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Chair

The Honourable Michael Chong

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• (1530)

[Translation]

The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)): Welcome to the 44th meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages. Today is Tuesday, March 31, 2015.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108, today, we are going to begin by studying Citizenship and Immigration Canada's commitment to part VII of the Official Languages Act. We will then study the Government of Canada programs designed to promote francophone immigration into Canada's official language minority communities.

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Honourable Chris Alexander, is here with us today, accompanied by three officials from his department: Ms. Welbourne, Ms. Beck and Mr. Saint-Germain.

I will now turn the time over to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Honourable Chris Alexander.

Hon. Chris Alexander (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the committee for inviting me and officials from my department here.

I appreciate your keen interest in the role of and the importance of strengthening official languages within our immigration system.

[English]

Our government believes—and it is a deep, long-standing, and great Canadian tradition to believe—that our linguistic duality is a source of immeasurable economic and social benefit for all Canadians. It is a big part of who we are.

First of all, I'd like solemnly to affirm before all of you that we are committed to applying all of the reforms we've made to our immigration programs to strengthen both of our official languages in terms of quality, presence, skills, and proficiency by means of our immigration system. We have a lot to show for these efforts in recent years. That commitment to excellence in Canada's official languages is there for all to see over these last nine years of reforms.

If you look at that record, you will find that language plays a very important, even central, role in these reforms. There is no doubt that immigration helps us ensure that the bilingual personality of our country is preserved and represented faithfully all across the country. We know that linguistic capability in French, in English, and preferably in both is essential to economic success in this country. We see it in the workers who come here. We see it in the students

who come here. We see it obviously in the immigrants we are so proud to welcome in record numbers every year.

[Translation]

We operate with the conviction that francophone immigration is not simply a priority just within Quebec. We want to strengthen and preserve Canada's bilingual personality, and we also want to expand linguistic duality all across the country, because the francophone presence is a national reality in all provinces and territories.

For these and other reasons, I was proud to help launch Canada's second annual Francophone Immigration Week. I also participated in the first edition. This was an initiative of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada and the francophone immigration networks, with more than 100 community activities organized from coast to coast. It was made possible through financial support from my department, and the participation of many partners.

We joined with francophones across the country, particularly francophone immigrants, in celebrating their unique culture, which continues to flourish and to define Canada's national identity. It was also an opportunity to officially recognize the important contribution that immigration and newcomers make to Canada's linguistic duality.

More recently, earlier this month, I addressed participants of the Journée de réflexion sur l'immigration francophone, which was also organized by the FCFA with support from CIC. This event, held annually since 2007, is a unique opportunity for stakeholders to discuss the current state of immigration but also to think about how we can innovate, improve our programs, attract more francophones and strengthen our francophone immigration networks. Without this opportunity for reflection, we would not have made as much progress as we have, especially since 2007.

We are strongly dedicated to sustaining the vitality and diversity of our francophone communities outside of Quebec through our immigration program, particularly in the context of the roadmap for official languages, in which francophone migration and immigration play a key role.

As you all know, immigration has always been central to the history of Canada, from the days of New France, and even in the history of our first nations, who have their own stories of migration to and within this continent.

• (1535)

Migration and immigration continue to play a decisive role in fostering the development of our official language minority communities. According to Statistics Canada, there are more than one million people in Canadian communities outside Quebec reporting French as their mother tongue.

[English]

In 2013 we welcomed a total of 3,358 francophone immigrants outside Quebec through our immigration program. We believe it's critical that this number continue to grow.

[Translation]

Let us be clear about the outlook for francophone immigration. I just received the exact figures from the department. From 1980 to 2005, one year before our government took office, there was only one year in which more than 2,500 francophone immigrants settled outside Quebec. In fact, that number was often below 1,000. Unfortunately, that is how things were when the Liberals were in power and during Conservative Prime Minister Mulroney's time in office.

However, since 2005, and particularly since 2006, the number of francophone immigrants has never fallen below 2,500. In 2013, we reached the number that I just mentioned: 3,358. That is why our government has set the goal of increasing the number of francophone immigrants who settle outside Quebec to more than 4% of all economic immigrants by 2018. We recognize that increased immigration from French-speaking countries is essential to achieve this goal.

In 2013, we unveiled a new roadmap for official languages, which identified immigration as one of three pillars to ensure the future vitality of Canada's official languages. Under the roadmap, the government will invest nearly \$150 million in official language initiatives related to immigration over the next five years. One important focus is promoting the benefits of fluency in Canada's official languages and investing in language training for newcomers settling in official language minority communities.

Newcomers with limited language abilities are more likely to earn less, be unemployed or live in poverty. I must also admit, ladies and gentlemen, that we are not satisfied with our immigration system's capacity to determine the French-language skills of newcomers who complete their applications in English. Bilingual people do not always report their language abilities. We invite them and encourage them to do so, but not all of them do it.

The number of francophones arriving in Canada could be higher than we realize. We are going to do what it takes to find out the proficiency of all of our newcomers in both official languages so that we know where we stand in terms of reaching our goal of 4% for French-speaking economic immigrants by 2018.

Most of the funds under the roadmap—\$120 million—are being invested to help economic class newcomers develop the language skills they need to integrate into Canadian society. I have to say that, in general, strengthening the language proficiency criteria for all of our immigration programs has improved the language proficiency of all our immigrants. We hope that this trend will continue in Quebec

and the other provinces and territories of Canada. That being said, we are prepared to help those whose language skills are not as strong when they arrive to improve.

Our government is also working to help French-speaking immigrants settle into their minority communities outside Quebec.

• (1540)

We fund 13 francophone immigration networks that work with many partners across the country. They are already receiving enough funding to welcome up to 5,000 French-speaking immigrants across the country. That is much more than two, three or even four years ago.

The new express entry system, which was launched on January 1 and which supports our economic plan, will make it possible to manage applications for permanent residence in Canada's key economic immigration programs. It has great potential to contribute to the economic vitality of francophone minority communities outside Quebec.

We just extended new invitations to our candidates for immigration. A total of 2.5% of them are francophone, which is much higher than in the past. We are hopeful that this number will gradually improve, but we also need your help in promoting francophone immigration to areas of Canada outside Quebec. We need to remind people throughout the world that it is possible to live and grow in French in all of our provinces and territories.

Not everyone in France or even Canada knows that 30% of Yukon residents are francophone. People also do not necessarily know how many francophones work in French, even in Vancouver. They are probably even less familiar with the history of Saint-Boniface and Moncton and the strength of our francophone minority communities. In fact, French speakers form the majority in certain areas outside Quebec, whether it is in eastern or northern Ontario or the Ottawa region.

Destination Canada, a program that gives us an opportunity to promote the strength of our labour market and our immigration programs, has been a phenomenal success. The program is not limited exclusively to Paris any more. It is also being delivered in Belgium and Tunisia, and we have also broadened our participation in order to offer similar job fairs in Dakar, Senegal.

It is worth noting that young Belgian, French and Swiss citizens can apply to travel and work in Canada under the International Experience Canada, or IEC, youth-mobility initiative. Canada's IEC agreement with France is, in fact, the largest of our 32 youth-mobility agreements. I would like to reiterate that an increasing number of young French nationals who participate in this program want to stay in Canada permanently to go to school and work.

• (1545)

[English]

A total of 13,850 visas were available last year for French citizens hoping to come to Canada under the working holiday, young professionals, and international co-op streams of the IEC.

[Translation]

In a spirit of reciprocity, we truly hope that a similar number of Canadians will participate in this program in France.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank you once again for inviting me to appear before you. I am ready to answer the committee members' questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Minister.

We have 45 minutes for questions and comments.

Mr. Nicholls, you have the floor.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, NDP): Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Minister, I would like to know if you are familiar with the provisions of the Official Languages Act.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Yes, I am very familiar with them.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Do you know that you have responsibilities under this act?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Yes. I worked as a federal public servant for 18 years and I was elected in 2011. I have been working in both official languages all that time and I am well aware of my obligations under that act.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Okay.

Here is a pop quiz. I am going to ask you to finish the following sentence.

Under the Official Languages Act, federal services must be...

The answer that I was looking for is that services must be of equal quality to those offered to the majority.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Okay.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: I mention that because the organizations that work with official language minority communities often say that we are far from meeting our goals in terms of percentage, funding and consultation.

During your speech, you did not mention the act. I would like to remind you that this is not just a tradition in our country. It is also a legal issue. You have responsibilities under the act. Every week should be Francophone Immigration Week.

Mr. Fraser, the Commissioner of Official Languages, and Mr. Boileau, the Ontario French Languages Services Commissioner, the watchdog in this regard, made an initial recommendation in their November 2014 report and that is to:

rely principally on Francophone organizations as providers of services and support to French-speaking newcomers in the context of any calls for proposals.

According to the witnesses who appeared before this committee, these organizations are underfunded. Do you have anything to say to them about that? Will funding increase in the coming years?

Hon. Chris Alexander: First, I feel responsible for the Official Languages Act every day and every week. We are constantly working to meet the objectives of that act.

Second, I said in the beginning that official languages are part of our reality. Our reality includes our laws. I am well aware of the status of official languages and the legislative measures that give our official languages that status.

Third, speaking of official languages, I think that nobody at this table and no political party in Canada has the right to be arrogant toward others by claiming that the minister who is currently speaking in both official languages is not aware of official languages.

Fourth, we doubled the number of francophone immigration networks in this country. We increased funding for immigration by \$30 million under the roadmap for official languages for a total of nearly \$150 million. Our immigration networks give us the capacity to accommodate 5,000 francophone immigrants across the country. We were far from reaching that number in 2013 and 2014, but our government has the intention and ambition to do so. What is more, we have out-performed any other previous government in this regard.

We must not forget that, unlike other portfolios, the responsibility for immigration to Canada is shared with the Province of Quebec, which is responsible for its own programs. These programs are offered to most francophone immigrants who come here. We are very proud to work with the Government of Quebec and we are very proud to focus on francophone immigration. Making sure that both official languages grow and remain strong is a priority for this government. Our performance on every level reflects that.

• (1550)

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: You have had nine years in office to make improvements. Frankly, I think that the Liberal regime of the 1990s is a poor reference. I will move on to my next question.

Last week, the FCFA said that the department does not have a coherent strategy that is in line with the entire immigration continuum, meaning promotion of communities, selection, recruitment, settlement, integration and so on.

What does your department intend to do about developing and implementing such a strategy? For example, what do you intend to do to deal with CIC's significant shortcomings with regard to promoting French-speaking and Acadian communities as a destination of choice for potential francophone immigrants?

Hon. Chris Alexander: What shortcomings are you talking about?

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: I can show that there are shortcomings with regard to funding. You mentioned Destination Canada. When you click on the link for Alberta or British Columbia on the Destination Canada website, there is no information at all in French. The Programme d'immigration francophone de la Colombie-Britannique is a website created by the province or francophone organizations in British Columbia—

Hon. Chris Alexander: The mistake was to not have the website translated.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: There was a lack of consultation.

Hon. Chris Alexander: ...on British Columbia's part, in French.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: You did not do enough consultation with organizations that work with OLMCs. You did not listen to those organizations, which are saying that they have been underfunded for years now. They are unable to provide services in French to those asking for them.

There is a problem within your department. There are deficiencies, and it isn't up to me to tell you where they are. It is up to you to listen.

Hon. Chris Alexander: It is your duty to identify the deficiencies. You are a member of the opposition, and that is part of your job.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Yes, and I gave you some examples. Now it is up to you to respond to them.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Okay.

The Chair: Mr. Nicholls, have you finished?

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Yes.

The Chair: Mr. Alexander, go ahead.

Hon. Chris Alexander: We cannot take responsibility every time the provinces or municipalities fail to provide services in French outside Quebec. We promote francophone minority communities. The federal government provides services. We have created francophone immigration networks that includes over 200 organizations across the country.

For the first time, there are networks of universities, colleges, community and economic organisations and employers in every province and territory that are there to welcome more francophone immigrants across the country. That did not exist a few years ago. We are investing \$150 million, which is five times more than in the past, to improve language training and immigration networks and to increase the number of francophone immigrants. We have delivered real results in this area.

• (1555)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Gourde, go ahead.

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister Alexander, thank you for being here with us today. I wonder if you could talk a little about the Express Entry program. How could that initiative help francophone immigrants settle outside Quebec?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Mr. Gourde, thank you for your continued efforts to be a champion of official languages in Canada.

The Express Entry program is really how we are going to achieve the goal of 4% of francophone immigrants. It's faster and it's on line. That is one way to recruit people. At job fairs like Destination Canada, people are practically obligated to create a profile when they apply for a work placement in Canada or when they apply for a one-

year work permit. The Entry Express program can be quickly identified, which makes francophone immigration more successful.

This is how it works: an applicant creates a profile and is put into a pool of people who are available. Individuals are ranked based on their education, language and professional skills, and their age. People with the most points are invited to apply to come to Canada as permanent residents.

We saw the first positive results of this program last week: 2.5% of the people invited to apply were francophone, and that figure represents only those who identified themselves as francophone. We still have to identify those who are bilingual. This was done without any additional efforts to increase the number of francophones coming to Canada through Express Entry.

We are proud of this system. For the first time, we can process applications in less than six months. This is unprecedented in Canadian immigration, at least in modern times. We will continue promoting Express Entry among francophone temporary workers already in Canada and among students studying in French. There are many such students in Montreal and across the country, and they often want to stay in Canada as permanent residents.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: You said it takes about six months to consider an application. How long does it take for people selected as part of the Express Entry program to get their work visa?

Hon. Chris Alexander: We are seeing the first results for Express Entry. The applications were submitted in early February, and we have already issued the first visas. People who created their profiles in January can already enter Canada with their work permit in hand. That won't be the case for all of the tens of thousands who will come, but that can happen in the best case scenario. Going from profile to permit in less than three months is really a new, extraordinary phenomenon. Our immigration system will therefore be more desirable than ever among francophones.

I can also tell you that, from a competitive standpoint, it is much faster than the programs in Quebec. Quebec is currently thinking about renewing its economic immigration program, and we encourage it to do so. Still, a three-month timeframe is far better than what any of our peers are doing, including Quebec.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Do the people using Express Entry know that being fluent in one of Canada's official languages, or both, increases their chances of being selected?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Yes, they know. That is part of the points system, which is the very foundation of all of our economic immigration programs. I don't remember the exact number of points people get for the second language. Maybe my colleagues could tell you. In any case, the program takes that into consideration and, of course, this will increase the number of candidates who speak both official languages.

I'm told it's 24 points for the second language. How many points for the first official language?

• (1600)

Mr. Yves Saint-Germain (Director, Language Program Policy, Planning and Accountability, Department of Citizenship and Immigration): One hundred and thirty-six.

Ms. Maia Welbourne (Director General, Strategic Policy and Planning, Department of Citizenship and Immigration): Up to 136 for—

Hon. Chris Alexander: Up to 136 for the first official language.

How many levels are there? Nine?

Ms. Maia Welbourne: There are more than nine levels.

Hon. Chris Alexander: For the most advanced level, our programs require level seven, but individuals who have achieved levels nine through 12 get 136 points. People who know the second language, either English or French, can get another 24 points.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: In the context of your department's strategy to achieve 4% francophone immigration, are you targeting specific countries or do you have a larger pool of countries likely to supply francophone immigrants?

Hon. Chris Alexander: First of all, we want francophones from anywhere in the world. Theoretically, there are no francophones on the planet who would not be allowed to apply. With that in mind, we want people from Africa, Europe, Asia and so on.

Second, we are looking closely at where francophones have been coming from for the past few years. They have been coming from France, Algeria, West Africa, and more and more from Congo and Senegal. There are also other francophone countries in Europe.

That said, we also need to consider francophones in Canada who are outside Quebec and whose status is temporary. I mean students and temporary workers. We need to encourage those who meet the program criteria to change their status and become permanent residents.

The Chair: Okay, thank you.

We'll turn now to Ms. St-Denis.

Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister Alexander, I want to come back to the question Mr. Nicholls asked you regarding Destination Canada.

In 2012, funding for Destination Canada was cut. The 2006 strategic plan to foster immigration to francophone minority communities was not renewed. On September 30, 2014, the government eliminated the Francophone Significant Benefit program, which was designed to simplify the hiring process. Yes, you did create Express Entry, but some of the witnesses who appeared before the committee, including those from the FCFA, told us that that program does not really benefit francophone communities that immigrate here.

All of the witnesses who appeared before us seemed to say that francophone populations are dwindling in OLMCs. Do you have any programs or strategies for curbing this decline?

This initiative does not seem very effective. The witnesses told us that, yes, people are selected to come here, but there are no programs to foster their integration into francophone environments.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Ms. St-Denis, those kinds of programs really do exist.

About three or four years ago, the government started by funding five or six francophone immigration networks, but they did not cover the whole country. There was a network here, in the Ottawa region, as well as in northern Ontario and in Acadia, but there were none in the other provinces. In addition, those networks were not as strong as they are today. We have significantly increased funding to those networks.

There are now nearly 300 points of service that are funded through 72 francophone agencies, which are part of 13 francophone immigration networks. Francophone immigrants can go anywhere in Canada and find services. I have seen such services in Saint-Boniface and Vancouver.

•(1605)

Ms. Lise St-Denis: Perhaps, but—

Hon. Chris Alexander: Even in Ajax, in my riding, the only schools that have been built recently have been francophone schools or French immersion schools, which are part of the French school board. My colleague, Mr. Chisu, can confirm this. I am therefore much more optimistic than you are in that regard.

I myself was born into an anglophone family in which no one spoke French, but I now consider myself a francophone. I promote francophone living and our identity in Canada, even in Toronto and Ajax.

That is why we are funding that. I would agree that we have not achieved all of our objectives. We want 5,000 francophone immigrants, or even 10,000 if possible, if we take into account all Canadian immigration, and not just economic immigration. We now have the tools to achieve this: Express Entry, francophone immigration networks, a strategy under our Roadmap, as well as political will, which is perhaps the most important factor. Since 2006, we have been surpassing previous results and we will continue to do so.

Ms. Lise St-Denis: I have a question for you regarding federal public servants.

Everyone knows that federal public servants earn a good living. They have good working conditions and a good pension. Are you satisfied with the francophone presence in the various departments, and especially your own?

If you call certain offices, people sometimes answer only in English. We could be doing more to integrate francophones into the public service or to simply require that people be bilingual. That is not currently a requirement. There are many departments in which French is not spoken.

Hon. Chris Alexander: We do not require that for every position, but that is often a requirement. We expect French to be spoken and services to be available in French.

I forgot to mention the Francophone Significant Benefit program. It was a temporary worker program that brought in only a few hundred every year. It was important to give Canadians priority in this market. That is why we reviewed all of our temporary worker programs.

We hope to bring in thousands of francophone immigrants. I don't mean temporary workers, but rather permanent immigrants. In my department, 30% of employees are francophone and 70% are anglophone, and this department does not administer immigration programs for Quebec. Yes, we need to strengthen our ability to increase francophone immigration to a level never before seen in the rest of Canada, but we are definitely working on it.

I worked at Foreign Affairs, and I always felt comfortable speaking in either official language. Yes, there are some gaps at times, and we need to keep an eye on those, but we have the best public service in the world when it comes to having two official languages. We also have the best Parliament. We are highly regarded in terms of our interpreters' skills and the systems that allow us to work in the official language of our choice.

Ms. Lise St-Denis: Should all of our federal institutions be the subject of an ad campaign on the importance of what you said about official language minority communities? Would it not be worth investing money in ads on the importance of linguistic duality across Canada?

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. St-Denis.

Mr. Alexander, you may answer the question.

Hon. Chris Alexander: We must always ensure that everything that Canada represents is well advertised.

I was in India a few months ago. Someone there asked me whether it was true that we speak English in Canada. Someone in India thought that Canada was a Francophone country. This is not a common perception, but it does exist even as far away as India.

I can tell you that advertising is done. It is present and it reaches our immigrants and our newcomers here in Canada. I see it in Vancouver, Montreal, Toronto, and other places. Immigrants are determined to ensure that their children speak French, even if English is the primary language spoken at home.

• (1610)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Williamson, you have the floor.

[*English*]

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Minister, it is good to see you and your officials here today. Thank you for coming.

Over the course of this study, we've heard a fair bit about the provincial nominee program, which is now playing an important and increasing role in selecting immigrants in partnership with the provinces. Could you tell us how you see this program developing over time? How can this program contribute to recruiting and welcoming more francophones outside of Quebec?

We had an interesting witness, Mr. Jacques Dubé, from Moncton, a municipality in New Brunswick where the unemployment rate is below the rate in Ontario. It is an activity of economic growth. They would like to substantially increase their number of francophone immigrants—immigrants in general, but this committee is focused

on francophone immigrants, so we will focus on that. How do you think this program could work for them as well?

Hon. Chris Alexander: The first point is that all provinces are welcome to deliver their provincial nominee programs through express entry. It will go faster and give them a better result if they do so. We have said to all the provinces repeatedly that if they want to grow their provincial nominee program, they should put it through express entry. They will still have control. They will still be able to put the provincial nominations, but they will hit higher standards in every respect, including higher standards of fast processing. That invitation is there. We know that several provinces, including New Brunswick, are thinking seriously about this. It is up to them to tell us when they are ready.

Second, it is exciting to see that not just we, but three provinces have made serious commitments to francophone immigration. Ontario has set a target of 5%. Manitoba has set a target of 7% and your home, New Brunswick, our one officially bilingual province, 33%. We are committed to working very collaboratively with all three to that end. I think these provinces see the road map for official languages, which has this significant immigration component, as an important tool to that end. They strongly welcome the money we have invested in the francophone immigration networks.

Mr. John Williamson: Thank you.

Could you tell us, what province do you think will be receiving the largest number of francophone immigrants over the next 10 years, obviously, outside of Quebec?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Interesting question.

Probably Ontario. I think if we did a proper inventory of skills, British Columbia would rank very high. There are a lot of francophones in Vancouver. I wonder why they want to live there.

Mr. John Williamson: It could be the weather. And the taxes, increasingly.

We regularly hear testimony in this committee regarding the challenges that many rural official language communities face. What does CIC, your department, do to try to incentivize immigrants to settle outside of Canada's largest cities?

Hon. Chris Alexander: The best things we've done there are through publicity. The quality of life in our smaller towns and cities,

[*Translation*]

such as Shawinigan, Regina, or smaller towns in BC's interior, is excellent.

[*English*]

We get high ratings for the quality of life in our cities, rightly so. But when people look a bit further, whether it's New Brunswick or the rest of Atlantic Canada, there is a lot there.

Our best strategy for increasing that settlement is to reinforce the roles of municipalities, towns, villages, small cities in this recruitment process, bring them to Destination Canada if they want to come, have them help us recruit people to build a profile and get into the pool of qualified candidates for *entrée express*, and also have them engage with employers.

We have a francophone employers' network that reaches all across Canada. They are not just employers who have a head office that operates in French; they want their workforce to operate in French everywhere they are in Canada.

• (1615)

[Translation]

I was in Thunder Bay recently. Municipal services there are provided in French to some extent. Bombardier is established in Thunder Bay. I met a French engineer, who, a year ago, did not even know that Thunder Bay existed. He was transferred there by Bombardier. That engineer now describes himself as a great champion of Francophone immigration.

Bombardier often conducts its operations in French, in Quebec of course, but elsewhere as well. With its presence in Thunder Bay, I predict that there may be a small wave of highly-skilled, Francophone immigration. Employers have a primary role to play in this.

[English]

Mr. John Williamson: Very good.

Could I ask you what percentage of immigrants move to a new location within Canada in the first two years of arriving? Do you have that information?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Interesting question.

I think we would have to get back to you on that. I think we all have our anecdotal evidence. I'm guessing that it's a little bit less now than it was 10 years ago. We are trying to link immigrants more closely with their employers, with their job opportunities, before they come, to let them know where they'll be able to work in their professions. We can come back to you with that.

Another way of showing the way forward for francophone immigrants is of course by sharing the experience of people who have succeeded, like the engineer in Thunder Bay I mentioned. We have put more videos, more links, than ever before on our website, including links that are completely in French, where people just tell their story.

[Translation]

Someone might mention that he was originally from Rwanda, that he was a refugee in Kenya and spent seven years at a camp. He was selected to come to Winnipeg, for example, and started a new career thanks to this or that support mechanism. There are all kinds of stories like that.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Leung.

Mr. Chungsen Leung (Willowdale, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Canada is a trading country, and of course we need people, not just francophones and anglophones, but also allophones. I've had the experience of working for both those two companies you mentioned, Bombardier and SNC-Lavalin, in the past. How could the public sector and private sector and CIC work together in this area to select the best immigrants as well as to integrate them into the total international trading network for Canada?

I point to how express entry is able to pick out those immigrants who have more than our basic bilingual language, as well as being allophones.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Obviously, French and English are our national and official languages. We're very proud of that, but we're also proud of the fact that we have so many Canadians—both those who are newcomers and those who were born here—who continue to learn and to master third, fourth, and fifth languages. Chinese is our third most spoken language in Canada, and we have linguistic capacity across the board, which is a huge asset for Canada in this global trading environment.

You're right. It should be a priority for Canadians to master the languages of our closest trading partners, of the countries with which we're doing free trade deals. We are thinking along those lines with our international education strategy and so forth. But how do we get employers involved? How do we engage with them?

We have more stakeholder engagement than ever before, round tables on francophone immigration but also on immigration issues generally. What occupations are required? We do this across the country on a continuous basis.

[Translation]

The Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité is a major interlocutor and stakeholder for us when it comes to Francophone immigration outside Quebec, but we are also encouraging employers to get involved in this new Express Entry initiative.

• (1620)

[English]

Keep in mind that, when you make a profile and enter the pool for express entry, you have to fill in a profile on Canada Job Bank as well, which we're all realizing and we've heard, probably from young people, is a very important tool for finding a job in your field.

As an economic immigrant, you have to be in Canada Job Bank. Starting this spring, employers across the country will see you once you're in the pool and once you've started on your pathway toward immigration. And they will be able to make you a job offer even if they don't have a labour market impact assessment. The rates of success, the rates of employment, the match between immigrants and employers' needs is going to go up. And that's also direct feedback to us because you don't just build your profile on Canada Job Bank. Employers post their jobs there: which jobs are required in Canada and which jobs are not being filled in sufficient numbers by Canadian-trained people.

We're not going to have enough software designers and software engineers any time soon, and so in recent years and in the foreseeable future, it's a priority for our economic immigration.

Mr. Chungsen Leung: In my experience, I certainly see this as being a positive for Canada, because we need to leverage the capability of Canada's bilingualism and the third language capability —

Hon. Chris Alexander: Yes, Mr. Leung, you know this as well as any of us around the table. We have the most qualified workforce we've ever had in Canada, the most educated. We even beat the rest of the world by many measures, but that means—when you have people with university degrees and a huge number who have at least completed high school—people can and have learned other languages and there is a hunger to learn both our official languages and then to learn third and fourth languages.

That's why the discussion about official languages in this country is more positive than ever before. People see second, third, and fourth languages as assets, as never before.

We also do presentations to employers emphasizing the benefits of bilingual and francophone employees. We have lots of data that shows how those with both official languages tend to do better in the labour market. They have more employment opportunities. They can be rewarded.

It's not the same everywhere, but generally the data shows that it's good to have these two languages. I think newcomers understand this very well, including those from India and China, who are sending their kids to immersion, who are sending their kids into the French system, even in the greater Toronto area.

The Chair: Okay, thank you very much.

Go ahead, Madame Day.

[Translation]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Alexander, for being here with us today. It is an honour to have you here.

I have a number of questions. Last week I gave you a copy of the motion I moved in this chamber.

I apologize. My voice is not so great today. You will have to listen closely.

I have a series of short questions. How many people have come to Canada through the Express Entry program since it came into effect? Do you have the number?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Are you talking about the people who have come to Canada? A few dozen visas have been issued so far. It is still March. Some of these people have arrived in Canada. I don't have the exact numbers, but the process is just starting.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: There are no more than a dozen Express Entry visas.

Hon. Chris Alexander: You asked how many people had arrived in Canada, but the number is much higher when it comes to approvals.

We launched this new system in January. We received the first applications in February and we issued the first visas during the month of March. Some of those people should already be here.

The good news is that 22,398 candidates qualified and are part of the Express Entry pool. The new system has a large pool of people. These are highly qualified people. They are starting to arrive in Canada. The application processing deadlines are generally six months or less.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: How many of these 22,000 candidates who were approved, speak French or are Francophone?

Hon. Chris Alexander: There are more than 22,000 people in the pool. We invited a few thousand people to apply. Among the very limited number of these few thousand people who were already invited, less than 200 are Francophone.

It should be noted that during the last round of invitations, it was 2.5%. Why is that percentage higher? The first rounds mainly invited those who already had labour market assessments, who were working mainly out west and were transitioning from temporary worker status to permanent resident status.

For the last round, it was 2.5%, which did not include the people who had labour market assessments. It's a good number and we plan to keep it up.

•(1625)

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: The objectives for 2023 are 4.3% Francophones outside Quebec.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Yes.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: You say that this 2.5% is higher than that of the first round. How will that work? Is Express Entry essentially a passport to becoming an immigrant? Is it faster to go through Express Entry?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Yes, but the passport comes later, once citizenship is obtained.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: I meant that figuratively.

Hon. Chris Alexander: Yes, it is a good path. It is a faster and more equitable way to getting permanent residency.

How are we going to achieve our objectives? We are going to promote Francophone immigration. We are going to recruit Francophones to join the pool. We are going to establish profiles and we are going to keep selecting candidates.

If we do not have all the tools we need to increase the number of Francophone immigrants, then we will enhance those tools. That is what we have always done. We set an objective and we will achieve it.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: I read in *Le Devoir* that 1,000 French student interns are affected by the changes Ottawa made to issuing visas to foreign students. A \$230 fee was added as well.

The Instituts universitaires de technologie, or IUT, is an umbrella organization of 113 educational institutions in France. Those 113 institutions, and I quote,

...note that more than a thousand IUT students are being denied internships just a few weeks before their scheduled departures, thereby jeopardizing their entire school year.

They are complaining about the fact that the paperwork was issued a bit late. The rules were made and they are holding things up.

Will you intervene in order to allow these people to enter the country more quickly?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Students doing an internship are exempt from paying these fees. The information reported by the media is inaccurate.

The rules introduced as part of our reform of the temporary foreign worker program have been known for months, since last year even. There is really no reason for people working in this field not to be aware of the new rules. The vast majority of the people working in this field have adapted.

Also, we continue to see great interest in International Experience Canada and Destination Canada 2014. There are a number of ways, especially for the French, to come here. We have two or three candidates for every position.

However, we will continue to ensure that Canadians have priority over the temporary foreign worker program. Nonetheless, we will also continue to be generous when it comes to programs to ensure youth exchanges. We will, of course, encourage far more Canadians to go France and other countries. This program still hasn't quite found the right balance.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: I have one last question.

Could you tell the committee what measures you have taken within your department to implement the eight recommendations made jointly by the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada, Graham Fraser, and the French Language Services Commissioner of Ontario, Mr. Boileau, with regard to Francophone immigration?

Hon. Chris Alexander: Yes.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: If you don't have the answer right now—

Hon. Chris Alexander: We very much appreciated their report. I talked to Mr. Fraser and I met with New Brunswick's official languages commissioner and that province's immigration minister, who is also a Francophone herself. We will write a formal response to their proposals, but the fact remains that we are already in the process of doing a number of things.

As I said earlier, we will take measures to identify people who are bilingual and able to speak French who are not necessarily identified in the current system. We will continue to meet the great challenge of promoting our Francophone minority communities to all our audiences. Immigration from Africa is growing the fastest. We will continue to work together with the employers and municipalities that will be taking in Francophone immigrants. They are our most important partners in this.

• (1630)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Day. Thank you, Mr. Alexander.

We will pause for a few minutes in order to allow Mr. Alexander to leave the room.

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(Pause)

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The Chair: We will now resume the deliberations of the Standing Committee on Official Languages with three officials from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

I will now give the floor to Mr. Chisu, for five minutes.

[*English*]

Mr. Corneliu Chisu (Pickering—Scarborough East, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much for participating in this discussion.

What steps is the CIC taking to promote the official languages minority community to potential immigrants and newcomers?

I'm asking this question because when I immigrated to this great country, when I was in Rome and I was asking for information about Canada, first of all I needed a book on Canada and I went to Switzerland to buy it. When I said that I would like to go to Edmonton, the immigration official told me, "You just go to Toronto, that is better". Probably if I had been given better advice maybe I would not be here in this House and I would probably have a better job as an engineer.

It is very important because coming from Romania, which is part of the Francophonie, a lot of people go to Quebec because everybody in Quebec speaks French. There are also classes of minority languages that have good jobs and have opportunities, but people don't know about it. For example, in northern Ontario there are the mining areas.

What are you doing to promote these opportunities for immigrants to go not necessarily to Quebec, *la belle province*, but to go to other provinces and in this way to achieve our goal to promote bilingualism in this country?

• (1635)

Ms. Stefanie Beck (Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services, Department of Citizenship and Immigration): I would say it's multi-dimensional.

There is work that we can do here in Canada in terms of outreach and communications. We were talking earlier that the minister mentioned our focus in some ways on students and on existing potential immigrants in Canada. There's outreach to those groups of people and abroad through our Canadian embassies, high commissions, and consulates general.

We have, with the last round of information we've sent to missions for express entry, added in a *volet "communautés minoritaires"*. They have been given packages of information that they can share with potential immigrants.

When we are doing our presentations by webinar, in person, and in meetings, not only the immigration staff, but the other staff of the mission are promoting the possibility of going to the minority communities as well and explaining what the opportunities are in those places. They are explaining a little of what you have said; that not only can they work in French in those places, but their children can go to school in French and they can receive health care in French. They see the environment is conducive to a good life, not only in their own maternal tongue, but in the French language, and of course in English.

[Translation]

My colleague, Mr. Saint-Germain, will add a few words.

Mr. Yves Saint-Germain: Thank you.

CIC is also engaged in promotional missions abroad. We are working with our provincial and territorial counterparts to go to various countries. Over the past few years, we went to Romania with representatives from New Brunswick to promote immigration and the communities. The provincial representatives can talk about life in Moncton or in Saint-Boniface, and employment opportunities. The provinces also contribute to selecting and promoting their communities.

As my colleague said, we are making efforts internally. We produced a video entitled *Living in Francophone communities*, which promotes communities from Newfoundland to British Columbia, and people who have successfully immigrated to Canada. On our website, there is a page entitled, "Francophone immigration", which provides all the details on all the communities. The site includes an interactive map that indicates where the Francophone communities are across the country. The map indicates where there are francophones, where the services, schools, and so forth are located.

Thank you.

[English]

Mr. Corneliu Chisu: How are we encouraging these immigrants to stay in communities with minority languages? They probably don't have job opportunities. I'm speaking also in this regard about the provinces. I'm speaking about licences. For example, a professional engineer who would like to work in Ontario would have to be licensed in the province of Ontario, as would a physician. There is a shortage of physicians here in this country and probably in the minority language communities. How can we give an incentive, or how is your department working on this field to attract people with qualifications who can work in their professions?

The Chair: Madam Beck.

[Translation]

Ms. Stefanie Beck: All three of us can answer that question because it is rather detailed.

CIC begins by explaining existing possibilities to immigrants. Obviously, people go by the information we give them on the places where there are jobs and whether members of their family can live there. Those are the factors that help them decide to move to a given location.

People stay in that location because they found work that interests them and pays them enough to have a good life, but also because they started a family. Their children start to get settled in and want to stay there. There are many factors that make an immigrant want to stay in a certain place.

Of course, the labour market can change. There is no guarantee that a person who immigrates to Saint-Boniface, for example, will stay there, but we are doing everything we can to ensure that integration goes smoothly, not just when the person leaves their country of origin, but also when they arrive.

As far as the need for engineers and doctors in the regions is concerned, I can't help but think about the movie *La grande séduction*. We need these people to stay in the rural communities. We have very targeted programs for that.

[English]

Do you want to talk about the credentials?

• (1640)

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Saint-Germain: As my colleague explained, we provide pre-arrival services abroad, which provide a type of path for each regulated profession. Newcomers who take the orientation sessions provided by Colleges and Institutes Canada through the Classification of Instructional Programs, are told what steps to follow from abroad, in the accreditation and credential recognition process. That is one of the mechanisms available.

As far as retention in the communities is concerned, there is no doubt that the settlement services funded by CIC contribute to retaining immigrants. They are told where various services such as schools or health care services are and they are directed to the community. Canadians need to be able to play a role in welcoming immigrants, making them feel welcome and providing mentorship or sponsorship services to help them find their way in a given profession.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Gravelle, you have the floor.

Mr. Claude Gravelle (Nickel Belt, NDP): Thank you, Chair.

I have a question I would like to ask, but I don't know who can answer it.

With respect to the pool of candidates, when the minister appeared before the committee he said that 22,393 people have applied to come to Canada. There are 200 francophones in the pool. How do you explain the fact that there are only 200 francophones in a pool of 22,000 applicants?

Ms. Maia Welbourne: Thank you for the question.

There are actually about 22,000 people in the pool. They are the eligible individuals who may be invited to file an application to come to Canada as permanent residents. It is also true that about 270 people provided French-language test results. We are currently working on the definition.

The minister mentioned that the problem was not necessarily that there were no other francophones or bilingual candidates in the pool. The fact remains that, for the time being, the number of francophones represents how many people provided French-language test results. We are trying to find a better way to define “francophone” in order to have a more accurate number.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: When the witness from New Brunswick appeared last week, he told us that for every job created for francophones, there were two created on the anglophone side. Under these conditions and bearing in mind the very small number of francophone immigrants who apply to come to Canada, what should we do to increase the number of francophones?

Ms. Stefanie Beck: What they are doing in Moncton is very interesting. We could perhaps learn something from them in that regard and apply it across Canada.

Let's go back to the question you asked earlier about what can be done to ensure that more francophones come forward as candidates from the outset, namely during recruitment.

We stepped up our efforts by focusing on recruitment in francophone countries. We have to ensure that more candidates come forward from the outset. That will allow us to increase the number of people in the pool.

I am unable to say how many jobs are created in relation to the number of francophones in the city, but according to what the witness said, it is an interesting number.

Mr. Claude Gravelle: In his presentation, the minister said that the government had invested almost \$4 million in the Destination Canada program, which consists of a series of annual job fairs that take place in November in francophone countries.

Might that explain why only 270 francophones applied to come to Canada? In fact, \$4 million is a very small amount given that we are talking about an investment that concerns every francophone country in the world.

•(1645)

Mr. Yves Saint-Germain: The department has invested in promotional missions, job fairs and study fairs. We spend more than \$4 million. According to the roadmap for 2013-2018, the department intends to spend \$30 million for promotional and recruitment activities, including the monies disbursed to New Brunswick. That includes participation in Destination Canada and European employment fairs such as Studyrama, promotional missions in Africa and missions in northeastern Europe. These activities make it possible to bring together all the stakeholders and employers. Those are the services we provide to participants in Destination Canada.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Daniel, you have the floor.

[English]

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, witnesses, for being here.

Being an immigrant myself, I know what it's like coming over here, and the key to all of this is actually having a job. We come here for better lives for our families, etc.

We've heard from many of the minority groups outside of Quebec that they're actually losing people already. The main loss is because of their children going away for education and not returning to the community and people going away for other jobs because there are no good jobs that are sustainable in these communities. The exception, of course, is Moncton, which you've already heard about. We heard from Moncton that they've actually doubled their recruiting for their francophone community. They've gone out deliberately seeking companies to come into that area and then have put people in there.

How do you see the role of the private sector in recruiting and integrating new immigrants? How does CIC work with the private sector and community sectors to attract, welcome, and integrate these new Canadians? Doing those things is really the only way to get them to stay in that location.

[Translation]

Ms. Stefanie Beck: I would like to thank the member for his question.

[English]

I think, as the committee has heard during the presentations over the past few weeks, that the link between the labour market and immigration is crucial. That is really what makes the difference. The CIC works very closely on the ground with local organizations to try to make sure that we are bringing in the kinds of people the employers want. The consultations that the minister launched last October have included representatives from the private sector throughout, across the country, *justement, avec ça en tête*, so that we can make sure that the programs that we are structuring, reforming, and reviewing constantly are well aligned with what the private sector needs.

CIC's mandate is of course citizenship and immigration, it's not job creation, but we work very closely with our colleagues in other government departments as well.

[Translation]

Mr. Yves Saint-Germain: Mr. Speaker, I would like to add that the recipe for success is to arrive in Canada with an offer of employment. It is important to CIC to work with employers to advertise positions at job fairs such as Destination Canada.

The greater the number of jobs posted, the easier it is for immigrants to come to Canada because they will obtain more points. For these immigrants there will also be a retention factor in these communities. If they have a job, they will want to settle in the community, buy a house, start a family and enrol their children in school.

[English]

Mr. Joe Daniel: Just to follow up on that, I know from when I immigrated that there was a beautiful form with all these points, etc., and I would have actually gotten more points if I had been a brain surgeon, but when we talk to a lot of these communities, they need people who will actually work in the forestry industry, who will work in all sorts of other industries where they are lacking people.

Are there going to be any changes there? Can you tell us how that process is going to work so that you get people who are covering all the industries, the whole spectrum, not just the highly educated?

Ms. Maia Welbourne: Maybe I can just speak a little bit to express entry, how that works, and how that gets to exactly that question.

Under the ranking scheme the minister talked about, there are a certain amount of points that can be accorded to somebody who has expressed interest in coming to Canada and is in the pool. Of those points, 600 are based on human capital characteristics, things like education—the higher the level of education, the more points you get—work experience, age—the younger you are, the more points you get—and so on. Another 600 points are related to policy objectives. For instance, one of the policy objectives we had when deciding express entry was to make sure it was responsive to the labour market as well as recognizing high levels of human capital. Under express entry, an individual with a job offer gets 600 points, which means that they're essentially guaranteed to be invited to apply. That's how we get at making sure we're not just bringing in the highly educated, brain surgeons or what have you, but also those individuals who have the skills in demand in the labour market.

•(1650)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Nicholls.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: The first question would be in light of the fourth recommendation of the commissioner to develop, in collaboration with the provinces and territories, an action plan for targets of immigration. How many times has the minister met with his counterparts at the provincial level since the report was deposited in November 2014?

Ms. Stefanie Beck: I'm sorry, I don't think we would have that number with us, but we can get back to you.

There are regular meetings with all of the provinces and territories, but he would also meet with them not only in groups but bilaterally.

The Chair: If you could pass on that information to the clerk, we'll have it distributed to the members of the committee. Thank you.

Ms. Stefanie Beck: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: I came across an interesting fact in a book by Jean-Benoît Nadeau and Julie Barlow called *The Story of French*. It says that in Syria there are 294,000 children who are learning French. This was published in 2010.

I'd like to talk about the largest humanitarian tragedy of our time. Why not sponsor and settle some of these children here? The report that recently came out from Save The Children highlighted the lost generation of Syrian children. Four out of five refugee children in Lebanon do not go to school. Enrolment rates in Syria are down to 50% from pre-war levels of almost 100%. There are 2.8 million children out of school.

When we look at the history of your department, particularly in the Trudeau and Clark years, the department managed to resettle 60,000 Southeast Asian refugees in 18 months. The department was headed by politicians—

Mr. John Williamson: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I recognize that the member has the right to say whatever he wants, but this is so far outside the scope of this study that the question may even be out of order.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Williamson.

I'm going to allow the question because the member has referenced francophone immigration in respect of Syria. We are here under two rubrics. One is the study, but there's also a motion to talk about how the department is meeting its commitments under part VII of the Official Languages Act.

I'll remind all members to make sure that they stick to the two rubrics under which we're conducting this hearing.

I'll allow Mr. Nicholls to continue.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Mr. Chair, it's just that I see an opportunity here for the department to act. In 18 months, the Clark government was able to settle 60,000 refugees, and yet this government, in three years, has only been able to resettle 1,300, I believe. Is there any way that we could use this as an opportunity to bring in young Syrian children to populate our French schools and French communities?

[Translation]

Ms. Stefanie Beck: Thank you for the question.

[English]

The way that we bring in refugees, which is the case with the children, their parents, and their families from Syria, is through a process that is different from the one for economic immigrants or family immigration. The initial selection is not based on language, as I expect you would know. The UNHCR is the channel that we use for immigration, for refugee processing. We don't specify by language, but by most in need, if I can put it that way.

The government has targets on Syrian refugees, which we will be meeting. I can't give you more than that. I can't comment on whether we would change our policy to only ask for files of children who are francophone, because that would be a significant change in policy.

•(1655)

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: In terms of those funds, do you know how much money is being allocated to education for the Syrian refugees? The money that's been—

Mr. John Williamson: Mr. Chair, that's out of order again.

The Chair: I'm going to allow the question, Mr. Williamson, because it has been framed in terms of francophone immigration to this country, and the motions adopted were pretty broad in respect of the two studies.

Go ahead, Madam Beck.

Ms. Stefanie Beck: We spend around \$120 million on language training, but we don't track by country of origin, for instance. I couldn't tell you how much is spent on Syrian refugees or indeed on citizens from another country.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Given that Africa will be the source of many of the world's francophones, what is the department's strategy for attracting African immigrants?

Ms. Stefanie Beck: As I mentioned earlier, we will be using our embassies and high commissions abroad more and more. You will see in the future that we will leverage ministerial travel. For instance, when he was in India, we made use of the opportunities that he had to reach out to the communities. Similarly, travel in Africa would provide those opportunities. Mainly, we are providing the missions with more tools: more documentation that they can hand out, more webinars, and more experts on the other end of the telephone and on the Internet.

I would add, though, that it's not something that we can do alone. We do that in concert with the communities and with the associations with which we work closely, with whoever is able to provide the information at the expert level. We don't pretend that our staff in the embassies and the high commissions abroad know everything about the minority communities, for instance. We make sure that they are fully supported in the outreach they do.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: I would like to thank all of you for your questions, comments and answers.

I would like to thank the officials for their testimony.

We will suspend proceedings for three minutes.

- _____ (Pause) _____
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- (1700)

The Chair: We are continuing the meeting of the Committee on Official Languages.

Before I give Mr. Gourde the floor, I would like to mention one thing.

The House of Commons administration has decided to put in place a project that will eliminate all the paper we use. In April, I will organize a committee meeting so that the House of Commons administration can give a presentation on having our committee go paperless. The meeting will last between 30 and 60 minutes. This project will start at the beginning of May.

[*English*]

All committees are going paperless.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Thank you, Chair.

I would like the committee to continue in camera.

The Chair: I will now have the Clerk proceed with a recorded vote.

The Clerk of the Committee (David Chandonnet): The vote has been completed.

(Motion agreed to: yeas 5; nays 4)

The Chair: I declare the motion carried.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: We'll suspend for a minute to allow the committee meeting to proceed in camera.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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