. Then, they fall in love with the Yukon and don't want to leave. Unfortunately for them, it's extremely difficult to stay there. These people exhaust themselves and go away or leave because they are asked to leave.¹⁷⁷

Aside from the fact that FMCs feel they are losing excellent candidates for immigration, the assistance they provide, within the limits imposed by IRCC, is not taken into account: "Many of the people who come to our offices are not eligible clients. We do our best to help them without violating the terms of our agreements, but they do not count in the results and in the calculation of the workload of our employees."¹⁷⁸ In other words, the work done with these clients is not taken into account by the department, which has an impact on the financial support it gives to the various community organizations.

IRCC must act quickly to relax its rules and make it easier for the provinces and territories, French-language colleges and universities, and FMCs to support international students in their efforts to obtain permanent residency.

5. Issues associated with the French language proficiency test

On September 27, 2016, a Radio-Canada news item unveiled the findings of a preliminary investigation report prepared by the Commissioner of Official Languages

175 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 18 October 2016, 1030 (Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader, New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour).

176 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesse, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise).

177 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesse, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise).

178 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 20 October 2016, 1000 (Isabelle Salesse, Executive Director, Association franco-yukonnaise).

regarding the cost and accessibility of the French language test administered to prospective immigrants.¹⁷⁹ The Commissioner deplored the fact that the French test is more expensive than the English test and said that this was a violation of the *Official Languages Act*.

It is important to note that the French language proficiency test in question focuses first and foremost on prospective immigrants who are outside Canada, even though it is also administered to candidates who are already on Canadian soil.¹⁸⁰ The test must therefore be available in all countries.¹⁸¹ IRCC is unable to administer the test on a global scale:

[W]e simply don't have the capacity to deliver a test like this one throughout the world. We don't have employees in all the different cities. We don't have the capacity to administer it, correct the test and receive the results. It would be impossible for us.¹⁸²

There is “no official Canadian test”¹⁸³ as such. The department must use the services of a third party to design, administer and mark the test:

So far, only one organization has submitted its tests so they can be officially recognized by the government of Canada and be used by potential immigrants around the world. [...] We are in regular contact with other organizations that have language tests to encourage them to make a request to have their tests recognized.¹⁸⁴

The “Test d'évaluation du français” (TEF) was developed by the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de région Paris-Île-de-France. The scope and content of the test being used “is not designed specifically to determine immigrants' language knowledge. [It is] also used in universities and elsewhere.”¹⁸⁵ That said, the test does have a Canadian component¹⁸⁶ and “linguistic experts establish equivalencies in relation to Canadian standards.”¹⁸⁷

IRCC is not hiding the fact that it costs more to take the French test than to take the English test. This is because the cost “varies, depending on the market and the location where it is administered [...], and it is the organization “that sets the price.”¹⁸⁸ Price differences

179 Radio Canada, *Tests d'immigration plus chers en français: le commissaire aux langues officielles blâme Ottawa*, 27 September 2016. [Available in French only]

180 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0945 (Stefanie Beck, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

181 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0945 (Stefanie Beck, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

182 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0950 (Stefanie Beck, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

183 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0930 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

184 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0940 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

185 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0930 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

186 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0945 (Stefanie Beck, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

187 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 1005 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

188 LANG, [Evidence](#), 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0930 (David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

exist even within Canada. According to the Commissioner of Official Languages, the cost of the English test administered in Canada varied between \$265 and \$365, while the cost of the French test varied between \$300 and \$485.

The Commissioner of Official Languages mentioned that, in January 2016, the TEF was offered in 18 test centres in 12 Canadian cities. The test was not available in Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador and the territories. Moreover, eight of the 18 test centres were in Quebec. As a result, applicants who did not live near one of the institutions administering the test also had to pay travel costs and, in some cases, accommodation expenses.

It should also be noted that the time between registration and the date of the test varied from two to eight weeks for all test sites in Canada except those in British Columbia and Nova Scotia, where the wait times were up to three and five months respectively.

In addition, the wait time for test results is longer for candidates who took the French proficiency test than for those who took the test in English; this is because the French tests are corrected in France. In some cases, these delays – which range from four to eight weeks – create administrative problems for candidates.

This situation affects IRCC's ability to identify prospective immigrants based on the first or second official language spoken for which they were assessed:

We're also considering the impact of the fact that the people can't obtain a test at a relatively moderate cost. What this means is that the people don't send their test results when they submit their application for immigration to Canada. In other words, they are normally not counted as francophones, but rather, as anglophones, or as people with another mother tongue. What we're considering is the impact this has on the ground thereafter.

This doesn't mean that they will not immigrate to Canada, or settle in Manitoba or Quebec. Not at all. However, for us, the consequence is that we aren't able to make an adequate determination of who is francophone and who isn't. That's another thing we want to rectify. The purpose of the test is to be able to give those people more points because they're francophone, and could also become bilingual later on.¹⁸⁹

IRCC is considering various options, but admits it is not simple. For example, the department has thought about subsidizing the French test so that it costs the same as the English test, "but how can we do it when prices vary so much internationally by region."¹⁹⁰

6. Support for immigration in anglophone communities in Quebec

As mentioned earlier, immigration is an area of shared jurisdiction. While the federal-provincial/territorial agreements with other members of the federation contain provisions pertaining to francophone minority communities, the *Canada-Quebec Accord on Immigration*, while taking into account the bilingual character of Canada, contains no provision to promote

189 LANG, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0945 (Stefanie Beck, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

190 LANG, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 27 September 2016, 0945 (Stefanie Beck, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship).

English-speaking immigration. The essential aim of the Accord is to provide Quebec with new means for preserving its demographic weight within Canada and ensuring the integration of immigrants in the province.

6.1. Innovating to deliver on commitments

The Canada-Quebec Accord on Immigration was signed in 1991 and has never been amended. Consequently, it does not take into account IRCC's obligations to English-speaking communities in Quebec under the Official Languages Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Furthermore, it does not seem to take into account the fact that anglophone communities are among the most multicultural in the country and have high rates of English-French bilingualism.¹⁹¹ In fact, these communities support integration into Quebec society.

IRCC must find ways to support the Government of Canada's commitment to the vitality of the anglophone minority, while respecting the Canada-Quebec Accord on Immigration. On 13 June 2013, then Minister of IRCC, the Hon. Jason Kenney, explained the department's approach to English-speaking immigration in Quebec as follows:

[B]ecause of the agreement [*Canada-Quebec Accord on immigration*], we cannot directly support settlement services for minorities in anglophone communities.

That being said, we are aware of our responsibility towards anglophone communities in Quebec. That is the reason why we subsidize certain research projects for anglophone organizations in Quebec, to the tune of \$500,000.

Under the agreement we cannot directly provide services for the settlement of anglophones in Quebec. However, we can support them a bit through these supplementary projects.¹⁹²

The Committee would like to emphasize that the representatives of Quebec's anglophone communities testified that IRCC is actively seeking solutions. They have asked for:

specific federal programs to attract and retain newcomers to our communities. We need and want Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada to fulfill its responsibilities to our community, and we believe they want to do more. Recent discussions with this department have been positive, and we hope to move more concretely forward with them soon.¹⁹³

As is the case with other areas of shared jurisdiction, the anglophone communities want the department to give them the same support it gives to FMCs:

When you talk about immigration, we have the same concerns as the francophones in the rest of Canada around growing or giving vitality to our community. If we can't do it through

191 LANG, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0910 (Jennifer Maccarone, President, Quebec English School Boards Association).

192 LANG, Evidence, 1st Session, 41st Parliament, 13 June 2013, 0850 (Hon. Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism).

193 LANG, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0850 (James Shea, President, Quebec Community Groups Network).

immigration because of the accords, because of Quebec, then we have to find another way.¹⁹⁴

A tripartite dialogue between the federal government, the Quebec government and Quebec's anglophone communities would help make progress on the issue of immigration in those communities.

194 LANG, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 1 November 2016, 0915 (Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General, Quebec Community Groups Network).

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

On the issue of governance, the Committee recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the Government of Canada revise the model for the governance of official languages in the public service to create a central body within the Privy Council Office in order to:

- a. strengthen the coordination role conferred to Privy Council and the Department of Heritage Canada under the *Official Languages Act*;
- b. facilitate intergovernmental relations as regards official languages and the development of official language minority communities; and
- c. develop standardized government-wide accountability mechanisms to enhance federal government's accountability and transparency with respect to official languages, and to give Canadians an overview of programs and spending under the Government of Canada's Official Languages Program.

With regard to funding, the Committee recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 2

That the Government of Canada review the funding arrangements recommended by federal institutions with respect to official languages and official language minority communities to ensure that they are consistent with the purpose of and responsibilities arising from the *Official Languages Act*.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That the Government of Canada increase the financial support it gives official language minority communities and that it provide basic multi-year funding for the organizations, institutions and networks in these communities.

RECOMMENDATION 4

That, in keeping with its responsibility for interdepartmental coordination under the *Official Languages Act*, Canadian Heritage work with the representatives of anglophone communities in Quebec to help federal institutions find innovative ways to foster the development of those

communities, particularly in areas that require intergovernmental collaboration, while at the same time respecting Quebec's prerogatives.

As regards community infrastructure, the Committee recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 5

That Canadian Heritage and Infrastructure Canada work together to ensure that some of the funding for community and cultural infrastructure is earmarked for official language minority communities.

With respect to literacy and skills development, the Committee recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 6

That Employment and Social Development Canada establish a pan-Canadian literacy and skills development strategy that is community-based and reflects the continuum of education and training in the minority language. This strategy must have components that are distinct from those intended for the majority in order to specifically address the needs of official language minority communities and immigrants.

On the issue of health care, the Committee recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 7

That, in the area of health services, the government substantially increase the proportion of French-language training programs and set up a data collection system to identify preferred language of service and the languages in which front-line staff are proficient.

With regard to minority-language education, the Committee recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 8

That, while respecting the provinces and territories' legislative powers in education, Canadian Heritage work with the Council of Ministers of Education Canada, as well as provincial and territorial departments of education, to develop a new memorandum of understanding for minority-language education:

- a. that is separate from the second-language education support agreement;**
- b. that gives effect to section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the principles resulting from Canadian jurisprudence pertaining to school governance;**

- c. that Canadian Heritage reach a strategic agreement with the Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones (FNCSF):
 - i. that addresses the priorities of its members;
 - ii. that raises these priorities during the negotiations with each province and territory toward the OLEP agreements; and
 - iii. The Committee encourages the advocacy organizations to continue their education and post-secondary education work with each province and territory.
- d. that includes minority-language early childhood education;
- e. that includes minority-language post-secondary education; and
- f. that includes projects to enhance educational facilities for the official language minority.

With respect to early childhood education, the Committee recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 9

That, further to the commitments made in the 2016 Federal Budget for initiatives related to early childhood education, a portion of the allocated funding be earmarked for developing early childhood education and related services in the official language minority communities.

As regards immigration, the Committee recommends:

RECOMMENDATION 10

That Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, pursuant to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and the *Official Languages Act*, implement an official immigration policy to increase the demographic weight of official language minority communities, while at the same time respecting provincial jurisdiction.

RECOMMENDATION 11

That Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada provide its Official Languages Secretariat with the human and financial resources needed to implement Recommendation 10.

RECOMMENDATION 12

That, further to commitments made by the provinces and territories for francophone immigration, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada ensure:

- a. better intergovernmental coordination by including positive measures with respect to francophone minority communities in framework agreements and other bilateral agreements between the Government of Canada and the provinces and territories; and**
- b. the alignment of bilateral immigration agreements with the immigration action plans and community development plans of francophone minority communities.**

RECOMMENDATION 13

That priority be given to the recruitment of the immigrants identified by official language minority communities and that funding be allocated to those communities so that they can participate in the recruitment of immigrants as partners of the federal government.

RECOMMENDATION 14

That Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada support the development of official language minority communities through immigration by enhancing existing programs to ensure that these communities can offer a full range of immigration services that are equal to those offered by the official language majority communities.

RECOMMENDATION 15

That Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada ensure that the principle of substantive equality is applied to all departmental programs and that it require the adoption and implementation of effective accountability measures.

RECOMMENDATION 16

That the Government of Canada take steps to ensure that language tests for newcomers are available for the same price across the country and that IRCC study the possibility of creating a Canadian product to test French language ability.

APPENDIX: LIST OF WITNESSES

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
<p>Réseau des cégeps et des collèges francophones du Canada</p> <p>Claude Harvey, Director General</p>	2016/09/22	22
<p>Department of Citizenship and Immigration</p> <p>Stefanie Beck, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services</p> <p>Donald Cochrane, Senior Director, International Region</p> <p>David Manicom, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Program Policy</p> <p>Corinne Prince-St-Amand, Director General, Integration and Foreign Credentials Referral Office</p>	2016/09/27	23
<p>Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones</p> <p>Melinda Chartrand, Chair</p> <p>Roger Paul, Executive Director</p>	2016/09/29	24
<p>Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Canada</p> <p>Roukya Abdi-Aden, Administrator, National Cooperation</p> <p>Jean-Guy Bigeau, President, Executive Director</p>		
<p>Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario</p> <p>Peter Hominuk, Executive Director</p> <p>Denis Vaillancourt, President</p>	2016/10/04	25
<p>Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Ontario</p> <p>Annick Schulz, Director of Communications, Marketing and External Relations</p> <p>Valérie Sniadoch, Director, Employability and Immigration</p>		
<p>Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta</p> <p>Jean Johnson, President</p> <p>Isabelle Laurin, Executive Director</p>	2016/10/06	26
<p>Réseau en immigration francophone du Manitoba</p> <p>Salwa Meddri, Coordinator</p>		

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Société franco-manitobaine Bintou Sacko, Francophone Hospitality Manager	2016/10/06	26
Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada (FCFA) Sylviane Lanthier, President, President of the Table nationale de concertation communautaire en immigration francophone	2016/10/18	27
New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour Marie-Josée Groulx, Francophone Initiatives Team Leader		
Association franco-yukonnaise Frédéric Nolet, Director, Economic Development Isabelle Salesse, Executive Director	2016/10/20	28
Office of the French Language Services Commissioner François Boileau, Commissioner of Ontario		
Alliance des femmes de la francophonie canadienne Blandine Ngoga Tona, President	2016/10/25	29
Centre d'accueil et d'établissement du Nord de l'Alberta Georges Bahaya, Executive Director, Reception, Settlement and Integration		
Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences Donald DesRoches, President Gabrielle Lopez, Acting Director General		
Department of Canadian Heritage Jean-Pierre C. Gauthier, Director General, Official Languages Branch Hon. Mélanie Joly, P.C., M.P., Minister of Canadian Heritage Hubert Lussier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship, Heritage and Regions	2016/10/27	30
Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation John Buck, Chief Executive Director Grant Myers, Provincial Development Officer	2016/11/01	31
Quebec Community Groups Network Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General James Shea, President		

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Quebec English School Boards Association Kimberley Hamilton, Director of Communications and Special Projects Jennifer Maccarone, President	2016/11/01	31
Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne Lynn Brouillette, Acting Director General	2016/11/03	32
Conseil économique et coopératif de la Saskatchewan Robert Therrien, Executive Director		
Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de common law inc. Daniel Boivin, President	2016/11/15	33
Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador Gaël Corbineau, Director General Cyrilda Poirier, President	2016/11/17	34
Immigration Francophone Nouvelle-Écosse Emmanuel Nahimana, Project Manager		
Department of Citizenship and Immigration Stefanie Beck, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services Jennifer Irish, Corporate Secretary Jean Viel, Director, Official Languages Secretariat	2016/11/24	36

REQUEST FOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 109, the Committee requests that the government table a comprehensive response to this Report.

A copy of the relevant *Minutes of Proceedings* ([Meetings Nos. 22 to 34, 36 and 38 to 41](#)) is tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Hon. Denis Paradis
Chair

**SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT, NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF CANADA,
ON THE STUDY TOWARD A NEW ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL
LANGUAGES AND BUILDING NEW MOMENTUM FOR IMMIGRATION IN
FRANCOPHONE MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

The New Democratic Party of Canada (NDP) would like to thank all who appeared before or contributed to the Standing Committee on Official Languages study entitled “Toward a new action plan for official languages and building new momentum for immigration in francophone minority communities.”

The NDP supports the report and all of the recommendations made by the Committee. However, we wish to add some comments concerning the role of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, program funding, the next census, access to justice and the role of youth in minority communities.

First, the Department of Canadian Heritage must show leadership to ensure the recommendations in the report are reviewed and implemented.

As we understand it, the existing official languages policy is based on a Program Alignment Architecture (PAA) model.^[1] We were told that the governance of the Roadmap is supported through three committees: the Committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers on Official Languages (CADMOL), the Executive Committee of the Committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers on Official Languages (EX-CADMOL), and the committee of Directors General (DG Forum) from Roadmap partner organizations and official languages coordination departments.

In the document presented to the committee on November 29 by senior Canadian Heritage officials,^[2] we clearly note that the Minister for Canadian Heritage and Official Languages must show leadership to Cabinet to ensure respect for the Official Languages Act (Part VII).

The NDP calls on the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Mélanie Joly, to lead the way in the department’s areas of action under the Official Languages Act and defend Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs). The NDP would therefore like the Minister of Canadian Heritage to promptly take the necessary steps to ensure that the recommendations in this report are implemented.

Second, the current Liberal government announced some of the improvements expected by OLMCs, but these improvements are not expected to be introduced until a few months before the next election. For example, the FCFA and the QCGN asked that at least the funds invested in OLMCs be indexed in the 2017

budget. The budget for organizations and communities has not been adjusted for inflation in more than 10 years.

We therefore recommend that the Liberal government listen to OLMCs' concerns about funding and increase the amounts invested in minority communities by indexing their funds starting in the 2017 budget.

Third, sufficient information is needed to plan official languages policy. As called for by several experts, we also ask that questions to better identify official language minorities in Canada be added to the next census.

Fourth, to improve access to justice in both official languages across Canada, we must be able to legislate the language skills of judges and Canada's judiciary. We need to establish stable, long-term mechanisms that will provide better access to justice in both official languages. We hope that the official languages committee will be able to start a study on this subject in early 2017.

The committee did not have the opportunity to examine the requests of youth representatives. However, the NDP understands that OLMC youth are vital to the future of linguistic vitality in minority communities across the country. The NDP therefore reiterates the recommendations of the Fédération de la Jeunesse Canadienne-Française (FJCF) that the Government of Canada:

Increase funding for the Young Canada Works in Both Official Languages program.

Increase funding for high-quality, paid internships for French students in francophone minority communities through the Young Canada Works at Building Careers in English and French program.

Launch a public awareness campaign to promote official languages and linguistic duality in Canada.

Invest in youth leadership development.

[1] LANG, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 November 2016, (Hubert Lussier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship, Heritage and Regions, Canadian Heritage).

[2] "Governance and Accountability, Roadmap 2013-2018," p. 8, LANG, Evidence, 1st Session, 42nd Parliament, 29 November 2016, (Hubert Lussier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship, Heritage and Regions, Canadian Heritage).