



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

**COMMUNITIES SPEAK OUT:
HEAR OUR VOICE
THE VITALITY OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

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

**Guy Lauzon, MP
Chair**

MAY 2007

39th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

has the honour to present its

SEVENTH REPORT

Pursuant to its mandate under Standing Order 108(3)(f), the Committee has decided to study the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities.

After hearing evidence, the Committee has agreed to present this report to the House including the following observations and recommendations:

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INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2006, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages undertook a study on the vitality of official language minority communities. This study incorporated two previous studies conducted in the fall of 2006 regarding health care and immigration. Three key objectives were identified: 1. to determine the practical effects of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* extending from 2003-2008; 2. to make recommendations to the Government of Canada on measures to follow up on this action plan beginning in fiscal year 2008-2009; 3. to consult and listen to the communities' concerns in order to strengthen ties between the communities and the federal government.

As part of this study of community vitality, the Committee travelled to the Atlantic provinces, Quebec and Ontario from November 6 to 10, 2006, and then to Western Canada from December 4 to 7, 2006. Other evidence was heard in Ottawa beginning in the spring of 2006. A total of 121 witnesses from 85 different organizations were heard.

This is a first since the Committee's inception 26 years ago, as it never had the opportunity to travel and meet with Francophone and Anglophone minority communities on their own ground. This report is thus intended as a collective commitment to the vitality of official language minority communities.

The initial impetus for this study came from two events:

- The *Action Plan for Official Languages*, launched in March 2003 and expiring on March 31, 2008, provided an investment of \$751.3 million over five years, with half being allocated to federal-provincial-territorial agreements on education for both minority language education and second language instruction, and the remainder going to community development (early childhood initiatives, health, justice and immigration), economic development, partnership with the provinces and territories, support for community life, the public service and language industries. An Enabling Fund to support community economic measures was added to the plan in 2005, along with annual funding of \$12 million for the last three years, bringing the total budget for the Action Plan to \$787.3 million. The Committee considered it essential to assess the effects of this plan, in order to identify directions to help the Government of Canada begin developing a strategy for further action as of April 1, 2008.
- The amendment of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* in November 2005 makes the federal government's commitment to fostering community vitality and promoting linguistic duality binding. The Government of Canada must now take "positive measures" to fulfill this commitment since failure to live up to it is subject to legal remedy. In the Committee's

opinion, this change to the Act means that the federal government must reassess in a significant way the nature of its commitment to official language minority communities.

The Government of Canada's approach to official language communities has thus far consisted primarily of encouraging the provinces and territories to uphold the federal government's constitutional and statutory responsibilities. The federal government is certainly a partner to the communities in this sense, but the provinces and territories are still free to adjust their actions according to their own priorities. Simply put, the federal government's support for communities has been in the form of the transfer of significant amounts of funding to the provinces and territories, but the provinces and territories have, for the most part, used these funds at their discretion. When the funding was not used in a manner that was at least compatible with the priorities set by the communities themselves, the courts rather than the federal government have more often been the communities' allies in dealing with the resistance of the provinces and territories. The Committee believes that the now binding nature of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* will likely lead to significant long-term changes, because if the partnership between the federal government and the communities suffers due to the circumstances, the communities can rely on the courts to counterbalance the federal government's tendency to favour the majorities and the provinces at the expense of smaller communities. Given the highly favourable nature of court decisions for the communities when they take legal action against the provinces, the federal government will no doubt prefer a long-term pact with the communities. Many witnesses told us that a renewed action plan reflecting the federal government's binding commitment to the communities, and including the provincial and territorial governments, would no doubt be a significant positive measure.

These two events reinforced each other and the Committee considered it appropriate to evaluate the results of the Action Plan from the perspective of the amendments to the *Official Languages Act*. The two main questions the Committee considered were: "Has the Action Plan contributed to the vitality of official language minority communities?"; and "What are the strengths and weaknesses of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* as regards community vitality?".

The answer to the first question is a cautious "yes." The Action Plan's success varies tremendously with the topic and the specific characteristics of the community. On the whole, the communities have responded very favourably to the Action Plan's initiatives as regards health; are eagerly awaiting the results of immigration initiatives; are worried about the continuation of measures in support of early childhood development; have not yet seen the practical effects of the major investments in education; and deplore the lack of weight given to the community sector. The other elements of the Action Plan were evaluated by organizations involved in the sectors in question, such as justice or economic development, but the effects have not been as evident as in other sectors. It was noted that the Plan says nothing of the arts, culture and the media. The organization representatives we met were, on the whole, well aware of the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, but a number of them stated that community members know very little about it.

The answers to the second question will be examined in detail throughout this report. The 39 recommendations are intended to bolster the strengths identified in the first phase of the Action Plan and to address the greatest shortcomings.

The study will not however be limited to the Action Plan. For the federal government's future initiatives to have some scope, the Committee had to lend an ear to the communities. This report also provides an account of what community representatives think of the Government of Canada's role and actions, and what they consider to be the best avenues for the future. In this regard, the cancellation of the Court Challenges Program was an important topic at the Committees' meetings. All the organizations that addressed the topic were opposed to the program's cancellation.

The Committee also had to summarize the current status of official language minority communities. This is where the concept of vitality comes into play. Are the communities healthy? This apparently simple question is in fact tremendously complex. We did not wish to address it from an academic perspective. This perspective is absolutely essential, but the role of a parliamentary committee is not that of a team of researchers.¹

The Committee decided instead to work from a common-sense definition: the change in the number of households where the minority official language is used within a given geographic area.

Despite the tremendous change in family models, the family is still the main, but not sole pillar of community vitality. In other words, the vitality of official language minority communities is defined primarily by the strength of the geographical roots of families that have chosen to have their children educated in the minority official language. This choice entails a number of disadvantages, like all aspects of being part of a minority community: less variety in jobs available in one's language, less services available, risk of social isolation, virtual necessity of being bilingual etc. These disadvantages are real and significant. These are the factors that lead individuals or families to leave their region, and that lead exogamous families to raise their children in the language of the majority. To encourage these families to lay down roots and if possible to attract new families, one of the main factors that can offset these disadvantages is the sense of attachment people feel to their community.

Various times during our meetings, this sense of attachment emerged as the most striking sign of community vitality. Witnesses voiced their pride in being able to tell their parents or grandparents they can now send their children to French-language schools. Having roots entails a link to the past that extends into the future. There are many

¹ For the academic debate on the concept of vitality, see the research plan in the study by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages entitled *A Sharper View: Evaluating the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities*, May 2006.

initiatives and people's enthusiasm for their work has taken primacy over the fight for survival. They are now building on what has already been achieved.

The importance of this attachment also illustrates quite clearly that strong community networks are the foundation for everything else. Without solid community networks to provide support, education or health services do not flourish and the community will break apart. Strengthening community networks must therefore come before developing and expanding services; otherwise they will break down for lack of a solid foundation. Above all, this community strength is the key factor preventing families from moving away. Community strength allows people, who so wish, to develop a sense of belonging, which is difficult to experience as part of a majority in large urban centres. This can become a considerable factor in retaining families and could possibly attract immigrants.

We must not however lose sight of two realities that are more worrisome:

- The status of Anglophones in Quebec outside the Montreal area is especially precarious since these communities face a triple challenge: they must cope with all the difficulties of being in a minority; must counter the strong appeal of more attractive future opportunities available to well educated families, throughout North America or at least in Montreal; and finally, they must fight the prejudice that Quebec's Anglophones enjoy special status by definition, when in reality these communities are declining.
- The second worrisome reality is the status of rural regions. For both Francophones and Anglophones, the ageing population is reaching alarming proportions. The average age of Francophones in Saskatchewan has reached 52 years. Clearly, this negative demographic growth is not specific to official language minority communities, but it is more difficult for those communities. If rural majority communities cannot retain their young families, how can we even imagine being able to encourage families in minority communities not to move away?

These are very complex issues to which lasting solutions will not likely be found in the short or medium term. The Committee wanted to call attention to these difficult realities to ensure they are not overshadowed by the predominantly optimistic tone of this report. This optimism is cautious of course, because the ice is still very thin in many places, as we will see. The predominant mood is nevertheless one of more assured strengths, felt by flourishing communities that look to the future full of confidence and positive energy.

Among the hundred or so witnesses the Committee heard, in Ottawa and other parts of the country, a number provided informative, surprising, provocative or insightful testimony, but one of them was especially important. That was Suzanne Roy, Executive Director of the *Association canadienne française de l'Ontario du grand Sudbury*. Her

defence of community organizations served as a wake-up call, both for Committee members and for the other witnesses present:

“Thanks to the ACFO associative movement, Ontario now has a good infrastructure. If colleges have been established, it’s because of the work carried out at the grass roots. All of our institutions flow from the grass roots. However, people now seem to be saying that because the infrastructure is already in place, it is no longer necessary to carry out that work at the grass roots level.”² “Some associations working on the ground have to make do with \$10,000 a year. It won’t be possible to do much if we don’t provide the necessary resources to ensure that development is appropriate.”³

Slowly but surely, the growth of larger institutions such as schools, colleges and health centres, with millions of dollars in funding, has overshadowed the fact that none of this would have been possible without the perseverance, commitment, dedication and even relentlessness of the volunteers who have brought these organizations along. These organizations are often not respected by governments due to their dependence on public funds and their sometimes persistent demands. They are however the source of projects that evolve from enthusiastic dreams to long-term, structuring initiatives that political officials later claim as their own. The great battles have been won and the younger generation may perhaps no longer have to push as hard to make their way. They have the privilege of choice for their future. For community organizations, it is time to consolidate what they have achieved and to pursue their projects. Though exciting, many projects have become increasingly complex, diverse and challenging. There are more balls in the air, but the same number of jugglers. They have dropped a few balls. It is not clear who will take over from the current generation. The volunteers are burning out. The Committee wishes to express its sincere appreciation to Ms. Roy and other witnesses for the invaluable work they have done and also for publicly demonstrating their support to community organizations.

² Suzanne Roy (Executive Director, ACFO Regional, Community Development Sector, Association canadienne française de l’Ontario du grand Sudbury), Evidence, November 10, 2006 , 10:05 a.m..

³ Ibid. 9:50 a.m.

This report is divided into four chapters:

- The first chapter provides the necessary information for the subsequent analysis of the various themes. It includes a summary of the key demographic data on communities; a description of the constitutional and statutory framework for the official languages in Canada; a description of the Department of Canadian Heritage programs designed to fulfill the federal government's commitment to fostering community vitality and promoting linguistic duality; and finally, a summary of the key elements of the *Action Plan for Official Languages*.
- The next two chapters, on health services and immigration, entailed more in-depth study by the Committee, since these two topics were initially to subjects of separate studies. When the Committee's tour across Canada was confirmed, it seemed best not to separate these two studies from the study on community vitality since health services and immigration are aspects of vitality and form an integral part of the Action Plan. The main difference between these two chapters and Chapter 4 is that they include testimony from expert witnesses and Government of Canada officials, and also provide a detailed account of the communities' perspective.
- Chapter 4 presents the main themes other than health and immigration that were addressed during the Committee's tour. Eleven themes were identified: education, from early childhood to the postsecondary level; community life; infrastructure; management of transfers from the federal government to the provinces and territories; the budget cuts of September 2006, especially the cancellation of the Court Challenges Program and literacy programs; the promotion of French; the media; the arts and culture; justice; economic development; and research.

The Committee members hope their efforts will contribute to closer ties among the communities, the federal government and the Parliament of Canada. We feel we have performed our role of oversight of the decisions made by the executive with conviction and sincerity. We are eagerly awaiting the Government of Canada's response and hope this report provides some support for the growth and vitality of English-speaking and French-speaking minority communities. These are not only our official languages but also our national languages, which are at the core of our Canadian identity.

1. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Before analyzing the testimony heard by the Committee, let us first look briefly at the demographic characteristics of Canada's various official language communities (section 1.1), and describe the relatively complex environment in which initiatives under the *Action Plan for Official Languages* are taken. This environment comprises the constitutional framework which sets out the official languages responsibilities of the federal and provincial governments (section 1.2); federal legislation and related regulations which define the federal government's specific official language responsibilities, the key item of course being the *Official Languages Act* of 1969, which was amended in 1988 to include support for the development of official language minority communities (section 1.3); a description of the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, highlighting the elements most likely to have a significant impact on the development of official language minority communities (section 1.4); and finally, what is known as the Official Languages Program, which includes all the programs that the Department of Canadian Heritage is responsible for delivering (section 1.5).

1.1 PROFILE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGE MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN CANADA⁴

1.1.1. National Profile

In 2001, there were 987,640 Francophones living outside Quebec, or 4.4% of Canada's population less the population of Quebec; while Quebec's Anglophone community had 918,955 members, or 12.9 % of Quebec's total population.⁵

Minority Francophones communities are very diverse. They are sometimes concentrated in specific regions, such as northern New Brunswick, Eastern Ontario or urban areas such as the St. Boniface district of Winnipeg. They can also be highly dispersed, whether in urban areas such as Toronto or Vancouver or in the rural regions of Newfoundland and Labrador or Saskatchewan.

Quebec's Anglophone community is highly concentrated in the Montreal area, with significant concentrations in the Eastern Townships, and smaller groups in Quebec City, the Outaouais and the Gaspé.

⁴ Unless indicated otherwise, the source of the data in this section is Statistics Canada: the paper based on 2001 census data and prepared for Canadian Heritage and Statistics Canada by Louise Marmen and Jean-Pierre Corbeil, *New Canadian Perspectives. Languages in Canada 2001 Census*, 2004; Department of Canadian Heritage reports on official languages; the series of brochures produced by the FCFA (*Profil de la communauté acadienne et francophone du Canada*, 2004); the study conducted by Jack Jedwab for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages entitled *Going Forward: The Evolution of Quebec's English-Speaking Community*, 2004; as well as the study by the Office québécois de la langue française, entitled *Les caractéristiques linguistiques de la population du Québec : profil et tendances 1991-2001*, 2005.

⁵ As an indication of the vitality of official language communities, Statistics Canada compiles data on first language and first official language spoken. Throughout this report, unless otherwise indicated, we will refer to the first official language spoken. For example, we will consider French as the "first official language spoken" of a person living outside Quebec if his first language is Romanian, he knows both official languages, but speaks French at home. If we looked only at this person's first language, he would be excluded from the statistics on Francophone minority communities. The services that the federal government must offer the minority in a region are based on the "first official language spoken." This distinction is especially important for the Anglophone community in Quebec which includes a large number of immigrants whose first language is not English but who are regarded as "English-speaking." It is less important for Francophone communities outside Quebec that include few immigrants, although change could be encouraged in this regard.

Official Language Minority Population by Province or Territory
(Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census)

Province/Territory	Official Language Minority		Total Pop.
	Number	%	
Nwfld. and Labr.	2 100	0.4	508 075
Pr. Ed. Island	5 275	4.0	133 385
Nova Scotia	33 765	3.8	897 570
New Brunswick	238 450	33.1	719 710
Quebec	918 955	12.9	7 125 580
Ontario	527 710	4.7	11 285 550
Manitoba	43 380	3.9	1 103 700
Saskatchewan	16 550	1.7	963 150
Alberta	58 825	2.0	2 941 150
British Columbia	59 370	1.5	3 868 875
Yukon	885	3.1	28 525
Northwest Territories	915	2.5	37 105
Nunavut	415	1.6	26 665

Minority Population – Canada (2001)

Minority Pop.	Official Language Minority		Total Pop.
	Number	%	
Anglophones (Quebec)	918 955	12.9	7 125 580
Francophones (outside Quebec)	987 640	4.4	22 513 450

Linguistic Composition – Canada (2001)

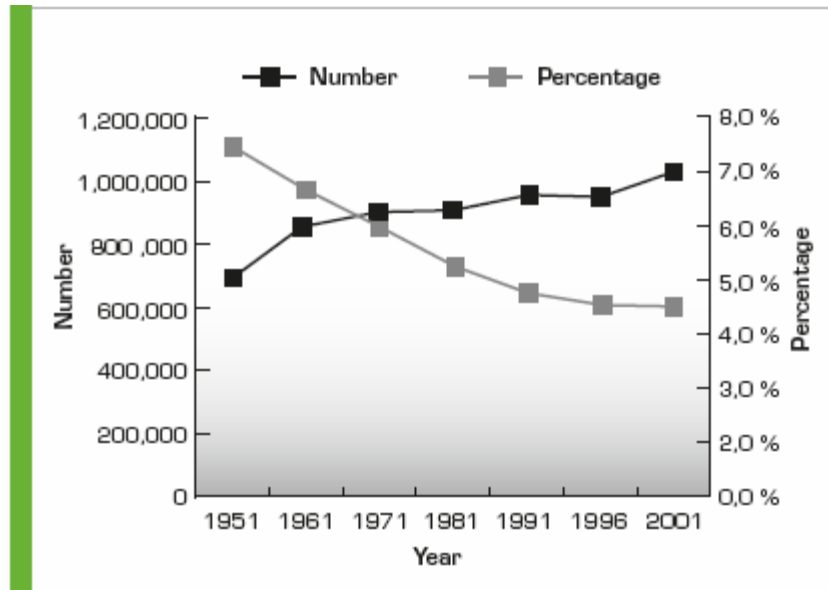
First Official Language Spoken	Number	%	Total Pop.
Anglophones	22 068 570	74.5	29 639 030
Francophones	7 136 985	24.1	29 639 030

Over half of all Francophones in minority communities live in Ontario (527,710), while over a quarter of them live in New Brunswick (238,450). These two provinces account for 78% of all minority Francophone communities in Canada, followed by British Columbia, which now ranks fourth among provinces for its number of Francophones (59,370 or 6.0%), Alberta (58,825 or 6.0%), Manitoba (43,380 or 4.4 %), Nova Scotia (33,765 or 3.4 %), Saskatchewan (16 550 or 1.7%), Prince Edward Island (5,275 or 0.5%), the three territories (2,215 or 0.2 %) and Newfoundland and Labrador (2,100 or 0.2 %).

Apart from New Brunswick, where Francophones account for a third of the province's population, they represent less than 5% of the population of the other provinces or territories.

Working from these basic figures and a comparison with recent census data, we note that:

- The number of Francophones outside Quebec has increased by about 260,000 in the last 50 years, but their share of Canada's total population has dropped from 7.3% in 1951 to 4.4% in 2001;



Legend: Number of native speakers of French, 2001, Canada less Quebec; Number, Percent, Year.
 Source: Louise Marmen and Jean-Pierre Corbeil: New Canadian Perspectives. Languages in Canada 2001 Census, 2004.

- From 1991 to 2001, the number of Francophones in urban centres increased much more than in rural areas;
- The Anglophone community in Quebec is aging more slowly on average than the Francophone community of Quebec.;
 - Among Anglophones outside Quebec, 22% were under the age of 15 in 2001 and 11% were over 65 years, which means there were twice as many young people as seniors;
 - Among Francophones outside Quebec, just 13% were under the age of 15 in 2001, while 15% were over 65, which means there were fewer young people than seniors;
 - In western Canada, these figures are especially worrisome since 53.4% of Fransaskois were over the age of 50 in 2001;
 - Despite the increase in the number of Francophones outside Quebec, the proportion of them who speak French at home has dropped steadily in the last 30 years;

- 56% of Canadians whose first language is French and who live outside Quebec do not have the desired level of literacy:⁶
 - This figure is similar for all Francophone communities in Canada, including in Quebec; in New Brunswick, however, it is 66%;
 - Among Anglophones in Quebec, this figure is 43%, compared to 39% for Anglophones in all other provinces.
- There has been significant progress in education levels among Francophones throughout Canada since 1971, which is reflected especially in the level of education among young Francophones. “The proportion of Francophones with a university degree exceeds that of Anglophones in every province outside Quebec. In Quebec, continuing a historical trend, Anglophones have higher levels of education than do Anglophones in other provinces.”⁷
- With respect to employment and income, it has been argued that Francophones fare well on the whole compared to the national average.⁸ It is argued that the disparities noted cannot be explained by language but, in some cases, by the higher proportion of Francophones living in rural areas, the greater challenges they face in obtaining a quality education, and the traditional employment sectors to which they are confined. All these hypotheses are tenuous however and are drawn into question by a recent study on income disparity between Anglophones and Francophones in New Brunswick, which demonstrates persistent gaps in income that cannot be explained by non-linguistic factors and leads to the conclusion that an individual’s linguistic group most certainly has an impact on income level.⁹

⁶ Jean-Pierre Corbeil, Statistics Canada, *Study: Literacy and the Official Language Minorities*, *The Daily*, December 19, 2006, pp. 6-8.

⁷ Jean-Pierre Corbeil, 30 Years of Education: Canada's Language Groups, *Canadian Social Trends*, Winter 2003, p. 14.

⁸ Jean-Guy Vienneau, Court Challenges Program, *Le développement et les communautés minoritaires francophones*, 1999.

⁹ Forgues, Éric, M. Beaudin and N. Béland, *L'évolution des disparités de revenu entre les francophones et les anglophones du Nouveau-Brunswick de 1970 à 2000*, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, Moncton, October 2006, p. 24.

- Over the last 50 years, the number of bilingual Canadians has increased slowly:
 - In the 2001 census, 18% of Canadians indicated that they could carry on a conversation in both official languages, compared to 12% in 1951;
 - 85% of Canadians whose first language is French and who live outside Quebec indicated they are bilingual, compared to 67% of Anglophones in Quebec;
 - Outside Quebec, the proportion of Canadians whose first language is English and who indicated they are bilingual has risen significantly, from 4% in 1971 to 7% in 2001;
 - Of the 5.2 million bilingual Canadians, 56% live in Quebec and 25% live in Ontario.

1.1.2. Francophone Communities

Newfoundland and Labrador

- In 2001, the Francophone community of Newfoundland and Labrador had 2,100 members whose first official language spoken was French, representing 0.4% of the province's total population, a share that has remained stable over the last thirty years;
- After a significant drop between 1971 and 1991, the number of Francophones speaking French at home has stabilized;
- The Francophone population is concentrated equally in St. John's, Labrador, and on the Port-au-Port peninsula, where Francophones account for over 15% of the population of the municipality of Cap-Saint-Georges;
- Over half the Francophones of Newfoundland and Labrador were born outside the province;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was 21% higher than the average provincial income and depends less on government transfer payments than the income of Anglophones does;

- In 2003-2004, 210 students were educated in French from kindergarten to Grade 12, at five schools, which indicates a drop in enrolment at English-language schools;
- The Francophones of Newfoundland and Labrador have a slightly higher level of education than the Anglophones;
- The province's Francophone community founded its first school in La Grand' Terre in 1984;
- In 1996, the provincial government recognized Francophones' right to school governance and in 1997, an agreement to this effect was signed between the federal government and the government of Newfoundland and Labrador;
- There is now an agreement between the federal and provincial governments to encourage the provincial government to offer services in French.

Prince Edward Island

- In 2001, the Francophone community of Prince Edward Island had 5,275 members whose first official language spoken is French, equal to 4.0% of province's total population, a share that has remained stable for twenty years;
- After a significant drop between 1971 and 1991, the number of Francophones speaking French at home has stabilized;
- The Francophone population is concentrated primarily on the tip to the west of Summerside, an area known as Évangéline, where Francophones are in the majority in some communities;
- The median age of those whose first language is French is 48 years, compared to 37 years among Anglophones;
- Three quarters of Prince Edward Island's Francophones were born in the province;
- Francophones' average income in 2001 was lower (\$23,277) than the national average, but comparable to the average income in the province, and 67% of it depended on government transfer payments;
- In 2003-2004, 724 students were educated in French from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 10 schools, indicating an increase in enrolment in English-language schools;

- The *Education Act* granted Francophones the right to manage their own schools in 1990;
- In 2000, the provincial government proclaimed the *French-Language Services Act*, which stipulates that provincial laws and regulations must now be issued in both official languages.

Nova Scotia

- In 2001, Nova Scotia's Francophone community had 33,765 members whose first official language spoken was French, or 3.8% of the province's total population, a share that has dropped somewhat in the last twenty years;
- After a significant drop between 1971 and 1996, the number of Francophones who speak French at home started to increase as of 1996;
- The Francophone population is concentrated equally in Cape Breton, in the Southwest and in Halifax, and represents a majority in Clare, Argyle, Inverness and Richmond;
- The median age of those whose first language is French is 46, compared to 39 for Anglophones;
- Close to three-quarters of Nova Scotia's Francophones were born in the province;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was slightly higher than the average provincial income, and government transfer payments accounted for a declining share of employment income;
- In 2003-2004, 4,151 students were educated in French from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 20 schools, indicating an increase in enrolment in English-language schools;
- In 1981, the provincial government passed legislation recognizing Francophones' right to be educated in French and the school board was established a few months later;
- A *French Language Services Act* was passed in October 2004, coming into force on December 31, 2006.

New Brunswick

- In 2001, New Brunswick's Francophone community had 238,450 members whose first official language spoken was French, which is 33.1% of the province's total population, a share that has remained stable for thirty years;
- New Brunswick is the only officially bilingual province in Canada;
- The proportion of Francophones who speak French at home has remained stable for thirty years;
- The Francophone population is spread out over the province, but there is a strong majority in the Madawaska region, whose urban centre is Edmundston, on the Acadian peninsula, whose urban centre is Bathurst, and in the Moncton/Dieppe region;
- The median age of those whose first language is French is 40 years, compared to 38 years among Anglophones, a smaller difference than in the other Atlantic provinces;
- 90% of New Brunswick's Francophones were born in the province;
- Francophones in New Brunswick have lower levels of education than Anglophones, and half of them have not completed high school;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was \$22,448, compared to \$24,091 for Anglophones;
- In 2003-2004, 35,050 students were educated in French from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 107 schools, indicating a drop in the proportion of students enrolled in English-language schools;
- The provincial government passed its Official Languages Act in 1969, which was revised in 2002. The Act Recognizing the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick, adopted in 1981, was incorporated into the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1993 following the defeat of the Charlottetown Accord.

Ontario

- In 2001, Ontario's Francophone community had 527,710 members whose first official language spoken was French, representing half of all Francophones in minority communities in Canada but just 4.7% of the province's population, a share that has been decreasing slowly but steadily over the last fifty years;

- The proportion of Francophones who speak French at home has dropped over the last thirty years;
- The Francophone population is spread out over the province but the greatest concentrations are in Eastern Ontario (Ottawa and Prescott-Russell and Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry counties), Northern Ontario (urban centres of Timmins and Sudbury), and the greater Toronto area and surrounding areas, where over 20% of Ontario's Francophones live, although they account for only 2% of the population;
- Two-thirds of Ontario's Francophones were born in the province;
- Francophones in Ontario have slightly less education than Anglophones, but the gap has shrunk significantly in the last thirty years;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was \$32,750, just \$100 lower than the average income of Anglophones;
- In 2003-2004, 89,367 students were educated in French from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 415 schools, indicating a slight drop in enrolment in English-language schools;
- The provincial government passed the *French Language Services Act* in 1986.

Manitoba

- In 2001, Manitoba's Francophone community had 43,380 members whose first official language spoken was French, or 3.9% of the province's total population, a share that has been dropping steadily for fifty years;
- The proportion of Francophones who speak French at home has declined over the last thirty years;
- Two-thirds of Francophones live in cities, primarily in the Winnipeg / St. Boniface area, and the remaining third live primarily in the rural municipalities around Winnipeg or in the south of the province, which means that the Franco-Manitoban community is by far the most geographically concentrated.
- 80% of Manitoba's Francophones were born in the province;
- The median age of those whose first language is French is 46 years, compared to 36 years for the population as a whole;

- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was \$27,329, which is about \$1,000 above the average provincial income;
- In 2003-2004, 5,171 students were educated in French, from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 29 schools, a stable share as compared to enrolment in English-language schools;
- Although the Constitution recognized linguistic duality in 1870, various legislative measures abolished it between 1890 and 1916, and the official status of French was not restored until 1979, following a Supreme Court decision;¹⁰
- Francophones in Manitoba obtained school governance rights in 1993;
- Manitoba has 15 officially bilingual municipalities, in addition to parts of the city of Winnipeg.

Saskatchewan

- In 2001, Saskatchewan's Francophone community had 16, 550 members whose first official language spoken was French, or 1.7% of the province's total population, a share that has dropped slowly but steadily for fifty years;
- The proportion of Francophones who speak French at home has been in decline for the last thirty years;
- Half of Francophones live in the cities of Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert, and the others are spread out over the province, with a significant proportion of Francophones in a few small communities, including Gravelbourg, Ponteix, Saint-Louis, Domremy and Zenon Park;
- 80% of Saskatchewan's Francophones were born in the province;
- The median age of those whose first language is French is very high at 52 years, compared to 36 years for the general population;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was \$27,888, about \$2,000 higher than the provincial average;

¹⁰ See Attorney General of *Manitoba v. Forest*, [1979] 2 S.C.R. 1032.

- In 2003-2004, 1,060 students were educated in French, from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 13 schools, which represents a slight increase as compared to enrolment in English-language schools;
- Although French language education was allowed under certain conditions when the province was founded in 1905, it was completely abolished between the world wars and was gradually reintroduced in the 1960s;
- The right to school governance was granted to Francophone parents in 1990.

Alberta

- In 2001, Alberta's Francophone community had 58,825 members whose first official language spoken was French, representing 2% of the province's population, a share that has been increasing since 1996;
- From July to September 2006, 2,900 more people left Quebec for Alberta than the opposite. Assuming they were predominantly Francophones, that would mean that, in just three months, Alberta's Francophone community grew by the equivalent of the total Francophone population of Newfoundland and Labrador.¹¹
- About two-thirds of Francophones live in the cities of Calgary, Edmonton and outlying areas while the rest are spread out over the province, with greater concentrations in a few regions such as Fehler and in a few other communities in the northeast and northwest of Alberta;
- Less than half of Alberta's Francophones were born in the province which, like the Francophone community in British Columbia, makes it a community with less traditional roots, but one that is also younger than other Francophone communities in western Canada;
- The median age of those whose first language is French is nevertheless higher (44 years) than that of 35 years for the province as a whole, although the gap is shrinking;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was \$32,058, slightly higher than the average income in the province;

¹¹ Statistics Canada, *Quarterly Demographic Estimates*, Table 6, p. 90.

- In 2003-2004, 3,619 were educated in French, from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 23 schools, a share that is growing relative to enrolment in English-language schools;
- The province granted Francophones school governance rights in 1993.

British Columbia

- In 2001, British Columbia's Francophone community had 59,370 members whose first official language spoken was French, or 1.5% of the total population, as compared to 1.2% in 1971;
- Very few Francophones in British Columbia were born in the province, about 10%, but there appears to be an increase in French being spoken at home, no doubt due to an increase in Francophone immigration;
- A bit less than half of Francophones live in the metropolitan Vancouver area, 10% in the Victoria region, and the others are spread out over the province, never exceeding 5% of the local population in 2001;
- The median age of those whose first language is French is higher at 46 years than that of 38 years for the province as a whole;
- The average income for Francophones in 2001 was \$26,293, on par with the average provincial income;
- In 2003-2004, 3,147 students were educated in French, from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 40 schools, an increase in enrolment compared to English-language schools;
- British Columbia has had French-language education program since 1977 and the provincial government granted Francophone school governance throughout the province in 1999.

Yukon

- In 2001, Yukon's Francophone community had 885 members whose first official language spoken was French, or 3.1% of the total population, a share that has increased over the past twenty-five years;
- The vast majority of Francophones are in Whitehorse and surrounding areas;
- Less than 20% of Francophones were born in the territory;

- The median age of those whose first language is French is higher at 42 years than the that of 36 years for the general population;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was \$31,541, on par with the average income for the territory;
- In 2003-2004, 119 students were educated in French from kindergarten to Grade 12 at Émilie-Tremblay School, a stable share compared to enrolment in English-language schools;
- Yukon's *Official Languages Act* was passed in 1988 and various agreements between Yukon and the federal government provide a framework for the delivery of services to Francophones.

Northwest Territories

- In 2001, the Francophone community of the Northwest Territories had 915 members whose first official language spoken was French, or 2.5% of the total population, a share that has grown since 1996 after a number of years of decline;
- Two-thirds of Francophones live in Yellowknife and surrounding areas and the remainder live throughout this huge territory;
- Less than 20% of Francophones were born in the territory;
- The median age of those whose first language is French is higher at 40 years than that of 30 years for the general population;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was high at \$44,056, \$9000 above the average for the territory;
- In 2003-2004, 128 students were educated in French from kindergarten to Grade 12 at Allain-Saint-Cyr school in Yellowknife and at École Boréale in Hay River, a stable share as compared to enrolment at English-language schools;
- The first French-language education program dates back to 1989 and the first all-French school was built in 1999.

Nunavut

- In 2001, Nunavut's Francophone community had 415 members whose first official language spoken was French, representing 1.6% of the territory's total population; any changes in that share will not be known until the 2006 census results are published;
- Less than 10% of Francophones were born in the territory;
- The median age of those whose first official language is French is higher at 39 years than that of the general population (30 years), but lower than in most Francophone communities in Canada;
- The average income of Francophones in 2001 was high at \$47,534, \$20,000 higher than the average income for the territory;
- In 2003-2004, 38 students were educated in French from kindergarten to Grade 12 at Trois-Soleils school, in Iqaluit;
- The first French-language education program dates back to 1989 and the first all-French school was built in 1999.

1.1.3. Quebec's Anglophone Community

- In 2001, Quebec's Anglophone community had 918,955 members whose first official language spoken was English, or 12.9% of the province's total population, a share that has remained stable over the last thirty years;
- The number of native speakers of English in Quebec (591,379) has been in decline for fifty years, and immigrants account for an increasingly large share of Quebec's Anglophone community, although the proportion of immigrants whose first language is English has clearly decreased over the past thirty years;
- It is estimated that about 225,000 more native speakers of English left Quebec for other provinces between 1971 and 2001 than vice versa;
- Three quarters of Quebec's Anglophones live in the Montreal area, and the Anglophones in the Eastern Townships now account for just 6% of the region's population, a significant drop over the last 30 years;
- Quebec's Anglophone community is aging more slowly on average than the Francophone community;
- The number of Anglophones who speak English at home is decreasing;

- The average income of Anglophones in 2001 was \$44,572, compared to \$38,669 for Francophones in Quebec;
- In 2003-2004, 108,160 students were educated in English from kindergarten to Grade 12 at 350 schools in nine school boards;
- Quebec's Anglophone community has the highest level of education in Canada;
- Since 1998, Quebec's school boards have been divided along linguistic lines: English-language and French-language.

1.2. THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES AND THE CONSTITUTION

What is commonly known as Canada's Constitution is a series of legal documents and established conventions — not necessarily written — that together make up the country's fundamental law, which guides the courts and forms the basis for the interpretation of all other legislation. Among the thirty or so pieces of constitutional legislation passed since Confederation,¹² two are especially important: the *Constitution Act, 1867*, formerly known as the *British North America Act*, and the *Constitution Act, 1982*, which includes the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Canada's two official languages were first recognized in the *Constitution Act, 1867*. Section 133 states:

Either the English or the French Language may be used by any Person in the Debates of the Houses of the Parliament of Canada and of the Houses of the Legislature of Quebec; and both those Languages shall be used in the respective Records and Journals of those Houses; and either of those Languages may be used by any Person or in any Pleading or Process in or issuing from any Court of Canada established under this Act, and in or from all or any of the Courts of Quebec.

The Acts of the Parliament of Canada and of the Legislature of Quebec shall be printed and published in both those Languages.¹³

In the *Constitution Act, 1982*, linguistic issues are addressed in sections 16 to 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

¹² For a list of key constitutional legislation since Confederation, see the Schedule to the Constitution Act, 1982 — Modernization of the Constitution.

¹³ A provision similar to the one applicable to Quebec was passed for Manitoba in section 23 of the *Manitoba Act, 1870*, and for New Brunswick with the addition in 1993 of sections 17 to 19 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Sections 16 to 19 strengthen prior constitutional provisions and incorporate the key elements of the *Official Languages Act* of 1969 (see section 1.3) into the Constitution. They make English and French the “official languages of Canada” and extend their equality of status and equal rights and privileges not only to the country’s legislatures, courts and legislation, but also to the institutions of the “government of Canada.” They also extend these provisions to the government of New Brunswick and since 1993, include the recognition of the equality of rights and privileges of English and French linguistic communities in the province, including their right to culturally distinct educational institutions.

Section 20 stipulates that the public has the right to communicate with, and to receive available services from, any head or central office of an institution of the Parliament or Government of Canada in English or French. The public has the same right with respect to any other office of any such institution where “there is a significant demand” or where “due to the nature of the office, it is reasonable that communications with and services from that office be available in both English and French.” Paragraph 2 of section 20 provides that any member of the public in New Brunswick has the right to communicate with, and to receive available services from, any office of an institution of the legislature or government of New Brunswick in English or French.

Sections 16 to 20 were subsequently clarified and strengthened by comparable provisions of the *Official Languages Act* of 1988.

Sections 21 and 22 are designed to harmonize the Charter with other constitutional provisions as to the issues addressed in the above language-related sections.

Section 23 pertains to minority-language education rights. It begins as follows:

(1) Citizens of Canada:

- a) whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside, or
- b) who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province, have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province

Pursuant to section 59 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, subsection (1)a) of this section is not applicable to Quebec because that province's legislature must first proclaim its validity, which it has yet to do. As a result, it applies only to Francophone minorities outside Quebec.

Subsection (2) of section 23 provides that citizens of Canada of whom any child has received primary or secondary school instruction in English or French in Canada, have the right to have all their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the same language.

The right established in subsections (1) and (2) is however subject to subsection (3), which stipulates that this right applies wherever in the province the number of children of citizens who have this right is sufficient to warrant publicly funded minority language education. This includes public funding for minority language educational facilities, where numbers warrant.

In contrast to sections 16 to 20, the provisions of section 23 are not repeated in the *Official Languages Act* of 1988 since education falls primarily under provincial jurisdiction. As a result, its provisions do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Official Languages. The courts are instead responsible for determining its application, especially as regards the responsibilities of provincial governments towards official language minority communities. A number of cases relating to this section have set precedents as cases involving legal aspects of the official languages on which the courts had not yet ruled. One of the most important of these was *Mahé v. Alberta* in 1990,¹⁴ in which the Supreme Court established an approximate formula to calculate the number of children justifying a separate educational institution. This decision also established school governance rights for the parents of children receiving this minority-language education. This decision has been decisive in the recent development of Francophone communities outside Quebec, as were the subsequent decisions in *Beaulac* (1999) and *Arsenault-Cameron* (2000). The Supreme Court reaffirmed among other things that "language rights must, in all cases, be interpreted purposively, in a manner consistent with the preservation and development of official language communities in Canada."¹⁵

1.3. THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*

The federal government enacted the first *Official Languages Act* in July 1969, following the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. In 1982, the entrenchment of linguistic rights in the Constitution through the *Canadian Charter of Rights*

¹⁴ *Mahé v. Alberta*, (1990) 1 S.C.R. 342 available online at: http://www.lexum.umontreal.ca/csc-scc/en/pub/1990/vol1/html/1990rcs1_0342.html.

¹⁵ *R. v. Beaulac*, [1999] 1 S.C.R. 768.

and *Freedoms* extended the scope of linguistic rights and led to the amendment of the *Official Languages Act* in September 1988.

The purpose of the *Official Languages Act* of 1988 is to:

- a) ensure respect for English and French as the official languages of Canada and ensure equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all federal institutions, in particular with respect to their use in parliamentary proceedings, in legislative and other instruments, in the administration of justice, in communicating with or providing services to the public and in carrying out the work of federal institutions;
- b) support the development of English and French linguistic minority communities and generally advance the equality of status and use of the English and French languages within Canadian society; and
- c) set out the powers, duties and functions of federal institutions with respect to the official languages of Canada.¹⁶

The Act is divided into fourteen parts, and parts I to V take precedence over all other federal legislation and regulations, except for the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. This is one reason why it is known as a quasi-constitutional statute.

Parts I to III of the Act provide greater detail on the provisions of sections 16 to 19 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as to the proceedings of Parliament (Part I), legislative instruments (Part II) and the administration of justice (Part III).

Part IV of the Act pertains to communications with the public and the provision of services, and provides greater detail on the provisions of section 20 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Pursuant to this part, the public has the right to communicate with and receive services in either official language from the head or central office of federal departments and agencies where a) there is “significant demand” and b) where it is warranted by the “nature of the office,” and wherever services are provided to the travelling public where “demand warrants.” The *Official Languages Regulations* adopted in December 1991 defined the terms “nature of office” and “significant demand.”

Part V pertains to the language of work for employees of federal institutions in regions designated bilingual. These regions are identified by Treasury Board and are located in Quebec, New Brunswick and Ontario. In regions not designated bilingual,

¹⁶ Official Languages Act, Section 2.

members of the official language minority must receive comparable treatment to that received by the other linguistic group where the situation is reversed. The application of Part V is not the subject of regulations, but its various provisions have been fleshed out in Treasury Board guidelines.

Part VI sets out the government's commitment to ensuring that Anglophones and Francophones have equal opportunities for employment and advancement in federal institutions, based on their demographic weight, but subject to certain conditions. It is primarily this part that is used to support the demands of Quebec's Anglophone community, which is demographically under-represented in the federal public service in Quebec.

Part VII of the Act is certainly the cornerstone for the vitality of official language minority communities. Not included in the *Official Languages Act* of 1969, it sets out the federal government's commitment to enhancing the vitality of linguistic minorities, supporting their development and fostering the full recognition and use of English and French in Canadian society.

Since Bill S-3 was passed in November 2005, federal institutions are now required to take "positive measures" to follow through on this commitment, and the provisions of Part VII are now subject to legal remedy. Prior to this, Part VII was merely declaratory, meaning that it did not include an obligation to act and did not create rights subject to recognition by the courts. All institutions subject to the Act must now re-evaluate their actions as regards the two aspects of the federal commitment set out in Part VII: supporting the official language minority communities and fostering linguistic duality.

The Department of Canadian Heritage is responsible for coordinating the efforts of all federal institutions pursuant to Part VII. In this regard, the minister submits an annual report to Parliament on matters relating to her official languages mandate.

Part VIII describes Treasury Board's responsibilities pursuant to Parts IV to VI of the Act. Part IX describes the powers of the Commissioner of Official Languages, which are to enforce the Act within federal institutions and uphold the rights of official language minorities, as well as promote linguistic duality and the equality of status of English and French in Canadian society. Part X sets forth the court remedy available, while Parts XI to XIV pertain to general aspects, related amendments made by the Act, as well as transitional provisions, and repeal and coming into force provisions.

1.4. ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The *Action Plan for Official Languages* announced in March 2003 provided for an injection of over \$751 million over five years in three key areas: education (\$381.5 million), community development (\$269.3 million) and the public service (\$64.6 million). Specific measures were also included for the language industries (\$20 million) and for the

implementation of the Accountability Framework applicable to designated federal institutions (\$16 million). An Enabling Fund for human resources development and community economic development was added to the Action Plan in March 2005, adding \$36 million over three years to the total investments under the Plan.

The Action Plan is the culmination of a process that began in 2001, based on three considerations:

- 1) Linguistic duality is a fundamental aspect of Canadian identity. Together with its openness to global cultural diversity, Canada has maintained this commitment to its linguistic roots, since over 98% of residents indicate they speak one of the official languages. Official-language minority communities have contributed a great deal to maintaining this aspect of Canadian identity. The federal government therefore has a responsibility to these communities that have tirelessly cultivated the country's cultural roots.
- 2) Linguistic duality is a competitive advantage for Canada internationally. Far from creating "two solitudes," our duality offers Canadians a window on linguistic plurality that is unique in the American continent, making it easier to forge ties with a multilingual Europe and encouraging us to help the Aboriginal peoples of Canada preserve their linguistic heritage. Moreover, learning a second language is often a springboard to learning a third and fourth language.
- 3) Since the first official languages policy was established in the late 1960s, there have been significant changes in individual and community ways of life. The cosmopolitan character of Canada's large urban centres places official language minorities in competition with other cultural communities with respect to services in their language. At the same time however, minority Francophone communities are now in a much better position to assert their rights, and their institutions are much more numerous and stronger. Youth retention, low birth rates and exogamous marriages do however weaken the social fabric of these communities. Finally, the relatively strong state of public finances makes it easier to consider long-term support for the development of these communities.

Based on these considerations, the Government of Canada announced in April 2001 the creation of a committee of ministers, chaired by the Honourable Stéphane Dion, to “consider strong new measures that will continue to ensure the vitality of minority official-language communities and ensure that Canada’s official languages are better reflected in the culture of the federal public service.”¹⁷

To achieve this, the Action Plan establishes:

- 1) the Accountability and Coordination Framework setting out and reminding federal officials of their respective responsibilities, while establishing a horizontal coordination process for actions stemming from the multiple elements of Official Languages policy;
- 2) three key areas for action:
 - a) education, including both minority language education, pursuant to section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and second-language instruction, in order to promote linguistic duality;
 - b) community development, which seeks to foster better access to public services in health care, early childhood development and justice, and create economic development tools;
 - c) the public service, whereby the federal government is to set an example by enhancing the provision of federal services in both official languages, the participation of English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians in federal institutions and the use of the official languages at work; and
- 3) greater support for the development of language industries in order to address the shortage of specialized language training and translation instructors and by expanding the range of careers that foster the language skills required in the federal public service.
- 4) In March 2005, the Government of Canada added to the Action Plan an Enabling Fund for official language communities, which rounds out existing programs that support human resources development and community economic development.

¹⁷ Prime Minister gives Minister Dion additional responsibilities in the area of official languages, Press Release, April 25, 2001.

1.4.1. Accountability and Coordination Framework

This framework is intended to make federal institutions more aware of their obligations under the *Official Languages Act*, to provide for ongoing consultation with official language communities and to establish an interdepartmental coordination mechanism on official languages. It includes 45 sections, the first 30 of which clearly spell out the responsibilities of federal institutions, especially those of the Department of Canadian Heritage, which is responsible for coordinating all measures taken by federal institutions to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities (Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*), and those of Treasury Board, which is responsible for services to the public (Part IV), language of work (Part V) and the equitable participation of English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians in the federal public service (Part VI).

These sections spell out federal institutions' current responsibilities. The framework goes one step further by adding new responsibilities under five categories:

- 1) An official languages perspective in the development of all new initiatives by federal institutions. Section 7 of the Framework stipulates that "all federal institutions are required to analyse the impact of proposals contained in memoranda to Cabinet on the language rights of Canadians and federal public servants."¹⁸
- 2) The implementation by each federal institution of a systematic process for raising employee awareness, evaluating impact on linguistic duality and community development, consulting interested publics, "especially representatives of official language minority communities, in connection with the development or implementation of policies or programs,"¹⁹ and the evaluation of results.
- 3) The establishment of a horizontal coordination mechanism focussed on the minister responsible for official languages. This minister must now ensure that federal institutions fulfill their responsibilities under the *Official Languages Act* and the Action

¹⁸ The Next Act. New Momentum for Canada's Linguistic Duality. Action Plan for Official Languages, Appendix 1, Accountability and Coordination Framework, Section 7, p. 68.F

¹⁹ Idem, Section 17, p. 70.

Plan. This monitoring role will be supported by the Committee of Deputy Ministers on Official Languages and a secretariat that is part of the Privy Council Office.²⁰

- 4) A larger evaluation role for the Department of Justice to allow it to examine the legal implications for official languages of initiatives by federal institutions.
- 5) The establishment of an evaluation process for measures taken under the Action Plan, including the preparation of a midterm report and an overall evaluation at the end of the implementation period.

The Action Plan includes a budget of \$13.5 million allocated over five years to the Privy Council Office for the overall coordination of the plan. In February 2006, this budget was transferred to the Department of Canadian Heritage.

1.4.2. Education

Over half of the \$751 million investment set out in the Action Plan is earmarked for education, with the following objectives:

- Increase the proportion of rights holders enrolled in French-language schools from 68% in 2003 to 80% in 2013;
- Support for French-language instruction for Anglophones in Quebec, and support to English-language schools outside Montreal;
- Increase the proportion of high school graduates with a working knowledge of their second official language from 24% in 2003 to 50% in 2013;
- Increase the number of participants in summer language bursary and language monitor programs;
- Promote research.

²⁰ In February 2006, these responsibilities were transferred to the Department of Canadian Heritage, along with the Official Languages Secretariat, which performed these roles. See the "Order Transferring from Privy Council Office to the Department of Canadian Heritage the Control and Supervision of the Official Languages Secretariat."

In order to achieve these ambitious objectives, the Action Plan includes a significant increase in funding for federal-provincial-territorial agreements: \$209 million over five years for existing minority-language education programs and \$137 million over five years for second-language instruction programs. These agreements represent an estimate of the additional costs incurred by each province and territory in order to offer minority-language education and second-language instruction, as compared to what it would cost for the same number of students if they were taught in the majority language. The Action Plan also includes a \$35.5 million increase for the official language monitor and summer bursary programs.

1.4.3. Community Development

In order to foster the vitality of official language minority communities, the Action Plan identifies seven key areas of activity: early childhood development, health services, justice, immigration, economic development, partnership with the provinces and territories and support for community life.

With respect to early childhood development (\$22 million over five years), three commitments were made:

- \$7.4 million for literacy development services;
- \$10.8 million for research in the form of pilot projects to evaluate how French-language child care services influence the cultural and linguistic development of young children;
- \$3.8 million in support of national organizations for the sharing of knowledge on early childhood development in official language minority communities.

With respect to health services, the Action Plan provides for a total investment of \$119 million broken down as follows:

- \$14 million for networking to help establish regional networks linking health care professionals, institution managers, local elected officials, teachers and community representatives;
- \$75 million for workforce training, recruitment and retention, including \$63 M administered by the *Consortium national de formation en santé pancanadien*, whose objective is to train 1000 new Francophone health professionals for minorities communities by 2008;

- \$30 million, including \$10 million for Quebec's Anglophone community, for the *Fonds pour l'adaptation des soins de santé primaires (Entente Santé 2000)*, which represents a substantial increase in funding for the federal-provincial agreement that was concluded in 2000 and expired in 2006.

With respect to justice, the Action Plan provides \$45.5 million for two groups of initiatives:

- \$27 million for upholding the legal obligations stemming from the implementation of the *Legislative Instruments Re-Enactment Act*²¹ and *Contraventions Act* issues;²²
- \$18.5 million for targeted measures to improve access to justice in both official languages, including funding for federal-provincial-territorial initiatives, funding for associations of French-speaking jurists, the creation of a community consultation mechanism, and the development of training tools for counsel employed with the Department of Justice.

With respect to immigration, the Action Plan provides \$9 million over five years, administered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, which previously had no stable funding for official language minority communities. This funding is earmarked for market studies and the production of promotional material to be used abroad and to support information centres for Francophone immigrants and French correspondence courses.

With respect to economic development, the Action Plan includes:

- \$13 million over five years for the *Francommunautés virtuelles* programs, which seeks to increase online services in French that bring together Francophone and Acadian communities;
- \$7.3 million over five years from the existing budgets of Human Resources Development for internships relating to economic development, as well as \$2 M in additional funding allocated to regional development agencies;
- \$10 million over five years for pilot projects to develop technology infrastructure in order to enhance the services offered;
- \$8 million over five years to improve the information and reference services offered by Human Resources Development, Industry Canada and

²¹ Given Royal Assent in June 2002, this act is intended to ensure the constitutionality of legislative provisions issued in English only prior to the *Official Languages Act* of 1969.

²² After the RCMP issued French-only tickets in the part of the National Capital Region located in Quebec, the Federal Court in a decision in 2001 called for measures to address these shortcomings in the act.

regional development agencies, within existing structures, including the hiring of bilingual counsellors.

As to partnership with the provinces and territories, the Action Plan includes an increase in the contribution by Canadian Heritage to federal-provincial-territorial agreements for official language minority services. These agreements encourage and help provincial and territorial governments improve their services to the official language minority community.

With respect to support for community life, the Action Plan includes an additional investment of \$19 million over five years to fund projects submitted to Canadian Heritage that are likely to help communities, especially for community centres, culture and the media.

1.4.4. Federal Public Service

With planned investments of \$64.6 million over five years, the revitalization of linguistic duality in the federal public service is a key element of the *Action Plan for Official Languages*. While this element of the plan will be addressed indirectly in this study, let us recall its main features:

- \$14 million for Treasury Board investments to support initiatives by other departments and agencies, including the creation of a Regional Partnership Fund to adapt federal initiatives locally, and an Official Languages Innovation Fund to support the services offered in both official languages and a corresponding workplace;
- \$12 million increase to the budgets of the Official Languages Branch of Treasury Board Secretariat in order to develop compliance monitoring mechanisms for federal institutions;
- \$38.6 million to the Public Service Commission to increase bilingual capacity in the public service by encouraging the hiring of candidates who are already bilingual, offering training to those who are not and fostering the retention and development of language skills.

1.4.5. Language Industries

In an attempt to counter the fragmentation and lack of visibility of these industries, to foster the recruitment of a sufficient number of replacement workers and to support research, the Action Plan includes a \$20 million investment allocated as follows:

- \$5 million for the establishment of a representative organization and to fund its coordination activities;

- \$5 million for market promotion and branding initiatives in Canada and internationally, to increase visibility for the industries and attract new talent;
- \$10 million for the establishment of a research centre on language industries.

1.4.6. Enabling Fund

The Enabling Fund was created in March 2005 to boost the work of the *Réseaux de développement économiques et d'employabilité* (RDÉE) and the Community Economic Development and Employability Committees (CEDEC), following the mandate review of the Official Language Minority Communities Support Fund, and in order to better coordinate requests for assistance submitted to various federal institutions. This Fund has annual funding of \$12 million for the last three years of the Action Plan.

As stated above, the purpose of the Action Plan was twofold: to foster the vitality of official language minority communities and to more strongly root linguistic duality in the federal public service. This study will focus on assessing progress on the first of these two broad objectives in order to consider what action should be taken when the Action Plan expires at the end of the fiscal year ending on March 31, 2008.

1.5. OFFICIAL LANGUAGES PROGRAMS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

The Minister of Canadian Heritage encourages and promotes the coordination and implementation by federal institutions of the federal government's commitment to enhancing the vitality and supporting the development of official language minority communities, and fostering the full recognition and use of English and French in Canadian society.

As part of this mandate, pursuant to Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, the Minister of Canadian Heritage²³ takes measures to advance the equality of status of English and French in Canadian society, including measures to:

- a) Enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and support and assist their development;

²³ In February 2006, the Minister of Canadian Heritage delegated to the Minister responsible for Official Languages, Josée Verner, her responsibilities pursuant to Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*.

- b) encourage and support the learning of English and French in Canada;
- c) foster an acceptance and appreciation of both English and French by members of the public;
- d) encourage and assist provincial governments to support the development of English and French linguistic minority communities generally and, in particular, to offer provincial and municipal services in both English and French and to provide opportunities for members of English or French linguistic minority communities to be educated in their own language;
- e) encourage and assist provincial governments to provide opportunities for everyone in Canada to learn both English and French;
- f) encourage and cooperate with the business community, labour organizations, voluntary organizations and other organizations or institutions to provide services in both English and French and to foster the recognition and use of those languages;
- g) encourage and assist organizations and institutions to project the bilingual character of Canada in their activities in Canada or elsewhere; and
- h) with the approval of the Governor in Council, enter into agreements or arrangements that recognize and advance the bilingual character of Canada with the governments of foreign states.
- i) ensure public consultation on the development of policies and review of programs relating to the advancement and the equality of status and use of English and French in Canadian society.²⁴

²⁴ Part VII of the Official Languages Act.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage tables an annual report in Parliament on matters relating to her official languages mandate. The total expenditures of the Official Languages Support Programs Branch for fiscal year 2005-2006 were \$341,478,897, as compared to \$300,263,331 in 2004-2005, and \$264,257,559 in 2003-2004.²⁵

These expenditures are allocated to two main programs:

- The Development of Official-Language Communities program (\$232 M),²⁶ has two components:
 - the Community Life component (\$52.9 M), which includes the following sub-components:
 - Cooperation with the Community Sector (\$37.4 M) includes grants and contributions to community organizations as well as Strategic Fund expenditures, a discretionary fund with an annual value of approximately \$5 million, from which the Department funds major projects as well as interregional or nationwide projects;
 - Intergovernmental Cooperation on Minority-Language Services (\$14.3 M): includes federal-provincial-territorial agreements on improving provincial, territorial and municipal services in the minority language;
 - Interdepartmental Partnership with Official-Language Communities (IPOLC) (\$3.9 M):²⁷ allows Canadian Heritage to transfer funding to another federal department or agency whose program can increase the vitality of official-language minority communities;
 - Young Canada Works (minority) (\$1.1 M): offers students summer employment in their field of study in an official-language minority community where they can use their first official language;
 - and the Minority-Language Education component (\$179.4 M), which includes two subcomponents:

²⁵ Data from *Public Accounts of Canada*. This data may vary slightly from that presented by the Department of Canadian Heritage in its annual reports on official languages.

²⁶ Department of Canadian Heritage, 2005-2006 estimations.

²⁷ Data for 2004-2005. There were no transfer payments in 2005-2006 because no Supplementary Estimates were passed.

- Intergovernmental Cooperation (\$178.1 M): includes federal-provincial-territorial agreements, concluded directly with the provinces and territories or through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) (\$175.1 M), as well as development bursaries and monitor positions for young Francophones from minority communities (\$3.0 M);
 - Cooperation with the Non-Governmental Sector (\$1.2 M): supports projects contributing to an increase in the production and dissemination of knowledge, methods and tools relating to minority-language education.
- The Enhancement of Official Languages program (\$109.2 M), also has two components:
 - Promotion of Linguistic Duality (\$4.6 M) has two sub-components:
 - Support for Linguistic Duality (Appreciation and Rapprochement) (\$4.1 M) includes Collaboration in Promotion (\$3.3 M), which supports Canadian non-profit organizations seeking primarily to promote linguistic duality in Canada, as well as Support for Innovation (\$0.8 M), which supports projects enhancing the visibility of Canada's linguistic duality;
 - Cooperation with Voluntary Sector (Bilingual Capability) (\$0.5 M), which refers primarily to Support for Interpretation and Translation for organizations wishing to encourage both official languages at public events and increase the number of documents available in both official languages, as well as the residual component of Support for Innovation, which can be used to promote services in both official languages.
 - Second-Language Learning (\$104.5 M) has two sub-components:
 - Intergovernmental Cooperation (\$101.6 M): includes federal-provincial-territorial agreements concluded directly with the provinces or territories or through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) (\$80.4 M), as well as Complementary Support for Language Learning, which includes second-language immersion bursaries and monitor positions (\$21.2 M);
 - Cooperation with Non-Governmental Sector (\$0.5 M): supports projects contributing to an increase in the production and dissemination of knowledge, methods and tools relating to second-language teaching;

- Young Canada Works (Second Language or Bilingualism) (\$2.4 M): offers students summer employment in their field of study in their second official language and internships to build advanced skills to make the transition to Canada's language-based industries.

1.6. BRIEF ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL DATA

- Expenditures for all programs administered by Canadian Heritage have increased by about 25% over the last three years, rising from \$272.94 million in 2002-2003 to \$341.48 million in 2005-2006, for an increase of \$68.5 million. This increase is entirely attributable to the increased investment in fiscal years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006, following a drop in 2003-2004.
- Nearly \$40 million of this \$68.5 million increase went to Second Language Learning, with expenditures increasing 61% over the last three fiscal years. By contrast, expenditures on Minority Language Education increased by 21% over the same period, by \$31.2 million. There was a slight decrease in investment in the Promotion of Linguistic Duality component over the last three fiscal years, while funding for the Community Life component fell by \$2 million over the same period, for a 3.6% decrease.
- When the *Action Plan for Official Languages* was launched, \$346 million was allocated to be spent over five years on Minority Language Education and Second Language Learning, under federal-provincial/territorial agreements for education. This was in addition to the \$943 million already allocated under regular programs, for a total of \$1.289 billion over five years. After three fiscal years, \$649.2 million has been spent, including \$158.0 million from the amount allocated under the Action Plan. As to the agreements for education, adding the funding from regular programs and the investments from the Action Plan, that leaves \$639.9 million to be spent in fiscal years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, including \$188.0 million from the amount specifically allocated under the Action Plan. Yet the Minister for the Francophonie and Official Languages announced that \$514.0 million will be spent over the last two fiscal years covered by the Action Plan, which would maintain current spending levels.²⁸ A shortfall of about \$125.9 million (\$639.9 - \$514.0 million) should therefore be expected in the amount spent on education at the end of the five-year

²⁸ See the statements by the Honourable Josée Verner, Minister for the Francophonie and Official Languages, Evidence, June 8, 2006, 9:25 a.m. These statements indicate the maintenance of the commitments signed on November 3, 2005, under the Protocol for Agreements on Minority-Language Education and Second Language Instruction, 2005-2006 to 2008-2009, signed by the Government of Canada and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.

Action Plan. This is equivalent to 36.4% of the total budget to be spent on education under the Action Plan.

- By the end of the five years covered by the Action Plan, on March 31, 2008, if 2005-2006 spending levels are maintained, it is anticipated that about \$115 million less than planned will have been spent under federal-provincial-territorial agreements for education in French-language schools outside Quebec. For second language instruction programs, the shortfall is expected to be about \$10 million.
- On the whole, after a slow start in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, investments under the Action Plan appeared to be moving forward as of fiscal year 2005-2006. Yet further to the investments under the Action Plan, the investment in ongoing programs dropped significantly (by 26%) for the Minority Language Education component, with \$37.5 million less in 2005-2006 than in 2002-2003, dropped slightly for the Community Life component, while there was a significant increase (26% or \$11.3M) in the amount allocated to second-language learning agreements during the same period.

CANADIAN HERITAGE

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES SUPPORT PROGRAMS	\$272,939,386	\$264,535,172	\$300,337,722	\$341,470,899
Data from Public Accounts	\$267,474,698	\$264,257,559	\$300,263,331	\$341,478,897
Canadian Identity Program Grants				
Contributions				
Organizations	\$5,975,246	\$5,933,186		
Programs	\$209,077,420	\$190,143,422		
Organizations	\$52,422,032	\$68,180,951		
DEVELOPMENT OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES	\$203,069,399	\$192,978,558	\$214,473,063	\$232,287,348
Data from Public Accounts			\$209,311,144	\$231,137,454
Community Development and Capacity Building Program Grants			\$4,595,787	\$4,972,337
Contributions			\$204,715,357	\$226,165,117
COMMUNITY LIFE COMPONENT	\$54,883,938	\$57,398,442	\$51,953,917	\$52,894,007
Cooperation with Community Sector / Community Support	\$34,746,648	\$37,031,435	\$33,383,847	\$37,437,226
Regular program	\$28,232,251	\$25,347,365	\$24,435,793	\$28,541,417
Strategic Fund	\$6,514,397	\$9,547,572	\$6,129,677	\$4,845,809
Action Plan for Official Languages		\$2,136,498	\$2,818,377	\$4,050,000
Administration of Justice in Both Official Languages	\$649,000			
FPT agreements on minority language services	\$13,171,426	\$14,151,205	\$13,339,560	\$14,306,888
Regular program	\$13,171,426	\$13,462,543	\$11,572,718	\$11,330,808
Action Plan for Official Languages		\$688,662	\$1,766,842	\$2,976,080
Interdepartmental Partnership with Official Language Communities	\$6,316,864	\$5,321,876	\$3,906,677	\$-
Young Canada Works (minority)		\$893,926	\$1,323,833	\$1,149,893

MINORITY LANGUAGE EDUCATION COMPONENT	\$148,185,461	\$135,580,116	\$162,519,146	\$179,393,341
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FPT agreements on minority language education	\$144,819,060	\$132,538,505	\$159,443,027	\$175,139,639
Regular program	\$144,819,060	\$122,763,505	\$116,238,066	\$107,365,771
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$9,775,000	\$43,204,961	\$67,773,868
Complementary Support for Language Learning	\$2,257,351	\$2,278,568	\$2,285,619	\$3,063,702
Regular program		\$2,190,478	\$1,662,819	\$2,361,702
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$88,090	\$622,800	\$702,000
Summer Bursaries for Francophones Outside Quebec	\$515,226			
Official Language Monitors (minority)	\$1,742,125			
Cooperation with Non-Governmental Sector		\$763,043	\$790,500	\$1,190,000
Language training and development program	\$1,109,050			

ENHANCEMENT OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES	\$69,869,987	\$71,556,614	\$85,864,659	\$109,183,551
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Data from Public Accounts			\$90,952,187	\$110,341,443
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Promotion of Inter-cultural Understanding Program				
Subventions			\$468,984	\$353,467
Contributions			\$90,483,203	\$106,467,119
Participation in Community and Civic Life Program				
Contributions			\$ -	\$3,520,857

PROMOTION OF LINGUISTIC DUALITY COMPONENT	\$4,998,029	\$5,311,528	\$4,544,399	\$4,629,739
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Support for Linguistic Duality (Appreciation and Rapprochement)	\$3,977,161	\$4,689,927	\$4,026,005	\$4,105,682
(Collaboration in Promotion)		\$3,579,493	\$3,426,505	\$3,291,969
(Support for Innovation)		\$1,110,434	\$599,500	\$813,713
Cooperation with Voluntary Sector (Bilingual Capacity)	\$1,020,868	\$621,601	\$518,394	\$524,057
(Support for Interpretation and Translation)		\$498,726	\$468,984	\$353,467
(Support for Innovation)		\$122,875	\$49,410	\$170,590

SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING COMPONENT	\$64,871,958	\$66,245,086	\$81,320,260	\$104,553,812
FPT agreements on second-language learning	\$43,796,843	\$45,818,258	\$55,861,270	\$80,418,605
Regular Program	\$43,796,843	\$45,043,258	\$44,710,394	\$55,081,029
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$775,000	\$11,150,876	\$25,337,576
Language Development Program	\$344,866			
Complementary Support for Language Learning	\$16,750,249	\$17,333,208	\$22,523,101	\$21,230,498
Regular Program		\$16,846,458	\$17,745,901	\$16,532,498
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$486,750	\$4,777,200	\$4,698,000
Summer Language Bursaries	\$11,466,774			
Official Language Monitors (second language)	\$5,283,475			
Collaboration with Non-Governmental Sector		\$411,840	\$562,160	\$533,745
Young Canada Works (second language or both languages)	\$3,980,000	\$2,681,780	\$2,373,729	\$2,370,964
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION (excluded from total)	\$9,774,298	\$9,994,316	\$11,154,154	n/a
Expenditures under the <i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$13,950,000	\$64,341,056	\$105,537,524

1.7. BRIEF EVALUATION OF THE ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The publication in the fall of 2005 of the government's midterm report entitled *Update on the Implementation of the Action Plan for Official Languages* did not give a clear picture of the results achieved with the initiatives taken thus far. In many cases, especially with respect to education, it was too soon to evaluate the real benefits of the new investments.

In her *Annual Report 2005-2006*, the previous Commissioner of Official Languages, Dyane Adam, applauded some initiatives but was highly critical of others. Her assessment was quite harsh on the whole, noting that "the implementation of the Action Plan has not been as transparent as it could have been. Data on activities and investments are not sufficiently accurate to allow for detailed accountability. In addition, some departments have delayed providing information without a valid explanation."²⁹ Her main observations were as follows:

- In the education sector, the Commissioner noted that, at the halfway mark, progress is barely discernible. Substantial funding was not released until the end of 2005.
- With respect to community development, the most concrete results were achieved in health care where the development of infrastructures and cooperation and training networks is progressing well in French and in English, in Quebec
- In the public service, the availability of services in both official languages has levelled off, which supports the Commissioner's recommendation that the *Official Languages Regulations* be reviewed.
- With respect to justice in the French language, the investments have provided for training activities, the development of legal and linguistic tools, as well as consultation mechanisms and access to justice awareness.
- With respect to early childhood development, progress has been made with the inclusion of clauses regarding child care spaces in official language minority communities in agreements signed with the provinces, but research projects have not yet been launched.
- Literacy initiatives for the Francophone community are progressing well, but there has been a significant delay for the Anglophone community.

²⁹ OCOL, *Annual Report 2005-2006*, p. 59.

- With respect to immigration, it is too soon to evaluate the results since most of the work done has pertained to planning.
- The establishment of the Enabling Fund provides for better coordination of the activities of various departments involved in human resources development and employability initiatives for the economy of local communities.
- With the greater funding provided, the Public Service Management Agency will be better able to promote linguistic duality in federal institutions, although there is a widening gap between the language training offered and what public servants need.

Various observations by the previous Commissioner suggest a link between what is happening in federal institutions and what the communities themselves are experiencing. The community perspective is the primary focus of the analyses following this section, but the Committee considered it important to place Federal Government initiatives in their demographic, legislative and institutional context. This makes it easier to appreciate the real complexity of the task facing the government and also shows that any progress or decline in community vitality in some ways depends directly on the government's actions, whether good or bad, or its inaction.

2. HEALTH

The second largest investment under the Action Plan went to health, at \$119 million, which is much less than the \$381.5 million allocated to education. In the spring of 2006, recognizing the importance of the health sector as an indicator of community vitality, the Committee undertook a study on access to health care in official language minority communities, as well as a study on immigration. Both were then incorporated into the study on vitality, which took the Committee on a cross-country tour. This explains why this section on health includes testimony from community representatives as well as experts and officials with the Official Languages Office at Health Canada.

This section is divided into two subsections:

- The first provides an overview of official language minority communities as regards health care: what we know about the state of members' health and what the testimony and expert analyses reveal about access to health services;
- The second part outlines the features of the health component of the Action Plan, assesses the results based on the evidence gathered, and makes recommendations on the three key areas for action cited in the plan: networking, training and retention, as well as development of primary care.

Our analysis shows that the health component of the action plan has by far produced the most concrete results. This success is the result of the tremendous work done by the *Société Santé en français*, the *Consortium national de formation en santé*, and the Community Health and Social Services Network. Bearing in mind the reservations noted in section 2.2.2.3, the work of these three organizations must be duly recognized and the government should not have the slightest hesitation in offering long-term budget assistance for the initiatives they have put forward.

2.1. OVERVIEW OF HEALTH STATUS AND ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

2.1.1. Health Status of Francophone Minority Communities

It is extremely difficult at this time to know the exact state of health of members of official language minority communities. The 2001 report of the *Comité consultatif des communautés francophones en situation minoritaire* (CCCFSM) indicates that minority

Francophones have poorer health in general than other residents of the same province.³⁰ This finding is supported by a 2001 study coordinated by the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA).³¹ The FCFA referred back to previous provincial studies conducted in 1999 in Ontario and in the 1980s in New Brunswick. This finding is thus supported by overlapping data from various studies.

Without reliable data, the FCFA study had to use indirect data on the “determining factors” of health rather than actual data on individuals’ health. The findings on the health of members of Francophone minority communities included in the 2001 CCCFSM report are thus based on extremely fragmentary data that do not show any changes in this regard to this date, nor do they indicate whether there will be any improvement or deterioration of the situation in the future.

This shortcoming was also identified in the FCFA study. With respect to the health of members of Francophone and Acadian minority communities, this study noted that “unfortunately there is no reliable and shared information for all Francophone and Acadian minority communities.”³²

Some of the evidence heard pointed to avenues for future research that are consistent with the FCFA study, but there are still very few conclusive findings. Appearing before the Committee, Professor Louise Bouchard from the University of Ottawa indicated that, according to her studies, “living in a minority situation, whether it be Anglophone or Francophone, seems to have a negative effect on an individual's perceived health status. It goes beyond one's financial situation, level of education or sex; there is something else at play. Also, this effect appears to be stronger among men than women, according to our analysis model.”³³ This is certainly an interesting avenue, but the information is insufficient to convincingly demonstrate the link between language and health status. As suggested by some other research mentioned by Jean-Pierre Corbeil of Statistics Canada, the Anglophones of Quebec are by comparison in a special situation that cannot too readily be compared to that of Francophone minorities.

As everybody knows, the situation of Anglophones in Quebec is very different from what we find outside Quebec, for a number of reasons. Clearly Francophones outside Quebec are far older and more likely to need health care. Far more Francophone seniors are unilingual. For these people, the stress or concerns

³⁰ Consultative Committee for French-Speaking Minority Communities, Report to the Federal Minister of Health, September 2001.

³¹ FCFA, *Pour un meilleur accès à des services de santé en français*, 2001. Available online at http://www.fcfa.ca/media_uploads/pdf/82.pdf.

³² Ibid. p. 6.

³³ Louise Bouchard (Professor, Director, PhD Program in Population Health, University of Ottawa, October 19, 2006, 10:45 a.m.

associated with the need to be understood and receive services in one's own language may be far greater than for Anglophones in Quebec, who have wider access to English health care services.³⁴

Researchers do however seem to agree that “the minority/majority ratio appears to reflect social inequality and unequal access to resources which, together with the other social determinants of health — socioeconomic status, education, literacy, age, sex and immigration — contributes to disparities in health.”³⁵ This also appears to explain the difference between the average income of Anglophones and Francophones in New Brunswick. Eliminating the influence of factors other than language, there is still a significant difference between Anglophones and Francophones.³⁶

So there are plenty of avenues of research, but there are obviously also significant gaps in our knowledge of the health status of members of official language minority communities. In the initial recommendations made in 2001 by the *Comité consultatif des communautés francophones en situation minoritaire* (CCCFSM), there were two components that were not chosen and that together might have filled some of these gaps: information technology and research.

Hubert Gauthier, then co-chair of the CCCFSM, expressed his concerns to the Committee about measuring the health status of Francophones. The difficulties are apparently in large part due to the fact that data collection systems, including those related to the Health InfoWay, do not identify Francophones. Using information technology to more effectively track Francophones' health status and adding “research” as a sub-component of the health component in the next action plan would give a better indication of the health of minority community members: “We know that it is not as good, but we want to know exactly on what points, and we also want to know what to do about it. Research is helping us to do this.”³⁷

Professor Bouchard suggested that the reason for this gap is that administrative health data cannot be used to study official language minority communities because the language variable is not included in the health files managed by institutions, files that are

³⁴ Jean-Pierre Corbeil (Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division, Statistics Canada), Evidence, October 17, 2006, 9:55 a.m.

³⁵ Louise Bouchard (Professor, Director, PhD Program in Population Health, University of Ottawa), October 19, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

³⁶ Forgues, Éric, M. Beaudin and N. Béland, *L'évolution des disparités de revenu entre les francophones et les anglophones du Nouveau-Brunswick de 1970 à 2000*, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, Moncton, October 2006, p. 24.

³⁷ Hubert Gauthier (President and Director General, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 10:30 a.m.

used to compile provincial statistics. Nor is there systematic oversampling of official language minority communities in national health studies coordinated by Statistics Canada.³⁸

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 1

That the Government of Canada suggest that the provinces include the language variable in health records, while respecting their jurisdiction, and that Statistics Canada use oversampling of official language minority communities in its next National Population Health Survey.

2.1.2. Access to Health Care Services for Minority Francophones

Access to health care services is certainly a key factor for a community's long-term vitality. It appears that the availability of such services in the patient's language also has a direct influence on the overall health of members of that community.

Studies clearly show that there is a connection between the ability to obtain services in our mother tongue and the quality of care we receive. If we are unable to properly understand the professional, communication is diminished and, consequently, there will be health care problems, the doctor's instructions will be misunderstood or the prescription we are given will be misunderstood.³⁹

Professor Bouchard confirms this and adds:

Despite universal access, users of the health care system who cannot communicate in their language do not have the same access or the same quality of care as their fellow citizens. The language barrier limits the use of preventive services, limits access to all services that require communication, particularly mental health, rehabilitation and social services, as well as adequate follow-up of patients, which in turn contributes to the increase in emergency services and the use of supplementary medical examinations to compensate for difficulties in communication.⁴⁰

With respect to access to services, the data is much more solid than that regarding health status, yet it is based on subjective assessments and should be used carefully.

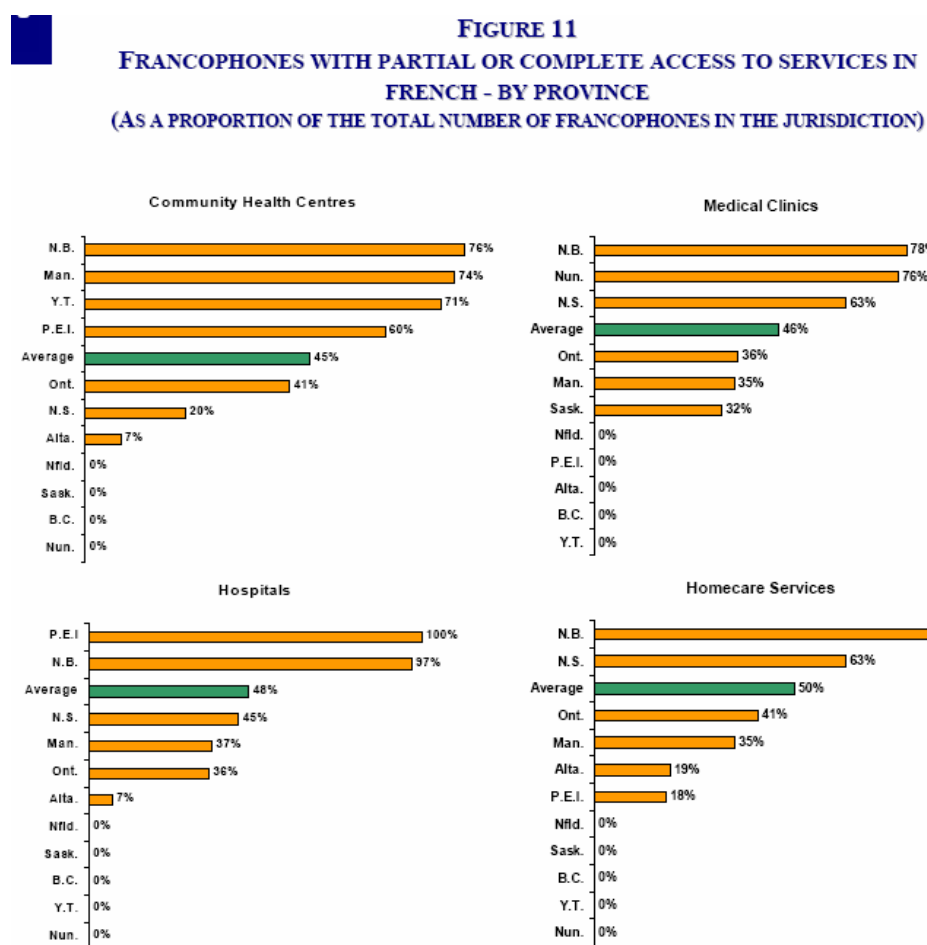
³⁸ Louise Bouchard (Professor, Director, PhD Program in Population Health, University of Ottawa), Evidence, October 19, 2006, 9:30 a.m.

³⁹ Hubert Gauthier (President and Director General, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 9:10 a.m.

⁴⁰ Louise Bouchard (Professor, Director, PhD Program in Population Health, University of Ottawa), October 19, 2006, 9:20 a.m.

According to the same CCCFSM report of 2001 cited above, between 50% and 55% of Francophones in minority communities often have little or no access to health services in their first language.⁴¹ These findings are based on the same study coordinated by the FCFA.⁴² The report also notes that “the results [...] must be interpreted carefully. This exercise is not a scientific study with a controlled margin of error.”⁴³

More specifically, the FCFA study noted that “between 50% and 55% of Francophones had no (less that 10% of the time) or very little (between 10% and 30% of the time) access to health services in French.”⁴⁴ It also noted that access varied greatly by province and by type of service offered.



Source: Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada, *Pour un meilleur accès à des services de santé en français*, 2001, p. 26.

⁴¹ Consultative Committee for French-Speaking Minority Communities, Report to the Federal Minister of Health, September 2001.

⁴² FCFA, *Pour un meilleur accès à des services de santé en français*, 2001. Available online at: http://www.fcfa.ca/media_uploads/pdf/82.pdf.

⁴³ Ibid, p. 24.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 25.

This table shows for instance that close to 25% of Francophones in New Brunswick and Manitoba denied having access to services in French at their community health facility, while this figure is 59% in Ontario, 80% in Nova Scotia and 93% in Alberta. Some services are simply not offered in some provinces. Access to health care services was 3 to 7 times better for Anglophones than Francophones within any given province or territory.”⁴⁵

These figures are important because they were used as the basis for the recommendations the CCCFSM made in 2001 to the Minister of Health. These recommendations in turn form the basis for the health component of the Action Plan for Official Languages, and it was this Committee that provided the impetus for creating the *Société Santé en français*.

Appearing before the Committee, Jean-Pierre Corbeil presented other research that further clarified some of the statements in the FCFA study:

A study published by Louise Marmen and Sylvain Delisle from Statistics Canada in 2003 on health care services in French outside Quebec revealed the difficulties encountered by Francophones outside Quebec with respect to obtaining services in French, resulting from the fact that in many provinces, Francophones are proportionately higher in numbers in rural areas, whereas Francophone specialists or other professionals likely to provide services in French work mostly in large urban centres.⁴⁶

In their opinion, the language variable is thus not as decisive as the fact that Francophones are more concentrated in rural areas and thus have less ready access to services in general, which are scarcer in the regions.

The evidence heard illustrated how much the situation can vary from province to province. In Newfoundland and Labrador, for instance, the Francophone community’s lack of demographic weight means that health services in French are practically non-existent, although interpreters can be provided if patients wish. “If there is a translation service, there is a danger of misunderstanding. It is also no easy matter to consult a doctor and to explain the problem through another person. That is not what we feel like doing when we are lying on a stretcher.”⁴⁷

In Nova Scotia, French-language health care services have not been systematically developed. That is why it has become important to identify the location of professionals who can serve the French-speaking population:

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 13.

⁴⁶ Jean-Pierre Corbeil (Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division, Statistics Canada), Evidence, October 17, 2006, 9:10 a.m.

⁴⁷ Cyrilda Poirier (Acting Director General, Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador), Evidence, November 6, 2006, 11:15 a.m.

There's no French-language health centre in Halifax. Currently, access to health services in French in Halifax is entirely a matter of chance. That's why the professional directory has become very important for us. We're starting to locate professionals. We found a certain number of Francophones at one centre, but it's an Anglophone centre that operates in French. In Chéticamp, which is a very homogeneous region, there is a system that could unofficially be called a Francophone centre.⁴⁸

The situation is certainly better in New Brunswick than elsewhere, but the progress made is fragile and the best approach for the majority does not necessarily work for the minority.

In New Brunswick, the Act is clear. It provides for health services for all citizens, in the language of their choice, wherever they may be in the province, and that's what we want. The reality, on the other hand, is something else again. Unfortunately, when the time comes for policy decisions, they are made the same way for everyone. History has taught us that in a minority context, the minority often takes more of a hit than the majority. It is therefore a question of providing tools, empowerment and capacity building.⁴⁹

There are also problems with universal access to health services in French throughout New Brunswick as regards specialized care. In Moncton, many specialized services are only available at the Moncton Hospital, where services are provided primarily in English. It is difficult for Francophones to obtain these services in their own language. Conversely, services are offered primarily in French at Georges Dumont Hospital, but can also be provided in English according to patients' needs.

Concerning more specialized services, we see that Francophone institutions are also able to provide services in English. The reverse is not necessarily true. We therefore have work to do in order to bring about broader policies so that Francophones can access specialized services, which they could not obtain, for example, at Georges Dumont Hospital in Moncton.⁵⁰

In Eastern Ontario, where there is a significant concentration of Francophones, accounting for up to 70% of the population in Prescott and Russell counties, the decision regarding the Montfort Hospital gave a significant boost to the integration of French-language services. "The Eastern Ontario health system includes 20 hospitals, 66 community support services organizations, 26 mental health community organizations, 8 community health centres [...] Of this number, 66 agencies are said to be designated or

⁴⁸ Alphonsine Saulnier (President, Réseau santé Nouvelle-Écosse), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 11:00 am.

⁴⁹ Gilles Vienneau (Director General, *Société santé et mieux-être du Nouveau-Brunswick*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 2:15 p.m.

⁵⁰ Hubert Gauthier (President and Director General, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 9:35 a.m.

identified, meaning that they are compelled by the province to offer health services in French.”⁵¹ Five of these agencies are postsecondary teaching institutions that offer services in French.

In Saskatchewan, on the other hand, there are no Francophone neighbourhoods that would justify the establishment of a community health centre offering various services. The Committee heard some troubling testimony in this regard.

For instance, during a trip to the region, a lady came to see me. She showed me how she would use the card prepared by the nurse who is in charge of her because she speaks only French. She was eight months pregnant, did not speak a word of English and lived in a rural environment. This lady had to carry the card around with her, in case she might have to call 911, and had to know what to say over the telephone because emergency services are not bilingual. This gives you some idea of the scope of the problem. In some places and in certain regions, this problem is still widespread.⁵²

In southern Ontario, there are few Francophones and they are widely dispersed, making it difficult to coordinate services between communities and regional health authorities. “The *Réseau franco-santé du sud de l'Ontario* covers an enormous territory. This complicates matters when one wants to develop priorities at a local level because decisions will soon be made, in Ontario, by the LHINs, the Local Health Integration Networks, which are the regional decision tables.”⁵³

In Northern Ontario, the situation varies greatly from region to region:

For example, in the western part of the region, the City of Sault Ste. Marie has declared itself to be unilingual Anglophone. So, there is very little available there. In fact, health care services in French are practically non-existent there. And because Francophones constitute an aging population in that region, the negative impacts on them are significant.

⁵¹ Nicole Robert (Director, French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario), Evidence, October 19, 2006, 9:10 a.m.

⁵² Soraya Côté (Director, *Réseau santé en français de la Saskatchewan*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:55 am; see also Denis Desgagné (Director General, *Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:15 a.m.

⁵³ Jean-Gilles Pelletier (Director General, *Centre francophone de Toronto*), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 9:20 a.m.

In the far east, in the North Bay area, for example, there are slightly more services available in French. On the other hand, considering the percentage the Francophone population represents — almost 25% — health care services in French are practically non-existent.

In the central region, Sudbury does provide health care services in French. Unfortunately, health care services in French are not always offered consistently there.⁵⁴

In Manitoba, despite the Francophone community's deep historical roots, services in French have only been provided since quite recently:

I won't go back to 1871 and tell you that the Hôpital Saint-Boniface was the first hospital established west of Ontario. It was not until 1989-1990 that it officially received a mandate to provide French-language services to the population of Saint-Boniface and Saint-Vital.

In 1999, when the Regional Health Authority was created, the hospital was officially given a mandate to actively offer French-language services to the Francophones of Winnipeg, particularly those of Saint-Boniface and Saint-Vital.⁵⁵

Community networks have since taken various initiatives that we will discuss later on.

Without significant demographic concentrations in Alberta, it makes it very complex to coordinate a range of services in French.

The health department has delegated many responsibilities to the regional health authorities. The province is broken up into many smaller jurisdictions, and our Francophone communities are scattered among all these regional health authorities. So we have to meet with each regional health authority in the province, since they are the entities we need to work with.

Our team consists of one person, and there are many people to meet with. Obviously, repeating the same message nine times to people who do not know us well is quite difficult.⁵⁶

In British Columbia, the vitality of the community health network has apparently convinced the province of the soundness of its initiatives serving the French-speaking population.

⁵⁴ Marc-André Larouche (Director General, *Réseau des services de santé en français du Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario*), Evidence, November 10, 2006, 9:45 a.m.

⁵⁵ Michel Tétreault (President and CEO, Saint Boniface General Hospital), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 7:25 p.m.

⁵⁶ Denis Vincent (President, *Réseau santé albertain*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 8:35 a.m.

From the outset, we managed to mobilize all the components of the health system to develop programs, starting with the BC Health Guide, or Guide-santé Colombie-Britannique, in French. The provincial health department acted as RésoSanté's main partner for that project since it's a departmental program.

To date, we've distributed more than 13,000 copies of the guide to the public, and more than 150 health cards have been translated. We've conducted some 20 awareness workshops in order to reach the Francophone community and health professionals who will be providing health services in French."⁵⁷

2.1.3. Health Status and Services for Anglophones in Quebec

For Anglophones in Quebec, despite the difficulty of being in a minority, their situation appears to be enviable:

Quebec has amended its health care act. Measures have been introduced for each regional health board to set up a committee tasked with ensuring that services are provided. Each board has to develop a plan to ensure that health care services are provided in English.⁵⁸

Yet this reality belies the difficulties faced by Anglophones outside Montreal.

The situation of Anglophones in Quebec is different from that of Acadians or of Francophones living outside Quebec. Anglophones living in large urban centres such as Montreal manage quite easily to obtain services in their language. When they live in more remote areas, their experience is quite similar to that of Francophones.

A recent CROP poll showed that only 48 per cent of Anglophones in Quebec are able to access the services they need, primary services, in their mother tongue. So there are always major shortages in Quebec, whatever one might think.⁵⁹

This statement is qualified however by Jean-Pierre Corbeil, from Statistics Canada. Anglophones in Quebec might well use the majority's public institutional services less, but they benefit more than Francophones outside Quebec from community networks that offer health services in English.

We noticed, in past studies, that Quebec Anglophones make greater use of family networks and personal networks than do Francophones outside Quebec. The reality is significantly different for these two groups.

⁵⁷ Brian Conway (President, *RésoSanté de la Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 10:20 a.m.

⁵⁸ Roger Farley (Executive Director, Official Language Community Development Bureau, Intergovernmental Affairs Directorate, Health Canada), Evidence, October 26, 2006, 10:05 a.m.

⁵⁹ Marcel Nouvet (Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Canada), Evidence, October 26, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

When it comes to fear or anxiety surrounding the ability to receive services in one's own language, we do not have a survey like the one that exists for Anglophones in Quebec, but we can assume that if the issue is intimately related to the availability of services in one's own language, it is less of a problem in Quebec than outside Quebec.⁶⁰

Comparisons can therefore be made between Anglophones in Quebec outside Montreal and Francophones outside Quebec, but caution must be exercised with generalizations until more convincing data has been collected.

2.1.4. Conclusion

The wide range of problems encountered throughout the country demonstrates that a standard approach might not address the realities of official language minority communities. In that sense, and as it will be shown a number of times throughout this report, the best way to proceed is a province-by-province or territory-by-territory approach, allowing the federal government, the provincial government and/or the appropriate designated regional authorities, and of course community networks, to work as full partners.

The evidence gathered on access to services is certainly reliable, but it does not provide the scientific basis to document in detail the problems faced by the official language minority communities in each province. The Committee could have made a recommendation regarding support for research on access to services, but it would appear that many of the gaps in this regard will soon be addressed by the results of a major study by Statistics Canada, a post-census survey on the vitality of official language minority communities, whose initial findings will be released in October 2007. The result of a partnership between Statistics Canada and eight federal departments and agencies, this study is an impressive undertaking:

It is the first time that we have conducted a survey on this scale dealing exclusively with official language minorities. This was a survey of 50,000 people that includes 17 modules on topics such as education, early childhood, linguistic trajectory from childhood to adulthood, access to health care in the minority language, cultural activities, linguistic practices in the workplace, sense of belonging and subjective vitality, just to name a few. The sample size is expected to produce very reliable estimates of the difficulties regarding access to health services and the French-language services offered to Francophones.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Jean-Pierre Corbeil (Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division, Statistics Canada), Evidence, October 17, 2006, 9:55 a.m.

⁶¹ Jean-Pierre Corbeil (Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division, Statistics Canada), Evidence, October 17, 2006, 9:10 a.m.

2.2. HEALTH COMPONENT OF ACTION PLAN FOR OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

2.2.1. The Health Component

Many of the health initiatives included in the Action Plan stem from the recommendations made in 2001 by the *Comité consultatif des communautés francophones en situation minoritaire* (CCCFSM). Hubert Gauthier, the current president of *Société Santé en français*, was the co-chair of the Consultative Committee at that time. The CCCFSM recommended that the Government of Canada adopt a comprehensive strategy with five components: networking, workforce training, intake centres, technology and strategic information, and finally research and awareness. The last two elements, deemed less of a priority, were dropped when the Action Plan was developed.

The Action Plan provided total investments of \$751.3 million over five years, \$119 million of which was allocated to health care through community development measures. The amount was broken down as follows:

- *\$14 million for networking.* An investment of \$9.3 million for Francophone communities provided for the creation of 17 regional networks of health care professionals, institution managers, local elected officials, teachers and community representatives. This network, structured according to World Health Organization recommendations, is coordinated by the *Société Santé en français*, which represents the five groups of partners. The annual meeting of members is attended by five representatives of each of the 17 provincial or territorial networks of the Society, with one representative for each partner category. For Anglophone communities, the Community Health and Social Services Network is responsible for developing networks. With a federal investment of \$4.7 million, it coordinated the establishment of a provincial network comprising 65 organizations, and nine local and regional networks that forge partnerships with regional planning bodies, health care service providers, researchers, subsidizing agencies, and communities.
- *\$30 million for the Primary Health Care Transition Fund (2000 Agreement on Health).* Primary care refers to the basic services or sometimes local services that should be universally available. It includes prevention, detection, examinations, information, treatment and long-term care. The Health Canada investment provided a substantial boost to a federal-provincial agreement concluded in 2000 and expiring at the end of 2006. For Francophone communities, the Midterm Report on the Action Plan for Official Languages mentioned 67 projects funded by Health Canada and coordinated by the *Société Santé en français* under the Primary Health Care Transition Fund. Of the \$30 million allocated to this initiative, \$20 million was earmarked for Francophones outside Quebec and \$10 million for Quebec's English-language network, to be managed by the

Community Health and Social Services Network. For Anglophone communities, the Network approved 30 or so projects in 13 of the 16 regions of Quebec. One of the key aspects of this sub-component is the *Préparer le terrain* initiative, managed by each of the 17 networks coordinated by *Société Santé en français*. Its objective is to foster the development of plans that will include an assessment of the situation in the various communities in each province or territory, an inventory of the most pressing needs, and strategies for establishing French-language services that meet local needs. It is in a sense a work plan that will help direct future investments in the development of primary care.

- *\$75 million for training, recruitment and retention.* The lion's share of the funding for the second priority of the health component, that is, \$63 of \$75 million over five years for training, recruitment and retention, is linked to the activities of the *Consortium national de formation en santé* (CNFS). Under the Action Plan, the CNFS undertook to train 1000 new health care professionals in Francophone minority communities by 2008. The goal is not simply to train health care professionals but if possible to ensure that they return to their community of origin after completing their education, and to promote access to training through distance education, partnerships or cooperation among institutions. For Anglophones, \$12 million in funding will be used to strengthen human resources capacity, to serve Anglophones and to offer English-language services to isolated communities with the help of technology. These initiatives are coordinated by McGill University.

2.2.2. Results of the Health Component

2.2.2.1. Strong Federal-Provincial-Community Cooperation

In her *Annual Report 2005-2006*, the Commissioner of Official Languages notes that the most significant progress since the implementation of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* in 2003 has been with respect to community development.⁶² Moreover, among all the sectors relating to community development, the greatest strides have been made in health care, in Dyane Adam's opinion. She credits *Société Santé en français* for establishing French-language training programs for health professionals, and for developing regional network of professionals, institutions, government authorities and community organizations.

⁶² Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, *Annual Report 2005-2006*, p. 58.

With regard to enhancing the vitality of official language communities, the structural achievement with the most lasting and the greatest multiplier effect is certainly the establishment of the networks themselves. In three years, these networks have become extremely important stakeholders for provincial governments in planning the services to be offered to official language minority communities:

Without that networking, nothing would have happened. The health care sector is a fairly technical, specific area. Had there not been networks there to act as a catalyst or foundation, a rallying point for the people actively involved in ensuring that health care services could be provided in French in Ontario, nothing would have happened. We would have services that lack oxygen, we would have health care professionals with nothing in their environment to remind them that they are Francophone, that they should be proud of being Francophone and proud to be able to provide services in French — in other words, this is value-added.⁶³

While difficult to measure, one of the most important effects of establishing these networks and the resulting projects is the significant improvement in relations between official language minority communities and provincial governments. This can be seen for instance in the recent decision by the Government of Manitoba to designate the *Conseil Communautés en Santé* as the official representative for Francophones on matters of health and social services in Manitoba.⁶⁴

The results in Ontario have been equally noteworthy:

Today, some two years later, we have made tremendous progress. And that progress will contribute to the history of health care services in French. Now health care reform includes the Health System Integration Act. The four Ontario networks have finally succeeded in securing a Francophone planning entity. We are still at the discussion stage, but the fact remains that the four Ontario networks are likely to become planning entities recognized by the Ministry of Health. They will work closely with regional authorities responsible for developing funding plans. [...] This is a major step forward for health services in French that would have been impossible had these networks not existed. So, it is a real success story.⁶⁵

In Prince Edward Island, a representative from the provincial ministry of Acadian and Francophone affairs appeared before the Committee to describe the impact of these networks.

⁶³ Marc-André Larouche (Director General, *Réseau des services de santé en français du Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario*), Evidence, November 10, 2006, 9:55 a.m.

⁶⁴ Denis Fortier (Administrator, Member of the Board of Directors, Regional Health Authority, Central Manitoba, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 9:20 a.m.

⁶⁵ Marc-André Larouche (Director General, *Réseau des services de santé en français du Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario*), Evidence, November 10, 2006, 9:20 a.m.

The Government of Prince Edward Island is a true partner of the *Société Santé en français* with regard to the work it carries out. Our government adopted a French-Language Services Act in 2000. We are now working to implement this legislation in order to ensure comparable high-quality services in all areas of government jurisdiction. The support of the *Société Santé en français* and the various existing funding components allow the Government of Prince Edward Island to meet its objective in a timely fashion.⁶⁶

Cooperation has been equally productive at the other end of the country:

From the outset, we managed to mobilize all the components of the health system to develop programs, starting with the BC Health Guide, or Guide-santé Colombie-Britannique, in French. [...] Our greatest success is without a doubt related to the fact that, as a result of that project, the department completely took charge of the ongoing distribution of the Francophone components of its program, while asking RésoSanté to continue its advisory role.⁶⁷

In Nova Scotia, the health partnership with the provincial government is also considered one of the most positive outcomes of the Action Plan.

We have an excellent collaborative relationship with the Department of Health. I think I can say that it's more than collaboration. The network is having major success because it automatically includes the Department of Health. When network members have discussions, the department is already at the table. It's represented by the French-language services coordinator, who has been in that position since 2004.

So the network doesn't exist without the department. The department can exist without the network, but the latter doesn't exist without the department. The department has been there from the outset. [...] This is a privileged relationship. I've never seen a similar relationship in any other area.⁶⁸

The importance of strong cooperation with the provinces was established from the time the *Société Santé en français* was created:

The objectives were actually clearly identified from the outset: the projects had to improve accessibility, be sustainable and not just a flash in the pan, and provincial approval was necessary. This was an important requirement for approval, because

⁶⁶ Donald DesRoches (Administrator, Member of the Board of Directors, Delegate of the Minister for Acadian and Francophone Affairs of Prince Edward Island, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

⁶⁷ Brian Conway (President, *RésoSanté de la Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 10:20 a.m.

⁶⁸ Alphonsine Saulnier (President, *Réseau santé Nouvelle-Écosse*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 11:20 a.m.

Ottawa indicated it would not interfere in a provincial area of jurisdiction. So, provincial support was necessary. Each and every project, bar none, was approved by the provincial government.⁶⁹

The representation of the federal and provincial governments in each network greatly facilitates monitoring and accountability as regards the results of the investments made by Health Canada.⁷⁰

This view is shared by the stakeholders behind the Anglophone community networks in Quebec:

We have another priority. This priority is a partnership with the Quebec ministry of health and social services. Consequently, any investment made here, in Quebec, in the health care sector, must be part and parcel of the programs, plans, reorganizations, reforms and legislation of Quebec. The formula for our success lies in the great cooperation with our colleagues, here in Quebec.⁷¹

In the following section, we will look at the tangible benefits of the health component of the Action Plan for Official Languages, first as regards access to primary health care, and then as to the training and retention of health care professionals in minority communities.

2.2.2.2. Primary Health Care

The primary health care initiatives demonstrate the networks' power. They show that community networks are once again the best way to identify the most pressing needs and the best way to meet them. The \$30 million invested in the initial development of these networks generated at least four times more funding for the communities from provincial governments and local partners. The Committee is of the opinion that the leverage effect of investments by the federal government is a prime example of its catalyst role in fostering the vitality of official language minority communities.

Hubert Gauthier, President of *Société Santé en français*, gave the Committee an encouraging progress report on access to primary care, just three years after the creation of the networks. "I won't give you a scoop with regard to results, but we are headed in the

⁶⁹ Hubert Gauthier (President and Director General, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 10:35 a.m.

⁷⁰ Marcel Nouvet (Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Canada), Evidence, October 26, 2006, 10:15 a.m.

⁷¹ James Carter (Coordinator, Community Health and Social Services Network), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 10:00 a.m.

right direction. The structures we have put into place are strong, and we can see an improvement of approximately five percent among the 55% of people who were deprived of services.”⁷²

This is especially noteworthy since, among Francophone communities, the completion of the 67 projects selected by the networks under the Primary Care Transition Fund was stalled by Health Canada’s delay in releasing the funding required to get a number of projects going. This resulted in a loss of about \$3 million in fiscal year 2004-2005, or about 10% of the total funding that the *Société Santé en français* and the networks had expected over five years.

For Anglophones in Quebec, very tangible results were achieved. “In this context, we can bear witness to the capacity of the Action Plan on Official Languages to achieve measurable and sustainable change. We have seen its effect in our community in the area of health and social services.”⁷³

In each province and territory, initiatives have been taken to significantly improve the services offered compared to what was available before the networks were created. In order to be well received by the community, projects must be initiated by the community itself. The decision-making process established by the *Société Santé en français* is designed to root the initiatives in the community, for the long term:

The project starts therefore at a community level, before the province gets involved. A debate then ensues. A whole host of characters gathers around the negotiating table including professionals, regional boards, the provincial government, and the educational institutions. I was involved in the process when I was in Manitoba, and there were some solid debates. Is one project more important than another? Why? What are the reasons behind this? You can imagine the type of debate that such questions sparked given that there is never enough money for funding across the board. Once that stage is complete, the project is then considered at a national level by way of a review committee which goes over the details one last time with Health Canada. Once approved, service delivery contribution contracts are signed with Health Canada. And that is how it works. The groundwork is extremely important.⁷⁴

⁷² Hubert Gauthier (President and Director General, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 9:45 a.m.

⁷³ Michael Van Lierop (President, Townshippers Association), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 9:20 a.m.; see also comments by James Carter (Coordinator, Community Health and social Services Network) Evidence, November 8, 2006, 9:05 a.m.

⁷⁴ Hubert Gauthier (President and Director General, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 10:35 a.m.

In some provinces such as Saskatchewan, they basically had to start from scratch:

At first, our network had identified few French-language health care services provided to Franco-Saskatchewanians and little consistency in the health care services offered by the various providers. We have come a long way in three years' time.

First off, we identified health care professionals who could offer French-language services. Our research was successful because our directory now includes close to 150 names. Having checked, I can tell you that we now have 180 names on this list.⁷⁵

In Southern Ontario, as in many other regions, community health centres are the best solution.

Community health centres go a long way toward addressing the needs of Francophones [...] Moreover, our Anglophone partners still have to realize that if Francophones were served in their own language, it would free up the English-speaking system [...] However, we are prepared to start with a 100% guarantee of bilingual services, that is, having Anglophones served in English and Francophones in French.⁷⁶

The representatives from British Columbia were very enthusiastic about the recent opening of such a community health centre:

We're proud to announce the opening of a clinic, the Pender Community Health Centre in the eastern section of downtown Vancouver, which will soon be providing dedicated French-language services, where Francophones will be able to make appointments with doctors and other health professionals who will provide them with health care in French.⁷⁷

Some regions are however experiencing persistent frustrations. This is the case in some communities in Northern Ontario:

It has been 15 years now that we, in Timmins, have been working to establish a Francophone community health centre [...] There is a network, but what tangible effect does it have on citizens living in Timmins, who have to receive part of their health care services in English because there is no Francophone community health centre? In the field of health care, the Action Plan has had no tangible impact.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Roger Gauthier (Elected Member and Treasurer, *Réseau santé en français de la Saskatchewan*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:00 a.m.

⁷⁶ Nicole Rauzon-Wright (President, *Réseau franco-santé du Sud de l'Ontario*), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 9:45 a.m.

⁷⁷ Brian Conway (President, *RésoSanté de la Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 11:10 a.m.

⁷⁸ Pierre Bélanger (Chair of Board of Directors, *Alliance de la francophonie de Timmins*), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 10:20 a.m.

For the Anglophone communities of Quebec, the results are equally impressive. With the \$10 million invested through the Primary Health Care Transition Fund, 37 public institutions have improved their ability to serve Anglophones in their own language.

These projects were carried out over a 15-month period, ending in March 2006. Seven projects involved coordinating efforts to increase the use of *Info-Santé*, a telephone health line for English speakers. A new centralized telephone system was created in four regions with the investment. It will guarantee availability of such telephone services in English across Quebec, with extensive language training and translation of nursing protocols and social intervention guides.⁷⁹

In addition to promoting *Info-Santé*, the Community Health and Social Services Network, together with the Quebec ministry of health and social services, has helped adapt the programs of local community service centres (CLSC) to the needs of dispersed or isolated Anglophone communities and create an environment suited to the Anglophone residents of some long-term health care centres.

Of course nothing is perfect and some regions have not benefited as much as others from federal investments. That said, the overall picture is still quite positive.

2.2.2.2.1. The Leverage Effect of Federal Funding

The catalyst effect of the networks was mentioned repeatedly by the witnesses and it acquired a strong symbolic value for a project in Manitoba, which illustrates perhaps better than any other one the importance of the federal government's commitment.

In Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, a Francophone majority community south of Winnipeg, a community centre is now being built.

Using a \$30,000 grant, we studied the needs of the community based on the 12 health determinants. Next, we designed a primary health care centre. In addition to the \$30,000 grant, the community raised \$1.5 million for this project. As a result, the Government of Manitoba joined in and added \$500,000. I will not name all the partners, because there are approximately 30 of them. Construction is currently underway [...] I keep calling it a Francophone centre, but it is really a bilingual centre because, in Manitoba, it is clearly bilingual. I consider this an added value. We provide services in French, but we can certainly also provide them in English.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ James Carter (Coordinator, Community Health and Social Services Network), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 9:10. a.m.

⁸⁰ Denis Fortier (Administrator, Member of Board of Directors, Regional Health Authority, Central Manitoba), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 9:20 a.m.

This project has also had some unexpected benefits. For instance, the health centre in Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes will become a training centre for health care professionals. The success of this initiative has also garnered the attention of the Canada Health Infoway and of *Télésanté Manitoba*, which have included it in a pilot project on the use of new technologies to link the centre with the network of other community health centres. The construction of this centre is also part of a larger project that includes the establishment of satellite centres in the communities of Saint-Claude and Saint-Jean-Baptiste, and the creation of a mobile multi-disciplinary team serving the three communities.⁸¹ All this with an initial federal investment of \$30,000!

In addition to the direct spin-offs from the construction of the centre, this also illustrates the merits of what we might call the “Manitoba model,” which includes three service delivery models:

First there are community access centres like the one in Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes [...] Second, there is the Telehealth program. We're installing equipment to connect the Francophone communities to the Telehealth network for the first time. This has never been done before back home. We were going to hook up small Anglophone villages near us, but we weren't reaching the Francophones.

With a little money from the projects of the FASSP, the primary health care adjustment fund, we could hook up eight Francophone communities in one year.

The third model is the mobile team model [...] These teams consist of four or five health professionals who travel from village to village to serve the communities in the rural regions.⁸²

The model appears to be very flexible and could possibly be used by other official language minority communities and many rural majority communities. It must be remembered, however, that the Francophone community of Manitoba benefits from a demographic density not found outside New Brunswick and the Montreal region.

2.2.2.2. Active Offer of Service

Other initiatives, both simple and effective, have been launched throughout the country. Immediate improvements were noted for instance as soon as very simple and inexpensive “active offer” measures were introduced:

⁸¹ Charles Gagné (President, *Conseil communauté en santé du Manitoba*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 7:05 p.m.

⁸² Léo Robert (Director General, *Conseil communauté en santé du Manitoba*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 7:45 p.m.

Francophones, when they come to a large hospital that is primarily Anglophone, will not fight for services in French, because they fear they will get second-level service, if you will, or hear 'stand in line, and we'll get somebody for you.' They've stood in line long enough, and they don't want to do that. So they will compromise and go with the English services, even if half the time they're missing some pieces here.

Therefore, we created what we call the national brand to identify where services are available. It becomes more proactive. Staff have identification [...] We've created that national service brand so that professionals can be identified and citizens know where service in French is available.⁸³

Active offer can play an important role in people's perceptions of service availability.

If you dial a toll-free 1-800 number and you are told to push 2 for services in French, it is clearly possible to obtain services in French. However, if you make a call and it is answered in English, the question probably does not even arise [...] Actively offering services in a language undoubtedly has an impact on the perception people have of the possibility of receiving services in their language.⁸⁴

The person who answered might have been bilingual, but without an active offer, the impression given is that service is not available. Conversely, institutions might perceive that their services are underutilized simply because clients do not realize they are available.

This situation is also evident among Anglophones in Quebec.

There is shyness, even if you're bilingual. [...] you don't want to create some kind of supplementary demand on a very overstretched system, or you might be concerned that if you ask for a service in English, there may be a delay in getting that service.

Anglophones are less likely to go to a public institution to get a service to solve the problem. They stay in their communities, and often when they do hit the public system, they're in crisis at that point. But this is definitely a factor, even for bilingual Anglophones. They are intimidated by the environment of a public institution for which they do not feel any linguistic or cultural affinity.⁸⁵

⁸³ Hubert Gauthier (President and Director General, *Société Santé en français*), Evidence, October 5, 2006, 10:05 a.m.

⁸⁴ Jean-Pierre Corbeil (Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division, Statistics Canada), Evidence, October 17, 2006, 10:10 a.m.

⁸⁵ James Carter (Coordinator, Community Health and Social Services Network), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 10:10 a.m.

2.2.2.2.3. Providing Continuity

One of the chief concerns raised by the networks relates to the fact that the Primary Health Care Transition Fund, which funds official languages initiatives as well as various other projects across the country, expired in 2006. In other words, while Action Plan initiatives run from 2003 to 2008, those relating to primary health care ended two years earlier. At the end of 2005, the midterm report already identified the following risk:

The Official Languages component of the Primary Health Care Transition Fund will end in 2006, which could disrupt the organization of services and reduce the opportunities that form the basis for networking and professional training. The *Préparer le terrain* project has received the approval of all partners and its results, expected next year, will guide the balance of the Action Plan.⁸⁶

Without any clear indication of the federal government's intentions, the provincial governments will hesitate to assume full responsibility for projects developed in partnership. In Eastern Ontario, *Préparer le terrain* initiatives are already being discussed with regional health authorities:

The network set about developing the 2005-2006 regional plan for health services in French, a responsibility it was given by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. It was in this context that the *Préparer le terrain* project [...] was managed by the network and integrated into the regional plan.

This important exercise generated a list of recommendations and priorities for French-language health services, which were presented to the local integration of health care services network for Champlain region in the fall of 2006. They are as follows: human resources, the organization of services, primary health care, accountability within the system and support for health care agencies in supplying French-language services.⁸⁷

The witnesses who raised these concerns noted that their intention is not to encourage the federal government to take over from the provincial authorities, but simply to ensure that the provinces can effectively fulfill their constitutional responsibilities as regards the development of official language minority communities.

⁸⁶ Midterm Report on the Action Plan for Official Languages, pp. 17-19.

⁸⁷ Nicole Robert (Director, French Language Health Services Network of Eastern Ontario), Evidence, October 19, 2006, 9:10 a.m.

It would be unfortunate to have developed such fine projects under *Préparer le terrain* and then not to be able to carry them out due to a lack of federal government support which, as in other areas, can have a leverage effect and remind provincial governments of the role they are required to play in the development of official language minority communities.⁸⁸

To provide short-term continuity for the projects developed and implemented with funding from the Primary Health Care Transition Fund, as intended when this component was incorporated into the Action Plan for Official Languages, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 2

That Health Canada immediately confirm its commitment to provide a minimum of \$10 million in funding for the initiatives under the “primary care transition” sub-component of the health component of the Action Plan for Official Languages, for fiscal year 2007-2008.

Given that the primary objective of creating networks in each province was to draw up a list of pressing needs and priority projects to be implemented so as to anticipate follow-up on the Action Plan, that the networks did this with great enthusiasm, and that the inability to carry out these projects would be a significant denial of the importance of providing long-term support to enable community networks to assume responsibility, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 3

That as soon as possible Health Canada indicate its clear commitment to provide, through transfers to the provinces and territories, the networks coordinated by the *Société Santé en français* and the Community Health and Social Services Network the resources needed to carry out the key initiatives identified under *Préparer le terrain* projects, in the form of increased long-term funding, starting in fiscal year 2008-2009.

2.2.2.3. Training

There is a significant shortage of trained health care workers in all parts of Canada, but the problem is much greater for minority communities, given their limited resources and the very few institutions that can offer training comparable to what is offered to the majority. In some cases, the situation is truly critical. In this regard, Anglophones in Quebec are in a

⁸⁸ Norman Gionet (President, *Société santé et mieux-être du Nouveau-Brunswick*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 13:15 a.m.

good position, despite the difficulties they face in retaining graduates since they have access to a number of excellent teaching institutions. Apart from New Brunswick and Eastern Ontario, Francophones are very far from having access to training comparable to what is available to the Anglophone majority.

With respect to training, the Action Plan's results are not felt as quickly in the communities as they are for other components given the length of professional training, which can last for two or three years for technical training, but up to eight years for a physician. Of the \$75 million invested in the training and retention of health professionals, \$63 million went to the *Consortium national de formation en santé*, which manages the programs for Francophone communities, and \$12 million went to McGill University, which coordinates second-language learning programs for health professionals in Quebec. In both cases, a long-term commitment from the federal government is essential to success.

2.2.2.3.1. McGill University

This relative advantage enjoyed by Anglophones in Quebec was recognized and accepted by Anglophone communities themselves, and led to different priorities, with a focus on language training, which are less expensive than long-term training for Francophones outside Quebec.

McGill University is the lead organization and is working with the 76 health organizations in the province of Quebec. Anglophones are currently developing initiatives to recruit and retain Anglophone health personnel in the province of Quebec. Huge efforts are being made to help professionals acquire a second language. Anglophones are learning a bit more French, and Francophones are learning a bit more English, which will help them treat English-speaking patients. [...] In the province of Quebec, 37 Anglophone projects have been funded. All these projects are designed in a manner that will improve access, accountability and the integration of services with provincial and territorial services.⁸⁹

In 2005-2006, 1,400 French-speaking health professionals were trained in order to better serve English-speaking clients, in 81 public institutions and 15 administrative regions in Quebec. In fiscal year 2006-2007, about 2,000 more Francophone health professionals will have received this training focussing on medical vocabulary.

In order to help retain Anglophone health professionals outside Montreal, "22 innovative pilot partnerships have been struck in 14 regions to create internships to increase the number of English-language students in nursing, social work and other health-related disciplines that receive professional training in the regions."⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Marcel Nouvet (Associate Deputy Minister, Health Canada), Evidence, November 26, 2006, 9:10 a.m.

⁹⁰ James Carter (Coordinator, Community Health and Social Services Network), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 9:10 a.m.

The problem of retaining graduates is significant throughout Quebec, but especially in the Outaouais region.

Heritage College in the Outaouais trains nurses who can practice their profession in English. Yet, about 80 per cent of these nurses leave the Outaouais and go to Ontario or elsewhere in the country to practice. One reason they leave is because they don't feel adequately equipped to offer services in both official languages. So, as part of the program instituted in collaboration with McGill University, these students will receive training in their second language adapted to the health environment in French.⁹¹

The Committee strongly supports the efforts made by McGill University, together with the Government of Quebec, public institutions and the Community Health and Social Services Network, and recommends:

Recommendation 4

That Health Canada renew and increase its long-term funding for the language training programs currently coordinated by McGill University under the “training and retention” sub-component of the health component of the Action Plan for Official Languages, starting in fiscal year 2008-2009.

2.2.2.3.2. Consortium National de Formation en Santé (CNFS)

The CNFS comprises ten universities and colleges throughout Canada that offer French-language programs of study in various areas of health care. Its ten members are:

- Sainte Anne University (Nova Scotia);
- Université de Moncton;
- French-language medical training program of New Brunswick, affiliated with Sherbrooke University;
- New Brunswick Community College - Campbellton;
- Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface;
- Saint-Jean Campus (Edmonton);

⁹¹ Roger Farley (Executive Director, Official Language Community Development Bureau, Intergovernmental Affairs Directorate, Health Canada), Evidence, October 26, 2006, 9:30 a.m.

- Laurentian University (Sudbury);
- Collège Boréal (Sudbury);
- University of Ottawa;
- Cité collégiale (Ottawa).

These ten institutions share total funding of \$63 million under the workforce training and retention sub-component of the Action Plan for Official Languages. The objective of the CNFS is to increase the presence and contribution of Francophone health professionals and researchers in order to better address the needs of Francophone minority communities.

Before signing bipartite agreements with Health Canada, each institution first had to indicate the additional enrolment expected as a result of the federal investments. The CNFS was also required to identify placements after which graduates could return to minority communities.

Cité collégiale for example signed an agreement with Health Canada valued at \$4.3 million over five years, in exchange for which it promised a specific number of extra students, graduates and placements over five years.⁹² These placements are crucial to retaining health care professionals.

We determined that 75 % of students who do their internships at local hospitals are hired to stay on after they graduate. That way, students return to their communities of origin. These new sites for clinical placements are crucial as regards regional retention.⁹³

In many respects, the results are spectacular and greatly exceed initial expectations.

The project has resulted in 1,428 new enrolments, which is 33% over the expected results, and almost 300 new graduates, which is 32% over the expected results.

The participating institutions made a commitment to develop and launch a total of 20 new programs during Phase II. They have already launched 16 and expect to launch a total of 28 by the end of 2008. With respect to the development of placement settings, which is key to the success of the CNFS project, CNFS has managed to develop 200 new placements. As far as our goal was concerned, we are 100% ahead of schedule.⁹⁴

⁹² Andrée Lortie (President, La Cité Collégiale), Evidence, October 24, 2006, 9:50 a.m.

⁹³ Andrée Lortie (President, La Cité Collégiale), Evidence, October 24, 2006, 9:10 a.m.

⁹⁴ Gilles Patry (Co-Chair, *Consortium national de formation en santé*), Evidence, October 31, 2006, 9:05 a.m.

The CNFS could also make a significant contribution to the international recruitment of health care professionals by developing qualification recognition programs, together with provincial governments.

A project valued at a million dollars was presented by the consortium to provide additional training for physicians who trained abroad so they can practise in Canada. The program is not up and running yet, but there have been discussions and commitments have been made.⁹⁵

Despite these significant successes, there are still tremendous challenges. The case of Manitoba is a telling example.

This year, eight doctors are in training, in unusual circumstances. Some are studying in English at the University of Manitoba, others at the University of Ottawa. In addition, two doctors are in training at the University of Sherbrooke. We've calculated that roughly 14 would have to be trained each year for us to be able to hope, within 20 or 25 years, to provide half of the frontline medical services required, that is, in family medicine. We've made good progress, but it's barely enough to offset departures.⁹⁶

The strength of the CNFS is in large part its ability to form partnerships among French-language institutions. In Nova Scotia, for instance:

Through the CNFS, we've managed to put certain programs in place at the college level, including a paramedic-ambulance care program. In the past four years, we've managed to train 50 ambulance attendants. So we have 50 Francophone paramedic-ambulance attendants who are ready to enter the system as soon as the regulations are in place. This is one of the areas where we've had good success.⁹⁷

This cooperation among institutions prevents the costly duplication of administrative structures for programs and allows more flexibility to adapt programs in order to better meet the needs of minority communities as compared to the unwieldy programs established where warranted by demographics:

We do not want to set up a program in medicine at Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface. Similarly, we do not necessarily want to create a physiotherapy program at Collège Saint-Jean. What we want is to work in partnership with these institutions.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ Roger Farley (Executive Director, Official Language Community Development Bureau, Intergovernmental Affairs Directorate, Health Canada), Evidence, October 26, 2006, 10:10 a.m.

⁹⁶ Michel Tétreault (President and Director General, Saint Boniface General Hospital) Evidence, December 6, 2006, 7:25 p.m.

⁹⁷ Alphonsine Saulnier (President, *Réseau santé Nouvelle-Écosse*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 11:05 a.m.

⁹⁸ Gilles Patry (Co-Chair, Consortium national de formation en santé), Evidence, October 31, 2006, 9:40 a.m.

Phase III of CNFS Projects

The funding of training and retention activities under the Action Plan for Official Languages from 2003 to 2008 constituted Phase II of the CNFS. Obtaining funding as of fiscal year 2008-2009 would launch Phase III, which would end in 2013-2014.

The primary objective of Phase III would be to continue training and build training capacity for existing programs, to evaluate these programs and to make any necessary adjustments, including improved tracking of students after graduation. Priority would be given to the training of front-line professionals in order to strengthen the initiatives of *Société Santé en français*. The second objective would be the upgrading of health professionals trained in French five or ten years ago. In minority communities, such upgrading is usually only available in English. The third objective is recognition of immigrants' foreign qualifications.

We have to be able to welcome and guide throughout the process new immigrants who already have training in health care. If they receive nursing training in a country other than Canada and the professional bodies do not recognize them directly, we have to be able to give them complementary training to allow them to work as soon as possible in their Francophone minority area.⁹⁹

The initial estimates show that a substantial increase in the federal investment would be required for Phase III.

Just to fulfill our existing commitments, we need about \$85 million. We will probably submit a proposal for about \$125 million to \$130 million over five years. I think that amount is fully justifiable. We intend to submit the proposal with much interest and enthusiasm sometime in March or April 2007.¹⁰⁰

The Committee members wish to show their openness to supporting the work of the CNFS and recognize the results achieved by recommending that the federal government accept the proposal put forward by the CNFS for Phase III. Given the significant amount of funding involved though we must proceed carefully and take certain precautions, which do not in any way call into question the program's validity.

⁹⁹ Ibid., at 9:45 a.m.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., at 10:20 a.m.

Sharing of Responsibilities

One of the great achievements of the networks developed under *Société Santé en français* is that the provinces and territories are now included in the decision-making process that starts in the communities. These governments by contrast are not part of CNFS activities: “In fact, the Canadian cooperation that has allowed interprovincial exchanges is not something that naturally occurs in areas under provincial jurisdiction. This is not done. This is not something that is necessarily considered as desirable.”¹⁰¹ In fact, one of the major achievements of the networking and primary care transition activities is to have demonstrated the opposite.

Agreements for significant amounts are signed directly between the training institutions and the federal government. This raises the concern that the federal government is taking the place of the provincial governments, whether or not the latter tolerate or benefit from this. The nature and extent of the federal government’s involvement in these projects have not been sufficiently clarified and care must be taken to avoid any appearance of the provincial governments’ responsibility for official language minority communities slowly being transferred to the federal government. The Committee agrees that it should ideally cost the provincial governments less to train a Francophone health care professional than an Anglophone one in order for the provinces to become actively involved in the development of official language minority communities. The cost to the provinces must nevertheless not be too low. The comments of the co-chair of the CNFS address this concern indirectly:

In the case of a Franco-Ontarian studying at the University of Ottawa, but not within the framework of the CNFS, no effort is made to organize training placements for that student in Windsor, northern Ontario or in Niagara. Nonetheless, I think that the federal government has a duty to serve all these minority communities, to fund Laurentian University, the University of Ottawa, Cité collégiale, Boreal College, these four member institutions of the CNFS, so that we can make an additional effort to encourage these students to go back to their home region. That is where the CNFS plays an important role. In this context, this becomes a federal responsibility.¹⁰²

The federal government’s current investment amounts to approximately \$60,000 per student under the CNFS. At first glance, it seems expensive to fund the additional “effort to encourage students to return to their communities of origin”. This investment must not absolve the provincial governments of their responsibilities and must not be used to directly compensate institutions over and above the cost to them of making this extra effort, especially since the provinces are not represented on the CNFS Board of Directors, and the federal government is an associate member only.

¹⁰¹ Andrée Lortie (President, La Cité Collégiale), Evidence, October 24, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

¹⁰² Gilles Patry (Co-Chair, *Consortium national de formation en santé*), Evidence, October 31, 2006, 9:55 a.m.

Financial Data

This caveat is in large part due to the fact that no financial analysis has been done of CNFS activities. This does not reflect any judgement by the members of the Committee, but rather suggests that greater accountability might be in order given the significant amounts involved. This problem is not as significant for networking and primary care transition activities, since the provinces and the federal government are partners in the decision-making process. The comments by the CNFS are clearly intended to provide some reassurance.

What I would like is perhaps to do another presentation for the government to say that if subsidies are linked to financial responsibility, then it owes us money. We have trained more students, in fact 30% to 40% more, than we set out to do. There is a responsibility — and I totally agree with this concept within universities — to ensure that the money received from the federal government, which comes from taxpayers, is well spent and that we can show specific projects in return for the money we are given.

That is why we proceeded with this evaluation exercise midway through Phase II of the health research and training project.¹⁰³

The problem is that this midterm evaluation did not include a financial analysis and sought instead primarily to report on the increase in enrolment, graduates and placements at each CNFS member institution.

Participation of All Provinces

Despite the various cooperation agreements among training institutions, the provinces of Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan¹⁰⁴ and British Columbia do not have any CNFS member institutions:

In Prince Edward Island, the Francophone postsecondary institution, the *Société éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard*, is not a full-fledged member of the *Consortium national de formation en français*, the CNFS. Until it becomes one, we'll be facing major barriers to the training and retention of health professionals.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Gilles Patry (Co-Chair, *Consortium national de formation en santé*), Evidence, October 31, 2006, 9:35 a.m.

¹⁰⁴ The *Institut français* of the University of Regina is an associate member.

¹⁰⁵ Jeannita Bernard (Member, Prince Edward Island French Language Health Services Network), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 9:15 a.m.

It would be helpful if all the provinces and territories had a representative on the CNFS board in order to state their specific health care training needs.

Beyond these caveats, the Committee fully recognizes the tremendous long-term benefits of CNFS projects and firmly believes that these benefits must be supported by providing a renewed financial commitment in the long-term.¹⁰⁶ The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 5

Subject to:

- **clarification of the respective responsibilities of member institutions, provincial and territorial governments and the federal government;**
- **an in-depth evaluation of the use of the funding allocated in order to compare the cost of training a student outside the CNFS to that of training a student within the CNFS;**
- **and finally including a spokesperson from each province and territory on the CNFS Board of Directors.**

That Health Canada show openness to the funding proposal to be submitted in 2007 by the *Consortium national de formation en santé* (CNFS) for Phase III of its projects extending from 2008-2009 to 2013-2014.

¹⁰⁶ This renewal would continue the commitments in the Ten-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care, released in September 2004. This plan states that the Government of Canada commits to: accelerate and expand the assessment and integration of internationally trained health care graduates; targeted efforts in support of Aboriginal communities and Official Languages Minority Communities to increase the supply of health care professionals for these communities; measures to reduce the financial burden on students in specific health education programs; and participate in health human resource planning with interested jurisdictions. "A 10-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care," September 16, 2004, available at http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/delivery-prestation/fptcollab/2004-fmm-rpm/nr-cp_9_16_2_e.html

3. IMMIGRATION

“Now, I think it is time to deliver the goods.”¹⁰⁷

Like the health sector, immigration was identified as a priority in order to foster the vitality of official language minority communities. Since the demographic growth of communities is the ultimate factor in their vitality, it is clear that the birth rate alone will not be sufficient to offset the decline in the number of families that speak French at home outside Quebec, and that speak English at home in Quebec. This is true for Canada’s population as a whole, but is essential to the long-term survival of official language minority communities. It is especially true for Francophone communities outside Quebec. Despite the explicit priority given to French-language immigrants in Quebec legislation, the Anglophone community of Quebec, with its quality institutions and economic and cultural strength, is much more attractive than Francophone minority communities, which must first make potential immigrants aware of their existence before they can attract anyone at all. There are of course differences for Anglophone communities outside Montreal that are in a comparable position and must for instance try to retain students from other provinces who have a choice to remain in Quebec or leave.¹⁰⁸

Similarly, the retention of families depends on the vitality of community life, and attracting newcomers depends on them receiving a warm reception. A family or individual may be willing to make sacrifices in terms of occupational or economic rewards if they feel attached to the community. Without this kind of attachment, the children will go to English-language schools, assuming equal economic prospects. Once again, success depends on the ability of community networks to welcome and integrate newcomers. The second condition, as we will see later on, is the active involvement of the provincial government. If the provincial government does not recognize the benefits of stimulating immigration among these Francophone communities, it is unlikely that federal investments will produce results. The proactive strategy of some provincial governments, especially Manitoba, is a prime example of the need for this kind of collaboration among the partners in the Canadian federation.

¹⁰⁷ Marc Arnal, Co-Chair, Community Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities, Evidence, October 3, 2006, 9:40 am.

¹⁰⁸ See in this regard Robert Donnelly (President, Voice of English-Speaking Québec), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 10:50 am.

In some Francophone communities in Canada, especially in large cities, immigration has already become commonplace. The clientele of the Centre francophone de Toronto, for instance, consists primarily of newcomers.¹⁰⁹ Vancouver's French-language school board serves students from 72 different countries who speak 58 languages in addition to French.¹¹⁰

Including an "Immigration" sub-component in the "Community Life" component of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* was certainly one of the first clear signs of the federal government's intention to use this development tool. This step was in response to the community consultations conducted by the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada, work that was also supported by studies coordinated by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, to which we will refer briefly below.

It must be noted first of all that the Action Plan's investment is modest at \$9 million over five years; it appears to have mobilized the communities somewhat, but its results cannot be measured for the time being.¹¹¹ It can be said that the support for immigration thus far has been a small step rather than a real strategy.¹¹² This is why the Committee was delighted by the federal government's launch in September 2006 of the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Minority Francophone Communities*. We will consider later on whether this plan has the consistency and flexibility needed to achieve its ambitious objectives.

This section outlines what we know about Francophone immigration to Canada. It then reviews the various elements of the federal plan designed to foster Francophone immigration. Finally, it presents the testimony heard by the Committee regarding the success of various initiatives to date, the persistent shortcomings and the potential ways of using immigration to strengthen community vitality in more than an anecdotal way.

3.1. KNOWLEDGE OF FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION TO MINORITY COMMUNITIES

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages has published two studies on immigration to Francophone minority communities, but their analysis is controversial and

¹⁰⁹ David Laliberté, President, *Centre francophone de Toronto*, Evidence, November 9, 2006, 9:15 am.

¹¹⁰ Marie Bourgeois, Director General, *Société Maison de la francophonie de Vancouver*, Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:35 am.

¹¹¹ For an overview of some specific measures, see Daniel Jean (Co-Chair, Government Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities), Evidence, October 3, 2006, 10:05 am.

¹¹² Some people consider the addition of the "immigration" sub-component to be the greatest success of the Action Plan, especially in view of the mobilization that resulted from the creation of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee. See Luketa M'Pindou, Coordinator, *Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de l'Alberta Society*, Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:55 am.

the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Minority Francophone Communities* did not include their results.¹¹³ The Steering Committee mandated by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to prepare this strategic plan did however use a study by the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada* (FCFA).¹¹⁴ This study provides a demographic profile of Francophone immigration to Canada from 1981 to 1996. It does not indicate the retention of Francophone immigrants in Francophone minority communities or their mobility, although it could serve as a starting point.

Based on the 2001 census data, as compiled by the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada*, 122,395 immigrants, whose first official spoken language is French, settled outside Quebec, or 12.4% of all Francophones outside Quebec. This proportion was 16.5% for Ontario, the province where close to three-quarters of all these immigrants settled, and 32.0% in British Columbia, where close to 20,000 Francophone immigrants settled.

Number of Francophone Immigrants, 2001, provinces and territories

	Total	Americas	Caribbeans	Europe	Africa	Asia	Others
Canada less Quebec	122395	10170	4350	52960	20995	33335	585
Newfoundland	215	30	0	110	20	0	55
Prince Edward Island	105	25	0	55	10	15	0
Nova Scotia	1585	215	40	760	85	400	85
New Brunswick	2820	1595	60	550	265	240	110
Ontario	87315	5705	3760	36345	16880	24475	150
Manitoba	2390	270	65	1395	390	270	0
Saskatchewan	820	160	0	400	120	140	0
Alberta	7890	670	205	3860	1275	1850	30
British Columbia	19015	1480	210	9330	1905	5935	155
Yukon	135	10	0	110	15	0	0
Northwest Territories	75	10	0	35	20	10	0
Nunavut	30	0	10	10	10	0	0

Data: Statistics Canada

Note : Those are people who have been granted immigrant status in Canada and who have declared French as their first official language.

¹¹³ Jack Jedwab, *Immigration and the Vitality of Canada's Official Language Communities: Policy, Demography and Identity*, February 2002, available online at: http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/archives/sst_es/2002/immigr/immigr_2002_f.htm; and Carsten Quell, *Immigration and Official Languages: Obstacles and Opportunities for Immigrants and Communities*, November 2002, available online at: http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/archives/sst_es/2002/obstacle/obstacle_f.htm.

¹¹⁴ FCFA, *Évaluation de la capacité des communautés francophones en situation minoritaire à accueillir de nouveaux arrivants*, available online at: <http://www.fcfa.ca/media/uploads/pdf/51.pdf>.

Jean–Pierre Corbeil of Statistics Canada paints a much less positive picture: “As for the surveys conducted by Statistics Canada on French-speaking immigrants, we are really at square one.”¹¹⁵ He also questions the above figures, and cuts in half the number of Francophone immigrants who settled outside Quebec:

Statistics drawn from the 2001 census show that using the first official language spoken criteria, there were some 53,000 French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec or slightly more than 1% of the immigrant population. For the non-immigrant population, the proportion is 5%. Bear in mind that these 53,000 immigrants whose first official language spoken is French live, for the most part in Toronto and Ottawa, where the respective number fluctuates around 11,000. What’s more, in addition to these 53,000 immigrants whose first official language spoken is French, there are about 70,000 immigrants for whom we cannot determine whether English or French is their first official language spoken. Therefore, Statistics Canada created a residual category called “first official language spoken English-French”. Using information provided in response to the question on the other languages spoken on a regular basis in the home, we did note, however, that a large proportion of these immigrants tend to favour English over French, even if they indicate that they have some knowledge of both official languages.¹¹⁶

3.2. THE 2003-2008 ACTION PLAN AND THE 2006 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Action Plan for Official Languages of 2003 included \$9 million over five years for Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) “to conduct market studies and design promotional materials for distribution abroad”¹¹⁷ and to “support information centre projects for French-speaking immigrants and distance education French courses sensitive to newcomers’ needs.” It appears however that the funding allocated was used primarily to boost the bilingual capacity of federal bilingual agencies involved in immigrant reception and for the planning work of the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee.¹¹⁸

On September 11, 2006, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Honourable Monte Solberg, and the Minister for International Cooperation, the Francophonie and Official Languages, the Honourable Josée Verner, jointly launched the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Communities*. This plan was produced by the Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities (hereafter the Steering Committee).

¹¹⁵ Jean–Pierre Corbeil, Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division, Statistics Canada,, Evidence, October 17, 2006, 9:10 am.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.. The significant discrepancy in the data from the two sources is likely due to the fact that the FCFA did not make a distinction between the “first official language spoken” and the residual category, “first official language spoken English-French.” They were merged instead, which inflated the real number of Francophone immigrants.

¹¹⁷ Action Plan for Official Languages, p. 48.

¹¹⁸ See Marc Arnal (Dean, St. Jean Campus, University of Alberta), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 8:30 am.

According to the 2001 Census, Canadians living outside Quebec whose first official language spoken is French accounted for 4.4% of the population of Canada. The Plan is intended to balance out the current proportion of Francophones outside Quebec with “French-speaking” immigrants who settle outside Quebec every year.¹¹⁹ The primary objective of the Plan is to achieve this annual proportion by 2008, through a variety of initiatives extending until 2011 in order to consolidate this growth. Considering that only about 1% of all immigrants to Canada have French as their first official language spoken and live outside Quebec, achieving this objective in 2008 would be a spectacular reversal.

3.2.1. History and Mandate of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee was created in March 2002 further to the consultations of Francophone minority communities conducted between 1999 and 2001 by the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada* (FCFA). These consultations pointed to the potential of immigration to foster the vitality of Francophone communities and were supported by analyses by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.¹²⁰

The Steering Committee comprises ten CIC representatives from various branches and regional branches, from twelve federal departments, six provinces, one territory, one representative of the Francophone Intergovernmental Affairs Network and eleven community representatives. Its initial mandate was as follows:

- To collaborate in developing a strategy to raise awareness of immigration issues in Francophone minority communities and to increase their reception capacity;
- To collaborate in developing a strategy to raise awareness in employees, service providers and CIC clients within Canada and abroad in all matters related to Canada’s bilingual nature, the desired results in terms of immigration, and the presence of official-language minority communities in each province and territory, in order to increase immigrant settlement within Francophone minority communities;

¹¹⁹ This proportion was established further to the changes made in 2003 to the *Immigration and Refugee Status Act*, which stipulated in the Preamble that “Canada’s immigration programs have to respect and reflect the country’s current demographics.”

¹²⁰ Jack Jedwab, *Immigration and the Vitality of Canada’s Official Language Communities: Policy, Demography, Identity*, February 2002, available online at: http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/archives/sst_es/2002/immigr/immigr_2002_e.htm; and Carsten Quell, *Immigration and Official Languages: Obstacles and Opportunities for Immigrants and Communities*, November 2002, available online at: http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/archives/sst_es/2002/obstacle/obstacle_f.htm.

- To collaborate in developing a strategy to liaise with Francophone minority communities in order to promote their participation in CIC's public activities and consultations, thereby increasing their expertise in immigration matters;
- To collaborate in developing a promotion, recruitment and selection strategy in order to increase the number of immigrants who choose to settle in Francophone minority communities;
- To participate in the implementation of a new strategy to integrate immigrants into Francophone minority communities;
- To identify CIC priorities under the memorandum of understanding with Canadian Heritage for the implementation of the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official Language Communities;
- To commission studies and research on issues related to immigration within Francophone minority communities to ensure that strategies are developed;
- Other activities deemed essential by Steering Committee members.¹²¹

In order to achieve concrete results with respect to the "Immigration" sub-component of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* of 2003, the Steering Committee published in November 2003 the *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities* (hereafter Strategic Framework).¹²²

The Strategic Framework of 2003 set out five objectives:

1. Increase the number of French-speaking immigrants to give more demographic weight to Francophone minority communities;
2. Improve the capacity of Francophone minority communities to receive Francophone newcomers and strengthen their reception and settlement infrastructures;
3. Ensure the economic integration of French-speaking immigrants into Canadian society and into Francophone minority communities in particular;

¹²¹ *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*, Appendix A.

¹²² Strategic Plan, p. 11.

4. Ensure the social and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants into Canadian society and into Francophone minority communities;
5. Foster regionalization of Francophone immigration outside Toronto and Vancouver.

A provisional assessment of the initiatives developed to achieve these objectives was published in March 2005 under the title, *Towards Building a Canadian Francophonie of Tomorrow. Summary of Initiatives 2002-2006 to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*.¹²³ Despite these excellent initiatives, they were essentially short-term, one-time projects that did not last long enough to significantly increase the proportion of Francophone immigrants choosing to settle in minority communities.

It was to address this shortcoming that the Steering Committee developed the Strategic Plan, which includes the objectives set in 2003.

3.2.2. Content of the Strategic Plan

The Plan “more clearly identifies the challenges and issues to be addressed, proposes focused actions for the next five years and sets a course for the long term.”¹²⁴

The first part of the Plan pertains to four challenges:

1. The number and make-up of French-speaking immigrants to FMCs;
2. Immigrant mobility;
3. Social and economic integration of immigrants;
4. FMCs’ lack of capacity to recruit, receive and integrate French-speaking immigrants.

The second part of the Plan addresses strategic choices, that is, the available options that the Steering Committee considers most likely to produce results if concrete action is taken. Suggested initiatives are outlined, as well as potential performance indicators for these initiatives. The link between the “strategic choices” and the “challenges” outlined in the previous point however is not defined.

¹²³ Available online at: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/francophone/report/initiatives.html>.

¹²⁴ Strategic Plan, p. 11.

The third part of the Plan summarizes the legislative and government policy framework, while the fourth part describes the strategy to implement the five-year plan in order to achieve the objectives. This five-year plan includes coordination mechanisms, priorities for action and financial considerations.

The local and provincial coordination mechanisms are left up to the communities. At the national level, the Steering Committee suggests that its mandate be renewed and that an Implementation Committee be added to it to turn the strategic Plan into concrete action.

The priorities for action for 2006 to 2011 are:

- Implementing and supporting local networks;
- Increasing the awareness of the local community;
- Implementing language training in English and/or French;
- Providing training to upgrade professional and employability skills;
- Research;
- Supporting the creation of micro-businesses;
- Supporting French-language post-secondary institutions in the recruitment and integration of foreign students;
- Promoting immigration and selecting potential immigrants;
- Supporting refugees.

Various funding possibilities are suggested for these initiatives.

3.2.3. Shortcomings of the Plan

The Committee members support the objectives of the Strategic Plan and recognize that adopting an approach to foster Francophone immigration to minority communities represents progress. They would also like to see these objectives achieved and that all individuals and organizations involved in implementing the Plan are able to track progress. In its present form, however, the Plan contains various weaknesses that seriously undermine the attainment of its objectives. The most important weaknesses are as follows.

3.2.3.1. No Statement of Current Status

A strategic plan should identify a starting point, the desired outcome and the ways to achieve it under the existing circumstances. The Plan does not indicate the actual number of immigrants currently living in Francophone communities outside Quebec and simply repeats the fragmentary public data from Statistics Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The Steering Committee did not conduct or commission any special study. The Plan's authors themselves conclude that: "Citizenship and Immigration Canada must improve its capacity to measure immigrants' knowledge of Canada's official languages in order to determine more precisely the changes in demographics for immigration to official language minority communities."¹²⁵ This is a considerable weakness since setting targets also depends on the ability to identify the initial conditions.

The same criticism applies to the Plan's data regarding immigrant mobility: if it is impossible to know where they are it is impossible to know where they are going. Given the limited data on their numbers and mobility, any measure to foster their social and economic integration will be based on very hypothetical analyses, if any. The information regarding communities' ability to receive immigrants is more solid since a study conducted in 2004 by Prairie Research Associates for the FCFA¹²⁶ indicates the key aspects.

Appearing before the Committee, Jean-Pierre Corbeil from Statistics Canada indicated the best ways to address these shortcomings:

One of the major Statistics Canada surveys on the settlement of immigrants in Canada is the *Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada* [...] Given the relatively small sample at the end of the third cycle, [it] does not, however, enable us to obtain reliable data on French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec. It is nevertheless clear that if steps were taken to oversample French-speaking immigrants, such a longitudinal study would provide a wealth of information on the settlement process for these immigrants in Francophone minority communities.¹²⁷

This kind of oversampling has already shed considerable light on the activities of allophones in Quebec.

We succeeded in obtaining a considerable sample in Quebec, not only for Quebec Anglophones by mother tongue, but also for allophone immigrants who favour English. Since competition between English and French is an important issue in Quebec, we significantly oversampled the allophones who favour French to understand the dynamics.

¹²⁵ Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, p. 4.

¹²⁶ Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada, *Évaluation de la capacité des communautés francophones en situation minoritaire à accueillir de nouveaux arrivants*, available online at: http://www.fcfa.ca/media_uploads/pdf/51.pdf.

¹²⁷ Jean-Pierre Corbeil (Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division, Statistics Canada), Evidence, October 17, 2006, 9:10 am.

We asked all the same question about access to health care and the various means of fostering community vitality.¹²⁸

A similar approach would no doubt help address this major gap in the data serving as a basis for informed decisions on receiving more immigrants in Francophone minority communities.

3.2.3.2. Ambiguity of Targets

When the Strategic Plan was launched, the Plan's initial targets were maintained: that 4.4% of all immigrants in 2008 be Francophones settling in Francophone communities outside Quebec. Knowing that Canada intends to accept between 240,000 and 265,000 immigrants in 2007, and assuming that this number remains constant for two years, that would mean between 10,560 and 11,660 Francophone immigrants *per year* settling in Francophone communities outside Quebec. Yet the Strategic Plan also states that "according to forecasts, approximately 15,000 French-speaking immigrants will settle outside Quebec *in the next five years*" (p. 3), nearly four times less than the objectives set, which creates substantial confusion. The Plan also indicates that it will take about fifteen years to achieve the annual target of 8,000 to 10,000 Francophone immigrants settling in Francophone minority communities.¹²⁹ In other words, it will take until 2021 to meet objectives that are lower than those the Plan maintains for 2008.¹³⁰ In launching the Strategic Plan, Minister Solberg also announced the renewal of the Steering Committee's mandate for five years, from 2006 to 2011, to oversee to the Plan's implementation.

Appearing before the Committee, the Deputy Minister responsible for the Strategic Plan indicated that this confusion was simply due to a misunderstanding of the term "French-speaking immigrant" which from now on should be understood as an "immigrant whose mother tongue is French, or whose first official language is French if the mother tongue is a language other than French or English" (p. 4). This apparent clarification actually confuses matters further since this definition is identical to the definition of "first official language spoken" as used by Statistics Canada, and it is precisely this definition that was used to set the target of 4.4% of immigrants. In other words, this apparent change in definition should never have resulted in a change in targets since the targets were in fact based on this definition.

Disregarding these inconsistencies and simply accepting that the new targets are about 15,000 over the next five years (p. 3), or an average of 3,000 per year, this would

¹²⁸ Ibid., 9:30 am.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ The Plan identifies other specific targets: 6,000 Francophone economic immigrants per year (p. 9), 2,000 international students per year at French-language postsecondary institutions outside Quebec (p. 10), and 1,600 refugees in official language minority communities (p. 10). The rationale for these targets is not explained.

amount to 1.25% of Canada's total immigration, which is very far from the original stated objective of 4.4%. Yet the Plan itself states that: "According to Statistics Canada, the number of immigrants who settle outside Quebec and whose mother tongue is French has varied between 1 percent and 1.5 percent for several years."(p. 4). In other words, the new targets to be achieved under the Plan represent no change from the situation that has persisted for years.

These ambiguities are not conducive to the success of the Strategic Plan or to mobilizing the interested stakeholders to achieve a clear target, even though its objectives are noble and are strongly supported by the communities. It would be unfortunate to jeopardize the success of initiatives designed to foster immigration to Francophone minority communities simply because of confusion in the preparatory work.

Finally, if the real starting point cannot be clarified and the targets are vague, it becomes virtually impossible to determine whether the Plan's objectives have been achieved. The Plan does not include any follow-up mechanism or timeframe for tracking progress towards the results, such as every year or at the halfway mark. In other words, if the Plan's objectives were attained or even greatly surpassed, it would be impossible to know this. The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 6

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada, together with the provinces and territories:

- **Ask Statistics Canada to oversample Francophone immigrants in the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada;**
- **Ask Statistics Canada to conduct a rigorous demographic study of Francophone immigrants in minority communities and the factors in their mobility;**
- **Identify best practices for their harmonious integration into Francophone minority communities;**
- **Completely re-evaluate the targets and definitions in the Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, specifically the anticipated increase in the number of immigrants settling in Francophone minority communities following the implementation of the Strategic Plan;**
- **Establish a time frame and develop a rigorous follow-up mechanism in order to regularly verify the results obtained.**

3.3. BUDGET MEASURES 2006-2007

Appearing before the Committee, Minister Solberg confirmed that \$307 million would be allocated to new settlement measures for immigrants. An initial \$111 million will be provided in 2006-2007, and a further \$196 million in 2007-2008. Three-quarters of this total amount, or \$230 million of the \$307 million, is earmarked for Ontario, and \$77 million for the other provinces excluding Quebec.

This funding is in addition to the \$90 million over two years already included in the 2005-2006 Budget. This brings the government's total commitments for immigrant settlement for the next two years to \$146 million in 2006-2007 and \$251 million in 2007-2008. Without knowing what the 2008-2009 and subsequent budgets will provide, the total budget for immigration as a whole will likely exceed \$1 billion over the next four years (see table on Page 91).

The 2006-2007 Budget does not include any specific funding for Francophone minority communities but, according to Daniel Jean, Co-Chair, Government Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities: "Clearly, some of that funding will promote immigration and help meet the specific integration needs of Francophone immigrants."¹³¹ These increases will of course be more noticeable in Ontario.

Of course, in a province like Ontario, where we have a very substantial Francophone community, Francophone settlement agencies and groups will see a big increase in the funding they get. Actually, in Ontario, CIC has a very direct say in how funding is allocated, but we take input from settlement agencies and obviously from the Province of Ontario. Yes, there will be substantial increases in funding for all settlement agencies.¹³²

The funding provided in the budget will be distributed to the provinces, which will manage it through their settlement agencies. Some of these agencies are already at work in Francophone minority communities and they will likely receive their share of this funding although specific shares were not stipulated.

This \$307 million investment is independent of the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities* launched in September 2006 by Ministers Solberg and Verner. This Strategic Plan did not contain any financial commitment. Daniel Jean did however mention some potential avenues to fund the Strategic Plan's objectives:

¹³¹ Daniel Jean, Co-Chair, Government Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities, Evidence, October 3, 2006, 9:45 am.

¹³² The Hon. Monte Solberg, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Evidence, October 24, 2006, 10:35 am.

Part of the funding [...] will come from existing programs. First, the Action Plan for Official Languages, launched in March 2003, allocated \$9 million over five years to promote immigration within Francophone communities. Second, the additional settlement funds announced for CIC in the 2006 budget will support some of the initiatives of the strategic plan. These new funds will be used to meet the immediate needs of immigrants by improving existing programs and developing pilot projects for target client groups, including Francophone minority communities. Third, we will rely on the leverage effect that can be created by forming strong partnerships with other departments, be it the Department of Heritage, the Department of Health or others. Fourth, the implementation committee will examine the existing funding mechanism for the implementation of the strategic plan and will identify shortfalls to ensure its success.¹³³

BUDGET MEASURES RELATING TO IMMIGRATION						
	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	TOTAL
Budget 2005						
Integration and settlement	20	35	55	80	108	298
Client services	20	20	20	20	20	100
Total measures already announced	40	55	75	100	128	398
Budget 2006						
Settlement		111	196			307
Permanent residency permit		134	90			224
Recognition of qualifications		6	12			18
Total new measures		251	298			549
Total of both budgets	40	306	373	100	128	947

The communities' first challenge will be to ensure that they receive their fair share of these significant investments. According to Marc Arnal, Co-Chair, Community Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities, \$50 million over five years would be needed to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan unveiled in September 2006.¹³⁴

3.4. MANITOBA'S APPROACH

There are significant differences among the provinces as to the intensity of immigration initiatives that have been developed. In Newfoundland and Labrador, a structured program to attract Francophone immigrants, including candidates from Romania, is in the early stages. In Alberta, no specific recruitment measures have been

¹³³ Daniel Jean, Co-Chair, Government Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities, Evidence, October 3, 2006, 9:10 am.

¹³⁴ Marc Arnal, Dean, St. Jean Campus, University of Alberta, Evidence, December 5, 2006, 8:30 am.

implemented yet, due in part to the need to manage interprovincial migration first of all. “For now, people are arriving in Alberta of their own initiative.”¹³⁵

The most significant achievements have been in Manitoba. Various witnesses indicated this. “What started the whole movement in Manitoba was a mission to Morocco, where presentations were made. The Société franco-manitobaine wound up with some 20 people on its doorstep one fine day, and was not at all ready for them. That is what led to the establishment of structures.”¹³⁶

Two key elements were cited above all others to explain this success:

- The geographic density of Francophone populations makes it easier live in French than in communities that are more spread out; and
- The province played an active role in developing and funding settlement structures.

In Manitoba, cooperation between the provincial and federal governments appears to have been decisive: “It is because they set up reception structures, targeted the type of immigrants who would want to stay in Manitoba and lastly, designed recruiting tools with us, and developed some of their own. That is what we have to do. The job has to be done in several stages.”¹³⁷ The province’s efforts stem from a strong stance in favour of immigration overall, including a “nominee program” that allows the province to target immigrants based on its specific needs.

The most successful province so far in employing the provincial nominee program is Manitoba. Manitoba last year brought in 4,600 people under their provincial nominee program, versus my province of Alberta at 611, and I think B.C. had 800. So Manitoba is very aggressive, and they do a number of things with it. They use it to target a couple of specific groups that are already established in Manitoba, in particular the Filipino

¹³⁵ Luketa M’Pindou, Coordinator, *Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de l’Alberta Society*, Evidence, December 5, 2006, 11:05 am.

¹³⁶ Marc Arnal, Co-Chair, Community Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities, Evidence, October 3, 2006, 9:50 am.

¹³⁷ Daniel Jean, Co-Chair, Government Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities, Evidence, October 3, 2006, 9:40 am.

community. They have a population in Winnipeg, in particular, so they reach out to the Philippines and say, "Come here. We'll find you a job. We have a welcoming community you can step right into."¹³⁸

To secure the support of Francophone communities, the Manitoba government has agreed to make a special effort to help Francophone communities recruit candidates: "The provincial government has set a Francophone immigration target of 7% for a population of 4%, recognizing that it had to make up for past mistakes."¹³⁹

What should be noted here is that the idea of making it a priority to support immigration came from both the province and the community networks involved in the *Agrandir l'espace francophone* project launched in 2001. The similarities between this initiative and the federal government's objectives, especially under the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, in turn mutually reinforced each other in this specific case, but much less so in other provinces. This is another example of the multiplier effect of an alliance among community networks, the provinces and territories and the federal government, as is also demonstrated in the results achieved by *Société Santé en français*. Moreover, evident from the comments about these initiatives that a sense of cooperation is developing beyond the initial files in question.

Last year, Manitoba took in slightly more than 300 Francophone immigrants. That's a lot, if you compare that figure to the number we took in four or five years ago, and we intend to go even further [...] We've set ourselves the following objective: an average of 700 immigrants a year for the next 20 years. At first, it will be a bit slow, but I believe we'll be exceeding that number in a few years. We're also working with the province of Manitoba, which is a world leader in immigration. This year, the province aims to take in 10,000 immigrants. That figure has nearly been achieved, and, in the last Throne Speech, a new objective was set, that of taking in 20,000 persons by 2011. We want to maintain the same percentage of Francophones and ensure that there are Francophones immigrating to Manitoba. We are a welcoming land and we're proud of what we're doing."¹⁴⁰

This necessary cooperation does not of course mean that everything is smooth sailing and relations between the Francophone communities and the provincial government are now harmonious, as the President of *Société franco-manitobaine* clearly noted.

We're facilitating Francophone immigration. I can't say we're being consulted, but, in the cases we've handled, the province has helped us bring in immigrants to Canada as quickly as possible. The government has reduced waiting times. In Manitoba, the waiting

¹³⁸ The Hon. Monte Solberg, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Evidence, October 24, 2006, 10:35 am.

¹³⁹ Marc Arnal, Dean, St. Jean Campus, University of Alberta, Evidence, December 5, 2006, 8:30 am.

¹⁴⁰ Daniel Boucher, President and Director General, *Société franco-manitobaine*, Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:30 pm.

period is three to six months, which is absolutely impossible in other provinces: it's not feasible [...] Our partnership with the province is mainly in this area, and we're working in very close cooperation with its representatives in that regard.¹⁴¹

There are also a lot of housing problems in the part of Saint-Boniface where a large number of immigrants wish to settle, and the services of the reception centre are insufficient. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration confirmed that the new investments could help address this very situation: "We've already started to do some things in St. Boniface. Because of the strategy, initiatives are already under way to help people find suitable housing, as this is a real challenge. We are very aware of this, but the strategy, combined with the \$307 million, means we now have the means to implement the strategy in a meaningful way."¹⁴²

The fact remains however that Manitoba is a very positive example on the whole and could serve as a model for initiatives in other provinces:

Manitoba has become a land of attraction. Francophones who come from elsewhere also want to settle in this kind of region to ensure a future for their children. That was my selling argument when I went overseas to sell my institution, the *Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface*. I told people to come to Manitoba because they could continue studying in French and, at the same time, live in an Anglophone setting, which would make them perfectly bilingual. In many cases, people want to settle in Manitoba because they want their children to become bilingual.

Immigrants have understood that linguistic duality is an extraordinary asset. Moreover, immigrants have changed the linguistic dynamic of our institutions. It's thanks to immigrants that we increasingly hear French spoken in the corridors of the university college. There are also people who come from the immersion system. That creates a new dynamic and a new type of wealth. The initiatives taken by the communities should be supported.

First there has to be a change in attitude before we get there, and I think we're on the right track. There is good reason for me being here today: I may be the tree that hides the forest. There are lots of talented people asking only to serve Canada, to settle here, to raise their families here and to find niches in order to provide the required assets in this environment.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Daniel Boucher, President and Director General, *Société franco-manitobaine*, Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:40 pm.

¹⁴² The Hon. Monte Solberg, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Evidence, October 24, 2006, 10:10 am.

¹⁴³ Ibrahima Diallo, Chair of the Board, *Société franco-manitobaine*, Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:50 pm.

3.5. ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

While the provincial government works with the communities on certain projects, the federal government can serve as a facilitator. This cooperation between the provinces and official language minority communities is however far from natural. In some cases, for community organizations, involving the province in immigration agreements can also cause some irritants, such as the requirement to show the need for services in French, when, of course, there is no demand for them since there are none. The federal government's role is then to follow through on its own commitments under Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* and to be persuasive with the provinces and territories in negotiating transfer agreements.

If the province does not clearly see the importance of allocating some of the funding it receives to French-language immigrant settlement agencies, the needs are so great in the majority community that there is little incentive to do so. At present, the agreements on immigration signed with the provinces include clauses requiring the provinces to consider official language minority communities, and to report any initiatives taken in this regard. These clauses can however be interpreted differently by the provincial governments, and do not include specific financial requirements such as for instance allocating a proportionally equal or greater amount to the province's Francophone communities. As a result of this need to justify investments in settlement structures for Francophones, some parties saw the signature of these agreements as a step backward as compared to the bilateral agreements between the federal government and the communities that were previously used to fund immigration projects.¹⁴⁴

Similarly, the communities of Northern Ontario would like to have the means to receive more immigrants, especially in areas such as Sudbury where there is nearly full employment, but the fact that immigrants are naturally drawn to larger centres prevents the communities from receiving funding. With that funding, these communities could attract many Francophone immigrants to places other than Toronto.

We have to convince immigrants who settle in Ontario to go up north, where job opportunities are available [...] The mining industry is doing well. We need appropriate settlement structures [...] At the present time, we have no support to investigate or analyze the file of an immigrant from another country that we know little or nothing about. How can we more effectively facilitate new Canadians' transition to Canada, to our educational system, to complete their education, if need be, and particularly outside Toronto? It would be nice to have direct incentives for new Canadians to encourage them to settle in Sudbury, Timmins, Hearst, and so on.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Jamal Nawri, Coordinator, Immigration, *Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique*, Evidence, December 4, 2006, 9:45 am.

¹⁴⁵ Denis Hubert, President, Collège Boréal, Evidence, November 10, 2006, 10:25 am.

The federal government included linguistic clauses in most of the agreements relating to immigration that it signed with the provinces, but the clauses do not appear to impose specific obligations on the provinces if they do not consider them justified.

In the agreements signed with the provinces, we included a provision asking them to make efforts in this respect. On a practical level, we want to show the other provinces the results achieved by such initiatives as those in Manitoba, in order to encourage them. We also hold meetings with the communities in the municipalities and provinces so that they encourage their provincial authorities to do the same.¹⁴⁶

So it seems to be more of an incentive than a real condition that the government imposes on the provinces in order to obtain funding. To clarify the federal government's role, which is to remind the provinces if necessary of their obligations to official language minority communities, and in view of the remedial role the Government of Canada must play for these communities, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 7

That, pursuant to his obligations under Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, in making transfer payments to the provinces and territories under the Immigrant Settlement and Integration program, invite the provinces and territories other than Quebec to allocate to the Francophone community a proportion of these transfers that is at least one percentage point above the proportion of the province's residents whose first official spoken language is French.

Moreover, there are provinces without recognized settlement agencies serving the specific needs of Francophone immigrants. The coordinator of the immigration file for the *Fédération des francophones de Colombie-Britannique* noted in this regard that:

Francophone immigrants are "taken in through Anglophone organizations. So they aren't as aware as we are of all the French-language services that immigrants can access, such as schools, continuing training centres, Francophone associations, community centres, and so on. We'd like to adopt some things from the Quebec model. It's already being promoted outside Canada for Francophone immigration outside Quebec, in particular in British Columbia, but we'd also like to keep the model, which enables us to recruit immigrants, in addition to integrating them ourselves, that is to say having our own intake and orientation services in British Columbia, and to do that through Francophone, not Anglophone organizations."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Daniel Jean, Co-Chair, Government Side, Citizenship and Immigration Canada Steering Committee — Francophone Minority Communities, Evidence, October 3, 2006, 10:15 am.

¹⁴⁷ Jamal Nawri, Coordinator, Immigration, *Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique*, Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:55 am.

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 8

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada invite the provinces and territories other than Quebec to designate at least one community organization per province and territory to coordinate the integration and settlement of Francophone immigrants and that this agency be able to conduct independent recruitment initiatives.

3.6. RECRUITMENT ABROAD

There were various references to the difficulty that Francophone communities have in attracting Francophone immigrants since the Quebec government monopolizes the promotion of Canada's Francophone communities abroad. These efforts are quite understandable of course, but it seems inconsistent that the Government of Canada should develop a Strategic Plan to encourage Francophone immigration to provinces other than Quebec on one hand, and on the other does not make every effort to fully promote Canada's linguistic duality abroad, including through its embassies. The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 9

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada intensify its efforts to recruit Francophone immigrants through its foreign embassies, and support Francophone minority communities' recruitment efforts by adequately training and raising the level of awareness of embassy staff, and by guaranteeing the availability of printed information in both official languages.

The effectiveness of the Government of Quebec's efforts abroad is especially noteworthy as regards the recruitment of foreign students. The bilateral agreements that Quebec signs with countries belonging to the Francophonie offer tuition fees that other French-language institutions in Canada cannot compete with. It costs on average \$2000 per year for a foreign student from Tunisia to study in Quebec, but would cost that same student \$17,000 per year to study in Alberta. Witnesses involved in French-language postsecondary education outside Quebec stated that this compromises one of the most effective ways of recruiting immigrants. The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 10

That the Government of Canada negotiate an agreement with Quebec, the other provinces and territories, and postsecondary institutions, to find a formula that is satisfactory to all parties to encourage the recruitment of international Francophone students throughout the country in an equitable manner.

4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The two preceding sections represented the culmination of the Committee's reflections on the themes of health and immigration as engines of development for the official language minority communities. These sections incorporated the perspectives of community representatives, political and administrative representatives of the government, specialists, and other interested organizations.

The current section focuses essentially on the needs of the communities, as expressed during the meetings held in the nine cities that the Committee visited in November and December 2006, and in other meetings held in Ottawa between spring 2006 and February 2007. The themes contained herein are those that were a priority for a large number of the organizations that the Committee met. The themes on which there was a clear consensus are: education, from early childhood to the postsecondary level; the vitality of community networks; infrastructure; the inclusion of linguistic clauses in federal transfer payments to the provinces and territories; the budget cuts of September 2006 (Court Challenges Program and literacy); the promotion of French; the media; the arts and culture; justice; economic development; and research. All these elements will be considered during the follow-up to the Action Plan for Official Languages beginning in fiscal 2008-2009, which the communities urge the Government of Canada to begin studying immediately.

4.1. EDUCATION: FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD TO UNIVERSITY

"French is taught, but English is caught."

4.1.1. Minority-Language Education

Education is certainly one of the sectors in which the most significant progress has been made, in the past twenty-five years, on matters affecting community vitality. There is no question that section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the Supreme Court rulings based on it were the elements that triggered this progress (see section 1.2). In the early 1980s, half of Canada's provinces had no French-language schools. After section 23 came into effect in 1982, the Supreme Court confirmed that the right to minority-language education gave the official language minority communities the right to govern and manage education and educational establishments.

These gains highlighted the Supreme Court's importance as a counterweight to the provinces' resistance to honouring their constitutional obligations under the Charter. Most of the decisive cases benefited from the support of the Court Challenges Program and, as we will see in section 4.5, this program to some extent became the symbol of the possibility that the federal government could continue to play the role of Constitutional guardian in

areas outside its jurisdiction and the authority of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

The development of schools and school-community centres has been the main advance made by Francophone minority communities in Canada. Future progress in this area will occur at a more moderate pace and will depend essentially on the impetus that can be given to early childhood services, which represent the main condition for recruitment that could serve to maintain, and then increase, enrolment in minority-language education. The problems of recruitment at the primary level will thus be discussed in the section on early childhood.

Almost everyone mentioned the gains in education as the greatest source of community pride. Some of the evidence was particularly eloquent, such as that of the Director General of the Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin, of Prince Edward Island:

[Our] schools and centres [are] probably our biggest success. And we see it spreading. We are recovering a lost generation, and even two generations in certain regions.

In Souris and Rustico, for example, we owe the survival of the language to grandparents and, in some instances, great-grandparents, who are Acadians, because Francophones have not had the opportunity for a number of generations to be educated in French. But these people are proud. We see it in their faces, just as we see it in the communities. They register their children in French schools without knowing a single word of French, but that's what they want for their children. They take French courses so that they can have conversations with their children in French.

These parents enrol their children in a school that's completely inadequate, when, just opposite, or nearly opposite, another school has everything, but is virtually empty because of declining birth rates. All this belongs to us as Canadians.¹⁴⁸

4.1.1.1. Federal Government Support for Minority-Language Education

Financial support from the federal government, through bilateral agreements with the provincial and territorial governments, has also made a decisive contribution to the communities' gains in education:

I can say right away that the contribution we get through the bilateral agreements has always amounted to 13 or 20% of our budget. Was this a great help to us? Yes, absolutely [...] This money helped us to survive, and, I believe, to provide first rate education to our youth. We could not have implemented all the enhancements in our schools, for early childhood, for instance, without these programs. There would have

¹⁴⁸ Lizanne Thorne (Director General, *Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 10:05 a.m.

been no junior kindergartens for three- and four-year-olds but now there is one in every school.¹⁴⁹

These agreements are substantial and represent the federal government's biggest investment in the official language minority communities. In 2005-2006, Canadian Heritage spent \$283.9 million on its education programs, including \$179.4 million (63.2%) on minority-language education. In 2002-2003, the figure was \$213.1 million, with 69.5% of spending going to minority-language education. The remaining 30.5% went to second-language instruction at majority schools, including immersion programs.

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
MINORITY LANGUAGE EDUCATION	\$ 148 185 461	\$ 135 580 116	\$ 162 519 146	\$ 179 393 341
Federal/provincial/territorial agreements on minority language education	\$ 144 819 060	\$ 132 538 505	\$ 159 443 027	\$ 175 139 639
Regular Program	\$ 144 819 060	\$ 122 763 505	\$ 116 238 066	\$ 107 365 771
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$ 9 775 000	\$ 43 204 961	\$ 67 773 868
Complementary Support for Language Learning	\$ 2 257 351	\$ 2 278 568	\$ 2 285 619	\$ 3 063 702
Regular Program		\$ 2 190 478	\$ 1 662 819	\$ 2 361 702
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$ 88 090	\$ 622 800	\$ 702 000
Summer Bursaries for Francophones outside Quebec	\$ 515 226			
Official Language Monitors (minority)	\$ 1 742 125			
Co-operation with the Non-Governmental Sector		\$ 763 043	\$ 790 500	\$ 1 190 000
Language Acquisition Development Program	\$ 1 109 050			

The federal-provincial-territorial agreements account for the majority (97.6%) of spending by Canadian Heritage on minority-language education. The total amount of spending for these agreements increased by \$30.3 million (20.9%) in fiscal year 2002-2003 to \$175.1 million in 2005-2006. This increase may seem modest in comparison to the \$209 million over five years for minority-language education called for in the Action Plan, which was to be added to the amounts set aside for the regular programs. Canadian Heritage has spent \$120.8 million through the Action Plan over the course of the past three fiscal years, 57.8% of the funding allotted over five years. However, this major investment

¹⁴⁹ Denis Ferré (Director of Education, *Division scolaire francophone no. 310, Conseil scolaire fransaskois*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:50 a.m.

was counterbalanced by an almost equally large reduction in the amount in the federal-provincial-territorial agreements set aside for regular minority-language education programs, which went from \$144.8 million in 2002-2003 to \$107.4 million in 2005-2006, a 25.8% decrease. In other words, to date, overall investments in minority-language education programs have been well below what was announced when the Action Plan was launched. The agreements that the government has signed since November 2005 to renew a number of these agreements, and the Estimates for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, do not indicate a substantial increase, but we will have to wait for the 2006-2007 report from Canadian Heritage and Public Accounts to see the real expenditures.

Using the amounts spent on minority-language education in the federal-provincial-territorial agreements in 2002-2003 — that is, \$144.8 million—as a reference point, and maintaining the undertaking in the Action Plan that, in addition to the investments made through the Action Plan, “the Minister of Canadian Heritage will renew the Framework Agreement and federal-provincial-territorial agreements under the Official Languages in Education Program at current funding levels,”¹⁵⁰ the amounts spent or to be spent would be:

- \$144.8 million a year for five years starting in 2003-2004, that is, a total of \$724 million for the regular program;
- 97.6% of \$209 million of new investments announced in the Action Plan, that is, \$204 million, the rest going to the bursary and second-language monitor programs;
- For a total of \$928 million over five years that should have been allocated to the federal-provincial-territorial agreements for minority-language education;
- Since, of this total, \$467.1 million has been spent during the past three fiscal years, there remains \$460.9 million to be spent over the last two fiscal years of the Action Plan to ensure that the initial undertakings with regard to minority-language education are respected. That would mean an average of \$230 million per year, well above the current level of \$180 million in 2005-2006, which according to recent announcements is expected to be maintained for the next three fiscal years;
- The announcement of \$1 billion for education agreements for fiscal years 2005-2006 to 208-2009, which includes both minority language education and second language instruction, would mean an average annual investment of \$250 million. To live up to the undertakings in the Action Plan, \$230 million would have to be spent on minority language education

¹⁵⁰ The Next Act: New Momentum for Canada's Linguistic Duality. *The Action Plan for Linguistic Duality*, p. 26.

alone. In other words, the announcement of these investments confirms that the Government of Canada will not be able to live up to its initial commitments in the Action Plan, unless it makes a substantial investment in order to offset the shortfall accumulated in the first three fiscal years of the Action Plan.

Had they not been accompanied by a reduction in the budget for the regular minority-language program, the Action Plan investments would have restored the funding levels that followed the awarding of the right to governance to Francophone parents. In a number of provinces, this relative drop in investments was clearly felt:

When we, in Alberta, obtained the right to manage the school boards in 1994, we had between 940 and 950 students. Today, we have approximately 2,300 students; that is an increase of more than 100%.

During the last five years, we have received additional funding which has allowed us to establish a management system. However, it must be noted that management alone is not enough to retain our students. We need to provide our francophone students the equivalent of what is offered in the local anglophone school.

If equivalency does not exist, making the choice between French language and English language education becomes moot. Students will prefer [to] enrol in the other system, where there are more and better programs.¹⁵¹

Investments thus prove necessary to ensure that the services offered the minority community are of equivalent quality. The Committee thus recommends:

Recommendation 11

That the Government of Canada fully respect the undertakings made in the *Action Plan for Official Languages* and increase the amounts in the federal-provincial-territorial agreements for minority-language education so that they reach \$ 460.9 million between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2009.

4.1.1.2. Early Childhood

More than health, immigration or any of the other themes raised during the meetings, early childhood was most frequently cited as the linchpin of the communities' future development. After a series of Supreme Court rulings in the 1990s gave the communities the right to govern their schools, a network of educational infrastructures developed and helped strengthen the communities' sense of belonging. Once these

¹⁵¹ Martin Blanchet (Trustee, Greater North Central Francophone Regional Authority no. 2), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:50 a.m.

infrastructures were in place, there was impressive success, but there are still only some Francophones who avail themselves of their right to send their child to French-language school. The establishment of infrastructures made significant development possible and at the same time revealed a major recruiting challenge.

The main problem lies in the fact that the large number of parents who send their children to daycare do not benefit from services of equivalent quality in French, if they exist, or have no choice but to enrol their child in an English-language daycare. Since this English-language daycare is normally attached to a school, the transition between the daycare and school is effortless, compared to the difficulties involved in transferring the child to a French-language school after being in an English-language daycare: fears that the child will be behind in French, the loss of well-established routines for transportation and the parents' schedules, fears the child will be isolated, etc. All these fears are added to many others that already exist when parents must choose to educate their child in French or in English.

The link between this recruiting problem at the primary level and early childhood services was confirmed during the creation of school-community centres. These centres — which combine a school, community and cultural spaces, and offices for organizations in a single building — revealed that, when they also contain an early childhood centre, primary school recruitment increased significantly. The same easy transition that prevented parents from taking the child out of the English-language daycare to enrol in the French-language school favoured the retention of children in the French-language schools.

Professor Rodrigue Landry, of the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, described the main impediments to the recruitment of Francophone students:

The first point concerns early childhood. In our opinion, this is the biggest challenge for the Francophone and Acadian communities. Currently, at least 40% of child rights holders under section 23 are not attending French-language schools. One of the decisive factors is exogamy, which is increasing. Approximately two-thirds of these children come from exogamous couples; they have a Francophone parent and an Anglophone parent. In most cases, unfortunately, those families choose English as the language spoken at home. French is the spoken language for one in five children.

Our research shows that exogamy isn't a direct cause of assimilation. The choice made by parents is the direct cause. Some parents make an informed choice. For example, all parents transmit their knowledge of their language to their children, who go to French-language school because that's the school where the minority studies. That enables children to be bilingual. Our research also shows that the children of exogamous families who attend French-language schools are the best bilinguals in the country.¹⁵²

¹⁵² Rodrigue Landry (Director, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistics Minorities), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 9:05 a.m.

In other words, the most decisive element is the attitude of Francophone parents in exogamous families about the importance of enrolling their child in French-language school. This attitude will itself be reinforced by the education they receive:

People have said that they [mixed or exogamous unions] are a disaster, because as soon as francophones marry anglophones, they start to use English. However, research shows that francophones who are more inclined to use English within an exogamous couple, have, in many cases, already shown a significant interest in English, be it from a very young age, or at least since the age of 15. So previous behaviour is important.¹⁵³

Parents who want their child to become bilingual and have the best prospects for the future choose immersion school or English-language school, while making sure that French is spoken regularly in the home. These parents are well-intentioned, but they don't know that the research¹⁵⁴ has shown that the people who are the most fluently bilingual are those who attend French-language school in a minority setting. Since the majority of families will send their children to some form of pre-school institution (daycare, pre-kindergarten at three or four, or kindergarten at five, it is essential that families have the choice to enrol their child in French-language pre-school and that parents be made aware of the importance of their attitude to language transmission:

Francization efforts must be made as soon as the child is born, so that when it comes time to begin school, parents do not have to worry about their child's linguistic abilities.¹⁵⁵

The Action Plan for Official Languages includes a budget of \$22 million for early childhood development, but in an envelope separate from the agreements on education that the federal government signs with the provinces and territories. This \$22 million is intended essentially to support literacy services (\$7.4 million), fund pilot projects and research projects on the influence that French-language daycare services have on children's future development (\$10.8 million) and help national organizations to disseminate best practices for early childhood services (\$3.8 million). These funds were never meant to be invested in the development of the services themselves, but in laying the ground work for future investments in the development of services.

The communities were particularly happy to see the 2005 agreements for the development of early childhood services contain a clause guaranteeing them a definite percentage specific to each province.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Jean-Pierre Corbeil (Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division, Statistics Canada), Evidence, October 17, 2006, 10:15 a.m.

¹⁵⁴ See for example the sources quoted in the brief submitted to the Committee by the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities, http://www.umoncton.ca/icrml/Documents/Memoire_au_Comite_permanent_7_nov.%202006.pdf

¹⁵⁵ Josée Devaney (Trustee, Greater North Central Francophone Regional Authority no. 2), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:40 a.m.

¹⁵⁶ See to that effect the evidence of Murielle Gagné-Ouellette (Director General, *Commission nationale des parents francophones*), Evidence, December 12, 2006, 8:45 a.m.

The announced investments and the obligation to reserve money to develop French-language services produced a rapprochement, in certain provinces, between the communities and the provincial governments, such as in Saskatchewan, where the model for integrating early childhood services with elementary school was well received:

The province said that it was open to our model for intervention: it would even like to implement it throughout the province. We believe that learning and childcare go hand in hand [...] We will certainly not stop promoting our early childhood development strategy, but if we had the federal government contribution that was promised in the agreement, we would be able to move forward much more quickly and we would be able to ensure a much more institutional and organized approach.¹⁵⁷

Similarly in Alberta, a province grappling with enormous infrastructure needs:

The agreement enabled us to start negotiating things with the province of Alberta right away. The provincial representatives sat down and tried to find ways to develop concrete services [...] When you insert a clause that accommodates francophones in Alberta, you give us the tools we need to continue to develop.¹⁵⁸

It is clear that the decision to redistribute the amounts provided for in the agreements for early childhood services was a hard blow for the communities that had made it their priority. The announcements had created expectations and launched projects that had to be suspended.¹⁵⁹ What the communities are asking for is not a massive reinvestment in the development of infrastructures for early childhood, but simply an improvement in the services offered. In other words, the communities would like to be able to offer services of comparable quality to those currently offered without an additional reinvestment in the majority communities. Parents would thus have a real choice and the impact on the communities' vitality could be significant.

If we can't afford to put our own structure in place, the subsidies will be used by Francophone families to put their children in Anglophone child care. That's the greatest tool for assimilation. When children are in an Anglophone environment at the preschool stage, in the vast majority of cases, they remain in that situation until they enter English school.¹⁶⁰

It is not so much the decision to prefer direct subsidies to the families that the communities were questioning as the disadvantages to a Francophone family of receiving the money if the existing services are not equivalent:

¹⁵⁷ Roger Gauthier (Elected Member and Treasurer, *Réseau santé en français de la Saskatchewan*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

¹⁵⁸ Jean Johnson (President, French Canadian Association of Alberta), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 9:00 a.m.

¹⁵⁹ For example, the Head Starts Strategy developed in Ontario was suspended. See the evidence of Jean-Gilles Pelletier (Executive Director, *Centre francophone de Toronto*), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 9:50 a.m.

¹⁶⁰ Marc Gignac (Director of Strategic Development, *Fédération des parents francophones de Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 11:15 a.m.

[The recently announced measures are] working very well wherever there are majority groups. However, for our minorities, where parents don't know where to go or where there are incredible waiting lists for child care, it's not working. It's essential to have infrastructures in place.¹⁶¹

The problem thus relates to the lack of infrastructures for the Francophone minority community equivalent to the services available to the Anglophone majority community:

But the problem is the lack of infrastructure. Francophone daycare centres just don't exist. There is one in Edmonton, but I don't know if there are any elsewhere. We need help in setting up these centres, and this is what we used to get under the early childhood plan. We got money to build the necessary infrastructure.¹⁶²

The other problem is the major differences that exist between the various provinces:

In Quebec, people can not only access childcare at \$7 a day, but they can also get \$100 a month. Personally, I have two young children, one daughter goes to school, and I have to spend about \$1,000 a month for childcare. The \$100 is welcome, but I would rather have access to an adequate childcare program.¹⁶³

The construction of school-community centres integrating early childhood services also revealed the extent to which, when services were offered, it became clear just how much of a demand there was:

Today, we see that schools that have Francophone child care are guaranteed of being able to recruit student rights holders, and our kindergarten classes are overflowing. However, this essential service is not offered in all our communities.

We believe that the future of our Francophone community depends on our ability to reach our children, from the cradle, and that francization must occur as soon as possible, since everything in child development occurs before the age of five.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Jean Watters (Director General, *Conseil scolaire francophone de Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:55 a.m.

¹⁶² Josée Devaney (Trustee, Greater North Central Francophone Regional Authority no. 2), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 11:45 a.m.

¹⁶³ Étienne Alary (Director, *Le Franco d'Edmonton*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 11:40 a.m.

¹⁶⁴ Marie Bourgeois (Executive Director, Société Maison de la francophonie de Vancouver), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:40 a.m.; see also the remarks of Mr. Jean Watters (Director General, *Conseil scolaire francophone de Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:55 a.m.

The same phenomenon occurred in Newfoundland and Labrador, where the provincial authorities were not even sure there would be any demand for French-language early childhood services:

Last year, we had the privilege of opening the first francophone daycare here, in St. John's. We now like to open more, whether home daycares or daycare centres.¹⁶⁵

In some cases, the federal government's investment in education made it possible to upgrade preschool services and produced immediate results:

Within the school board itself, our greatest achievement has been the establishment of full-time kindergarten. The provincial government funds half-day kindergarten. Through the funds earmarked for official languages, we are able to finance full-time kindergarten. This allows us to integrate our children, and make considerable francization efforts. So when the children begin grade one, they are linguistically ready to take on the task ahead of them.¹⁶⁶

That success remains very fragile, however, because it is impossible to meet the growing demand for preschool and early childhood services:

Currently, preschool services are being offered by parent volunteers. Our fear is that some children will not be able to attend French-language preschool, and parents are worried that their child will not have the linguistic ability needed to register in the French-language program.¹⁶⁷

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 12

That the 125,000 daycare spaces, whose creation the Government of Canada announced in the 2006-2007 Budget, include a specific number for Francophone minority communities, in a proportion that is at least equivalent to the proportion of Francophones living in each province or territory.

¹⁶⁵ Marie-Claude Thibodeau (Director General, *Fédération des parents francophones de TNL*), Evidence, November 6, 2006, 11:25 a.m.

¹⁶⁶ Josée Devaney (Trustee, Greater North Central Francophone Regional Authority no. 2), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:50 a.m.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 10:35 a.m.

The Committee also recommends:

Recommendation 13

That, when the education agreements with provinces and territories other than Quebec are next renewed or when the budgets for minority-language education are not spent completely, these amounts can be used by the provinces and territories to fund the upgrading of French-language early childhood and preschool services.

4.1.1.3. Retaining Students Enrolled in Primary

We have seen that the offer of early childhood services could be decisive to parents' choice to enrol their child in a French-speaking institution, and that this choice has serious repercussions for the child's entire future development. Yet, the offer of services alone will not be enough unless it is accompanied by a growing awareness among those known as rights holders, that is, the families who, under section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, have the right to enrol their child in the minority language school and to participate in school governance. For example, many parents think that French immersion is sufficient to maintain language skills, while the best guarantor of bilingualism is full-time French-language education:

Immersion courses have served the francophone population, for better or for worse, before schools were established and before we had French-language education in our communities.

There are still people who have the following perception. I'm thinking particularly of Quebec parents who arrive in Newfoundland. They settle here and they decide that they want their children to be bilingual. So instead of sending them to a francophone school system, they send their children to an immersion program. So in this way we lose part of our clientele, and I find that unfortunate.¹⁶⁸

Moreover, from the perspective of community development, enrolling children from exogamous families in immersion programs has the significant disadvantage that it takes the students out of the Francophone community environment and integrates them into the majority system, which has the further consequence that it makes it difficult for the Francophone community to follow the progress and path of the students taking immersion programs. In other words, as we will see in the following section, immersion programs are designed for students from the majority and to create a spirit of openness in the Anglophone community, but, compared to minority-language education programs, they do little for community development:

¹⁶⁸ Cyrilda Poirier (Interim Director General, *La Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador*), Evidence, November 6, 2006, 10:10 a.m.

We have to get people to understand the difference between an education in immersion, which is basically designed for anglophones who have never known French, and a francophone education, which includes a whole cultural dimension. There are still francophones who don't understand that distinction. And for some students, whose parents or grand-parents were francophone, but who have lost their language to some extent, there is some francization to be done.

It is a bit of a shame that only 15% of eligible students use French-language schools. There is definitely some work to be done. That is also more or less included in the projects proposed by the Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones. We are considering the need to set up an identification, information and outreach campaign for parents. So, clearly, there is work to be done in that area.¹⁶⁹

Even in those provinces where the proportion of Francophones is increasing, student recruitment is by no means a given: In Canada, the proportion of eligible students attending French-language schools is estimated to be 60%.¹⁷⁰ This proportion is much lower in certain provinces, however. In Saskatchewan, according to the estimate of a Director of the *Conseil scolaire fransaskois*, that proportion is less than 20%.¹⁷¹

The efforts must then be sustained in order to prevent primary students from migrating to English-language secondary schools:

It is difficult for us to keep our students. In many cases, they only stay until grade six. Quite a few families are mixed marriages. Once the child has finished grade six, the anglophone spouse wants to enrol the child in what he thinks is a real school. He thinks that it is enough for his child to have learned to understand the language. Now he must get on with serious things.¹⁷²

The overall situation was summed up neatly by the Director General of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada:

Francophone school boards in minority communities throughout the country are facing similar challenges: difficulty recruiting students which leads to relatively low percentages of a potential pool of students with rights at their schools; difficulty retaining students which is expressed by a significant drop in staff, particularly at the secondary school level; mandatory provincial and territorial curriculums that are not always sensitive to the identity and community requirements of francophone schools and minority communities; the scattered nature of the francophone population particularly in rural regions; and,

¹⁶⁹ Paul Dumont (Trustee, Greater North Central Francophone Regional Authority no. 2), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 11:20 a.m.

¹⁷⁰ Rodrigue Landry (Director, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistics Minorities), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 9:20 a.m.

¹⁷¹ Denis Ferré (Director of Education, *Division scolaire francophone no. 310, Conseil scolaire fransaskois*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:50 a.m.

¹⁷² Josée Devaney (Trustee, Greater North Central Francophone Regional Authority no. 2), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 11:35 a.m.

finally the high proportion of students with rights from exogamous families or families where French is not the language most used at home.¹⁷³

That is why an awareness-raising campaign aimed at the parents, such as the school boards have been suggesting for many years, is so necessary:

When the federal government agreed to implement immersion courses, there was a great deal of publicity. There was publicity to promote immersion, etc. When Franco-Saskatchewanian or francophone schools were created all over Canada, not much Canadian publicity was done to stress the fact that this was the road that francophones should take if they want to remain bilingual.¹⁷⁴

As Professor Landry pointed out, the Senate Committee on Official Languages adopted recommendations to that effect in its 2005 report on education.¹⁷⁵

Given all these elements, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 14

That the Government of Canada, with the consent of the provinces and territories, conduct an awareness and information campaign directed at the Francophone minority communities with the following objectives:

- a) to raise parents' awareness of the benefits of enrolling their child in a French-language preschool and primary institution;**
- b) to encourage the continuation of French-language education at the secondary level as an asset in the child's future career opportunities in an Anglophone majority environment.**

¹⁷³ Raymond Th  berge (Director General, Council of Ministers of Education, Canada), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 11:00 a.m.

¹⁷⁴ Bernard Roy (Superintendent of Education, *Conseil scolaire fransaskois*), Evidence, December 6, 2006 at 9:50 a.m.; see also the evidence of Jos  e Devaney (Trustee, Greater North Central Francophone Regional Authority no. 2), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:35 a.m.

¹⁷⁵ The first recommendation reads: "That the federal government implement:

- a) a national campaign to increase awareness of, and respect for, language rights on the part of Canadians; and
- b) an information-campaign directed to Francophone communities in a minority setting and rights-holders under s. 23 of the Charter, regarding their rights to French-Language education and the relevant case law." French-Language Education in a Minority Setting: A Continuum from Early Childhood to the Postsecondary Level, Interim Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages, June 2005, Recommendation 1.

4.1.2. Second Language / Immersion Programs

The federal-provincial-territorial agreements on second-language instruction tie in with the federal government's efforts to promote Canadian linguistic duality. The most striking results of these investments are felt in the climate of the relations between the two official language communities: "The results that [immersion school] yields are understanding, acceptance and cultural enrichment."¹⁷⁶

That being said, unlike the minority-language education programs, the supplementary investments in second-language instruction in the Action Plan were not offset by a corresponding reduction in the regular program. In that respect, the second-language instruction programs are the ones that, by far, benefited the most from the Action Plan's investments. The amount of the federal-provincial-territorial agreements almost doubled in four years, from \$43.8 million in 2002-2003 to \$80.4 million in 2005-2006.

¹⁷⁶ Denis Ferré (Director of Education, *Division scolaire francophone no. 310, Conseil scolaire fransaskois*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:50 a.m.

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING	\$ 64 871 958	\$ 66 245 086	\$ 81 320 260	\$ 104 553 812
Federal/provincial/territorial agreements on second language learning	\$ 43 796 843	\$ 45 818 258	\$ 55 861 270	\$ 80 418 605
Regular Program	\$ 43 796 843	\$ 45 043 258	\$ 44 710 394	\$ 55 081 029
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$ 775 000	\$ 11 150 876	\$ 25 337 576
Language Acquisition Development Program	\$ 344 866			
Supplementary Support for Language Learning	\$ 16 750 249	\$ 17 333 208	\$ 22 523 101	\$ 21 230 498
Regular Program		\$ 16 846 458	\$ 17 745 901	\$ 16 532 498
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$ 486 750	\$ 4 777 200	\$ 4 698 000
Summer Language Bursary	\$ 11 466 774			
Official Language Monitors (second language)	\$ 5 283 475			
Co-operation with the Non-Governmental Sector		\$ 411 840	\$ 562 160	\$ 533 745
Young Canada Works (second language or both languages)	\$ 3 980 000	\$ 2 681 780	\$ 2 373 729	\$ 2 370 964

The organization Canadian Parents for French is pleased by the renewal and enhancement of the amounts allocated for second-language instruction. The results are palpable, particularly in Ontario:

With the signing of the Canada-Ontario agreement on minority language and second official language instruction in 2005-2006 to 2008-2009, unprecedented progress was made toward support and revitalization of core French and French immersion programs for Ontario schools. There are currently 968,000 students enrolled in FSL programs in Ontario, and close to 115,000 are enrolled in French immersion [...]

A follow-up study by CPF (Ontario) of how the funding was spent at each school board indicated that funds went mostly to basic expenditures for these programs, such as the purchase of material resources and teacher professional development [...] Currently, one individual is assigned at the Ministry of Education to the FSL portfolio, overseeing close to 970,000 students in 60 school boards across the huge geographical expanse of Ontario.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁷ Monika Ferenczy (President, Canadian Parents for French (Ontario)), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 10:40 a.m.

In some cases, this increase in clientele created problems with access to the programs:

In some school boards, there are buildings that are closed as schools, but the school boards will not open French immersion programs in those empty buildings, and parents line up at four o'clock in the morning to sign up their children for these programs. There is, we believe, adequate funding for French as a second language through the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario. However, that funding is not reaching its destination, and that is where we need to collaborate to have some tighter accountability measures at the local level so that it transfers to pupil places.¹⁷⁸

The Committee is pleased by the initiatives taken to support second-language instruction, which is an essential element in the promotion of linguistic duality. These initiatives have produced striking successes that must be sustained. However, from the perspective of supporting the vitality of the official language minority communities and, given that Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* has been strengthened, the Committee agrees with Canadian Parents for French that the current levels of funding are sufficient to attend the programs' objectives.

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 15

That the Government of Canada maintain its current level of funding at the least for second-language instruction programs, including immersion programs, and support the provincial and territorial governments' efforts to set up adequate administrative structures in order to reduce the problems with access and accountability, all with the cooperation of recognized organizations that promote second-language learning.

At the same time, the Anglophone community of Quebec's crying need for French-language instruction must not be neglected, since this is closely linked to the community's capacity to retain young families, but also necessarily to employment development for adults:

From our perspective, the 2003 action plan was slow in being implemented in such areas as education, economic development, and the public service. English speakers in our region have a real need for improved French language instruction in schools and for adults alike. Despite great financial constraints, the Eastern Townships School Board has increased the proportion of core courses offered in French in its schools. The action plan

¹⁷⁸ Monika Ferenczy (President, Canadian Parents for French (Ontario)), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 11:25 a.m.

should be providing support for this initiative. Low-income adult English speakers do not currently have access to free or low-cost French language courses. This is desperately needed.¹⁷⁹

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 16

That the Government of Canada increase the level of its investment in the agreement on English as a second-language instruction between the federal government and the government of Quebec.

4.1.3. Post-Secondary Education

The investments in second-language instruction programs contributed greatly to the development of the post-secondary institutions that provided students' second-language instruction and then subsequently attracted the students who had taken these courses, one example being the St-Jean Campus at the University of Alberta:

Our students, some 70% of whom are immersion program graduates, are native English speakers. Our challenge is to turn these students, who are linguistic bilinguals, into complete bilinguals within two or four years, depending on their programs of study. In other words, they are asked to acquire French and English as both individual and common languages. The process is a long and difficult one, but we will achieve our ends in large part thanks to the support we receive from the Government of Canada through bilateral agreements.¹⁸⁰

The Institut français at the University of Regina was asked to train public servants required to offer services in both official languages:

We have benefited from and will continue to greatly benefit from the Dion Plan, its philosophy and its concrete actions. You have to understand that we exist within a majority that has a lot of difficulty understanding why we are here. We have a vision of education which is different from that of the anglophone majority.¹⁸¹

The former Commissioner of Official Languages explicitly supported this development option for minority post-secondary institutions:

The federal government's main challenge is to find a way, as we've done with the action plan, to assist provinces in their efforts to improve access to training in the second official language. We could offer resources, and consider recommendations, as some have recently done, to the effect that post-secondary institutions commit to preserving

¹⁷⁹ Michael Van Lierop (President, Townshippers Association), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

¹⁸⁰ Marc Arnal (Dean, St-Jean Campus, University of Alberta), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 8:20 a.m.

¹⁸¹ Dominique Sarny (Director, *Institut français*, University of Regina), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:40 a.m.

knowledge of English and French acquired in secondary institutions. In some areas of the country, because post-secondary institutions do not offer programs or services in French, young people lose their knowledge of that language.¹⁸²

These developments are completely desirable, but, from the perspective of enhancing the vitality of the official language minority communities, the Committee feels that they are of lesser importance than programs that help retain young graduates in their original communities.

That, for example, is the effect produced by the creation of the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface:

I think our greatest achievements are our school system and the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface. To build on that, we'd like to start sooner, before students even enter our school system, because, when they do, sometimes it's already too late. If it's already too late, a lot of our Francophones don't choose our system because of that. Our greatest achievements, in my view, are the Franco-Manitoban education sector, the university college, the occupational technical school and everything related to the college.¹⁸³

That is unquestionably the same type of significant effect that the *Centre de formation médicale de Moncton* will have, since New Brunswick's Francophone students will no longer have to leave their province to receive medical training in French. The problem of retention is crucial in the health field, where graduates are in great demand, and it becomes difficult to keep them in their communities. This situation can be exacerbated or helped by the fact that workforce mobility rules vary from one province to another. This is however more difficult for official-language minority communities in general. Saint-Boniface General Hospital, for example, works hard to bring back students who took their training elsewhere:

We periodically invite them to do internships at the hospital where, for example, we try to find them summer jobs. If they're from Manitoba, they can come and work at our research centre during the summer. That enables them to stay interested in our institution. It also enables us to talk to them about prospects, about how we can open doors for them when they come back.¹⁸⁴

In Alberta, Saint-Jean Campus will be helping to set up a community college to provide French-language technical and professional training that will be integrated into the University of Alberta.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Dyane Adam (Commissioner of Official Languages), Evidence, 6 June 2006, 9:55 a.m.

¹⁸³ Léo Robert (Director General, *Conseil communauté en santé du Manitoba*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:25 p.m.

¹⁸⁴ Michel Tétreault (President and CEO, St-Boniface General Hospital), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 7:55 p.m.

¹⁸⁵ Marc Arnal (Dean, St-Jean Campus, University of Alberta), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 9:45 a.m.

These examples are a clear illustration of the dynamism of the Francophone minority communities and reinforce the importance of offering the entire continuum of education services, from early childhood to university, since, more and more, education is the guarantee of a satisfying career path. Offering Francophones this option also creates a living environment in which the possibilities are no longer limited by having to work in English.

The Committee recommends:

Recommendation 17

That the Government of Canada create a program, in partnership with the provincial and territorial governments and post-secondary institutions, to offer internships that will encourage the retention and return of Francophone students to the official language minority communities.

4.2. VITALITY OF COMMUNITY NETWORKS

The associative community is like the oil that keeps the gears working properly. I think we have to do whatever we can to ensure that it is healthy, without necessarily criticizing the fact that it always depends on government. In a minority situation, that is the reality.¹⁸⁶

Increasingly, both spouses in a family work, and there are fewer and fewer volunteers. Those who are called upon to do volunteer work are people like Ms. Saulnier, who has just taken very early retirement and who will become a volunteer par excellence. I also retired a few years ago. I'm still a volunteer, and I'm going to continue, but we're getting burned out.¹⁸⁷

4.2.1. Community Life Component of the Action Plan

Under the Community Life component, the Action Plan provided \$19 million over five years to fund community projects submitted to Canadian Heritage, including those for community centres, culture and the media. This additional funding was not intended to boost the organizations' capacities directly since no funding was allocated to their operating budgets. The funding was instead comparable to that provided under the Strategic Fund to support structuring projects for communities, but for projects that do not necessarily meet existing program criteria, or that have significant infrastructure requirements or that are interprovincial or national in scope.

¹⁸⁶ Denis Hubert (President, Collège Boréal), Evidence, November 10, 2006, 9:55 a.m.

¹⁸⁷ Paul d'Entremont (Coordinator, Réseau santé Nouvelle-Écosse), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 11:10 a.m.

On the whole, funding for the Community Life component of the Canadian Heritage Development of Official Language Communities program was cut by 3.6% from 2002-2003 to 2005-2006, from \$54.9 million to \$52.9 million. This drop in funding can essentially be explained by the fact that the budgets for the Interdepartmental Partnership with Official Language Communities¹⁸⁸ could not be transferred to other departments since there were no Supplementary Estimates in 2005-2006.

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
COMMUNITY LIFE COMPONENT	\$ 54 883 938	\$ 57 398 442	\$ 51 953 917	\$ 52 894 007
Cooperation with the Community Sector / Support for Communities	\$ 34 746 648	\$ 37 031 435	\$ 33 383 847	\$ 37 437 226
Regular Program	\$ 28 232 251	\$ 25 347 365	\$ 24 435 793	\$ 28 541 417
Strategic Fund	\$ 6 514 397	\$ 9 547 572	\$ 6 129 677	\$ 4 845 809
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>		\$ 2 136 498	\$ 2 818 377	\$ 4 050 000
Administration of Justice in Both Official Languages	\$ 649 000			
FPT agreements for minority-language services	\$ 13 171 426	\$ 14 151 205	\$ 13 339 560	\$ 14 306 888
Regular Program	\$ 13 171 426	\$ 13 462 543	\$ 11 572 718	\$ 11 330 808
<i>Action Plan for Official Languages</i>	\$ 3 906 677	\$ 688 662	\$ 1 766 842	\$ 2 976 080
Interdepartmental Partnership with Official Language Communities	\$ 6 316 864	\$ 5 321 876	\$ 893 926	\$ -
Young Canada Works (minority)		\$ 893 926	\$ 1 323 833	\$ 1 149 893

Funding for community organizations comes primarily from the Cooperation with the Community Sector subcomponent. This funding increased overall by about \$3.3 million or 7.7% from 2002-2003 to 2005-2006. This increase can be attributed to the investments under the *Action Plan for community support projects*, and the Strategic Fund, which also provides project funding.

Funding for community organizations comes essentially from the regular program of the Cooperation with the Community Sector subcomponent, formerly known as Support for Communities or Canada-Community Agreements. In 2005-2006, this funding rose to its 2002-2003 level after two consecutive decreases in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005.¹⁸⁹ In other words, as is the case with FPT agreements on minority-language education, but less significantly so, the investments under the Action Plan resulted in a drop in funding from the regular program, while the Action Plan investments supplemented those under the regular program.

Of the additional \$19 million the Action Plan provides for Community Life, about \$9 million was spent during the Plan's first three fiscal years. That leaves \$10 million to be spent in fiscal years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008.

¹⁸⁸ Under this program, Canadian Heritage transfers funding to other departments that take initiatives to foster the development of official language minority communities.

¹⁸⁹ Some witnesses stated that the spending freeze dates back earlier than this. See for instance Marianne Théorêt-Poupart (Communications Coordinator, Association franco-yukonnaise), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:35 a.m.

4.2.2. Increase Support for Organizations

As demonstrated in this report many times already, the strength of community networks is the main source of long-term initiatives that support community vitality. Their strength is threatened in various locations, especially in Ontario:

In fact, as regards the associative movement, right now funding is the sinews of war. We need increased core funding, based on regional characteristics. Compared to other cities, Toronto has higher rents, and so with \$50,000, the Toronto ACFO will not be able to continue. There are other things that will also have to be considered, such as distances in the North.

We have also talked about multiyear plans, rather than having to do the same work over again every year. That makes no sense. We need a three to five year plan so that ACFOs can create the right structure and subsequently attain the desired results. That is not something that can be done in one year; and without adequate funding, it's a vicious cycle. If there is less money, there is no work and no qualified staff. If there is no alternative funding, there are no results, and if there are no results, there is no money. So, the whole thing starts all over again.¹⁹⁰

During its meetings, the Committee noted that the people driving these initiatives are getting worn out, people who in most cases do this strictly on a voluntary basis. The significant gains made by the communities, especially as regards education and more recently health care services, has made the work these people must now do every day significantly more complex:

Grassroots organizations, those that work in the communities, saw their funding decrease in the 1990s. Evidently, their funding did not keep up with inflation, so much so that the Alliance de la francophonie de Timmins, which serves 19,000 Francophones in Timmins alone, cannot even hire full-time staff, neither a secretary, nor a director general, nor a development officer. We have part-time staff and volunteers. This is volunteer work that I have already termed, on Radio-Canada, extreme volunteer work, because people have to work in the evenings and on weekends; it is extremely difficult.¹⁹¹

Stronger skills and more resources are needed for project management, accounting and strategies for canvassing the various orders of government. These increasingly demanding roles must be performed by community organizations that in many cases cannot even afford to hire someone full time.

¹⁹⁰ Suzanne Roy (Executive Director, ACFO Regional, Community Development Sector, Association canadienne française de l'Ontario du grand Sudbury), Evidence, November 10, 2006, 11:00 a.m.

¹⁹¹ Pierre Bélanger (Chairman of the Board, Alliance de la francophonie de Timmins), Evidence, November 28, 2006, 9:20 a.m.; also see comments by Sylvain Lacroix (Director General, *Alliance de la francophonie de Timmins*), Evidence, November 28, 2006, 9:55 a.m.; as well as Jean Comtois (Vice-President, *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario*), Evidence, December 12, 2006, 9:45 a.m.; Réjean Grenier (publisher and editorial writer, *Journal Le Voyageur*), Evidence, November 28, 2006, 9:30 a.m.; Richard Caissier (Director General, *Association des enseignants et enseignantes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 2:00 p.m.; Josée Nadeau (Director, *Association francophone des parents du Nouveau-Brunswick*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 2:05 p.m.

The action plan has enabled us to make the targeted departments more aware of the provision of services and of the challenges facing the Acadian and Francophone community. However, we haven't enjoyed significant investment directly related to community development, which is to say of our French-language communities in an English-dominant environment. If we have one recommendation to make, it would be that this deficiency be corrected.

Since 2001, the number of French-language schools in Prince Edward Island has increased from two to six. The offer of services has risen and demand is still increasing. Unfortunately, funding allocated to our communities has not increased. Consequently, we are having trouble meeting the demand that we have created by establishing these centres.¹⁹² Our increasing work load has put a serious strain on financial and human resources, and this is of great concern to us. We wonder about our capacity to respond to meet the needs and to establish partnerships with those who have the greatest impact on our community's development.¹⁹³

Nearly all the community organizations that appeared before the Committee made similar comments.

In British Columbia, we determined our needs and submitted a comprehensive development plan together with supporting figures. In spite of everything, the cost of living is rising, and we now only have one employee. That's all we have, whereas development has to be done.¹⁹⁴

To respond in an effective and realistic fashion, we need more substantial funding, not on a project basis, but to support the basic infrastructure in the various community sectors. The number of sectors has increased, but we still only have two or three people working on all the standing committees, etc. At a certain point, we will no longer be able to keep up.¹⁹⁵

With respect to strengthening Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, the Committee is of the opinion that the resources allocated to community organizations must be increased, as an urgent priority. The growth in services, projects and investments has led to a high demand for community resources, yet the funding allocated to community organizations has not grown with other investments, and they are increasingly complex to administer due to the new requirements for obtaining contributions. So there are few people who are being asked to do more and more.

¹⁹² Lizanne Thorne (Director General, *Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 9:15 a.m.

¹⁹³ Michel Dubé (President, *Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:35 a.m.

¹⁹⁴ Michelle Rakotonaivo (President, *Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

¹⁹⁵ Francis Potié (Director General, *Association de la presse francophone*), Evidence, November 28, 2006, 9:20 a.m.; see also Willie Lirette (President, *Fédération des aînées et aînés francophones du Canada*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:40 p.m.; Mariette Carrier-Fraser (President, *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario*), Evidence, December 12, 2006, 9:40 a.m.; Daniel Thériault (Director General, *Société des Acadiens et Acadiennes du Nouveau-Brunswick*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:10 p.m.

The Committee recommends:

Recommendation 18

That the regular program funding of the Cooperation with the Community Sector subcomponent of the Community Life Component, Development of Official Language Communities Program, be increased by 50% for fiscal year 2007-2008 compared to current levels of financing, and then be increased proportionally with the overall budgets for Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Support Programs, in order to reflect the additional effort required of organizations once projects are in place.

Another source of pressure on community organizations is the increasing complexity of reporting requirements. The Committee strongly advocates any measure that increases the financial accountability of organizations receiving public funds. It has become very clear however that a number of organizations do not have the resources at present to take on this responsibility and that too much of the volunteers' time is spent filling out reports to justify the funding these organization have received.

Second, the process for transferring federal funds to community agencies is very costly because it involves contributions and funding transfers conditional on reimbursement. The provincial government, on the other hand, simply uses an allocation method and conducts an annual audit. The problems we are describing to you may be very practical problems but they make the life of organizations in Francophone minority communities very difficult. These funding agreements are very cumbersome to manage and the same types of complaints have been expressed by many other groups.¹⁹⁶

The Committee does not regard funding for the operating expenses of these organizations as a gift that makes them parasites of the state. On the contrary, the individuals who take on tasks that are a federal responsibility generate inestimable savings.

The federal government is not giving these organizations a gift because the government is compelled to do so by the Act; rather it is a program whose objectives the government believes in and it must therefore ensure that the people responsible for delivering these services are able to do so. When the government chooses to directly provide the services it considers important, it hires public servants, rents offices and provides the infrastructure for the work to get done. When the government provides a contribution for a project, it is because it considers that the community organizations are better able to deliver this program than it could itself. It makes the community organizations responsible for delivering the programs whose objectives it develops.

The federal government now has a legal obligation to foster the vitality of official language minority communities. We consider the funding of community organizations a

¹⁹⁶ Jean-Gilles Pelletier (Director General, *Centre francophone de Toronto*), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

much more effective, economical, structuring and stimulating way to fulfill these obligations than increasing the number of public servants to achieve these same objectives. Community organizations thus become a tool enabling the federal government to more effectively meet its obligations.

In 2005-2006, of the \$341.4 million in funding that Canada Heritage provided under its official languages support programs, \$5.3 million or 1.6% was in the form of grants and the rest was in contributions. The Committee considers the risk of abuse by organizations to be insignificant as compared to the tremendous savings achieved through the work they do in fostering the vitality of official language minority communities. The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 19

That all the funding provided to organizations under the regular program of the Cooperation with the “Community Sector” subcomponent of the “Community Life” component that is not for specific projects be provided in the form of grants.

This does not mean that the management of contribution agreements does not need to be improved. On the contrary, bureaucratic red tape is one of the main irritants interfering with the community organizations' ability to do their work.¹⁹⁷ It is not a question of reducing the accountability criteria but rather of recognizing that a community organization that relies on volunteers does not have the same resources as an organization that has a number of employees and can assign staff to administrative duties relating to the management of these agreements. Various irritants are cited: the renewal of agreements on an annual basis, which creates uncertainty for multi-year projects and creates an additional workload, and transfers in the form of reimbursement upon presentation of receipts, which requires organizations to keep separate accounts for each project although projects evolve at the same time with resources divided among the projects. These are just two examples that a group of experts is currently considering in reviewing the Treasury Board policy on transfer payments.

¹⁹⁷ Jean-Gilles Pelletier (Director General, *Centre francophone de Toronto*), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 10:10 a.m.

The Committee recommends:

Recommendation 20

That Treasury Board consider the specific characteristics of official language minority communities, including the obligation to take positive measures to foster the development of these communities, and introduce greater administrative flexibility in the development of its policy on transfer payments.

This observation regarding the significant difficulties faced by community organizations applies to all official language minority communities in Canada, whether English-speaking or French-speaking. Matters are especially critical in Ontario, however, where half of Francophones in minority communities live; they are also spread out, so more organizations are needed to effectively represent the various regions:

Canadian Heritage nevertheless has a rather limited budget to support organizations. The number of organizations in Ontario alone is increasing, but the pie is still the same size. To ensure that Francophone organizations and associations receive some funding, the amount allocated to each of the organizations is being reduced so that everyone gets a little. The organizations then have trouble not only living, but surviving.¹⁹⁸

These comments were supported by various representatives of educational institutions and health care facilities who are responsible for significant budgets and complex institutions, but who nevertheless stress the importance of maintaining community health networks:

If the ACFO were not a solid partner, we would not be here. Despite that \$14 million [for health networks], which is great, we would not exist. It is thanks to the ACFO that we have been able to grow. Unfortunately, there is not sufficient awareness of the fact that it is organizations such as this that are involved.¹⁹⁹

It is also very difficult for Anglophone communities outside Montreal, which face the same pressures as other community organizations, but must also fight the perception that Anglophones in Quebec automatically enjoy special status. The fact is that, given the same number of people as Francophone minorities, Anglophone organizations receive only about 10% of total funding under Canadian Heritage's Cooperation with the Community Sector program.

Through Canadian Heritage you're looking at an envelope of about \$33 million for the support of minority language communities. The other reality is that \$30 million of that \$33

¹⁹⁸ Mariette Carrier-Fraser (President, Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario), Evidence, December 12, 2006, 9:40 a.m.

¹⁹⁹ Marc-André Larouche (Director General, *Réseau des services de santé en français du Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario*), Evidence, November 10, 2006, 10:05 a.m.

million goes to the Francophone organizations outside Quebec and only \$3 million goes to the Anglophone organizations in Quebec. And the numbers are comparable: 950,000 people versus just under 1 million people. We agree the reality is that the needs of those small Franco organizations everywhere in Canada are obviously many times more significant, because we have a lot more in terms of institutions in Quebec. But we don't all live on the Island of Montreal.²⁰⁰

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 21

That the proportion of total funding for the Cooperation, with the “Community Sector” subcomponent of the “Community Life” component of Canadian Heritage’s Development of Official Language Communities Program, that is allocated to Quebec’s Anglophone community be increased and that priority be given to community organizations outside the Montreal metropolitan area.

The Anglophones of Quebec also have a problem retaining their best and brightest:

There is a sense of demoralization [...] it is the brightest and the best [who have left], the people with the most education.²⁰¹

I hope that, when they [young people] leave, they do so with a desire to return. But at the moment, they leave to go — they are not thinking about coming back. Perhaps if we could get them to think about it, some of them might come back. But they would need to have a future, and jobs.²⁰²

The minority French and English populations in Canada are very similar in size, just short of a million each. The reports I get of the francophone minority outside of Quebec give me some encouragement that the support they are receiving is achieving positive results. I celebrate that. We all celebrate it. However, it is time to examine whether Canada wants to maintain a population of anglophones in Quebec or whether it might be more politically expedient to allow us all to emigrate or die out.²⁰³

The other problem for both Francophones and Anglophones pertains to the fact that the federal government regularly calls upon community organizations to prepare plans and development priorities for the programs it wishes to implement. As we saw with respect to health, the networks in each province and territory were tasked with developing priorities and projects to increase access to primary health care in French. This project was called *Préparer le terrain*. To date though no funding has been confirmed to launch initiatives that the networks identified as priorities at the federal government’s request. Both recently and

²⁰⁰ Robert Donnelly (President, Voice of English-Speaking Québec), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 11:30 a.m.

²⁰¹ Rachel Garber (Executive Director, Townshippers Association), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 9:50 a.m.

²⁰² M. Robert Donnelly (President, Voice of English-Speaking Québec), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 11:40 a.m.

²⁰³ Peter Riordon (Treasurer, Quebec Community Groups Network), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 11:00 a.m.

in the past, community organizations have been asked to come up with regional strategies to foster Francophone immigration, but the funding agreements for immigrant settlement were signed with the provinces without any specific amount being allocated for Francophone communities and without any assurance that the priorities set by the communities would be respected. The communities have now become increasingly sceptical and sometimes even cynical about what the federal government asks them to do.

We make a proposal to Canadian Heritage, and its officers make the decisions. Last year we made some very difficult decisions that were not respect.²⁰⁴

Our communities have not yet renewed their agreement with the Department of Canadian Heritage [...] Any uncertainty could kill the initiative of volunteers and employees, thus leaving our communities in a tenuous situation.

We therefore ask that these agreements be renewed as soon as possible in a manner consistent with the needs of the communities. The communities' priorities must be the priorities set out in those agreements, and the necessary resources to achieve them must be provided there.²⁰⁵

The Committee is of the opinion that the requirement to “take positive measures” entailed in strengthening Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* also includes the obligation to respect the priorities set by the communities themselves insofar as these priorities are compatible with the program criteria. The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 22

That, insofar as it respects the spirit and criteria of the program concerned, Canadian Heritage, under the “Community Life” component of the Development of Official Language Communities Program, commit to respect the priorities set by the organizations representing official language minority communities and specifically include them in these agreements.

4.3. INFRASTRUCTURE

Many examples have illustrated the effectiveness of an active offer of services. An active offer of services highlights unrecognized demand and produces results that exceed expectations. While the simplest kind of active offer is a sign saying “English-French,” or a badge identifying institutions where patients can be served in French, the most elaborate type with the most striking results is a building. This form offers a solid foundation from which community networks can achieve stronger growth. Three kinds of infrastructure have

²⁰⁴ Jean Johnson (President, *Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 9:45 a.m.

²⁰⁵ Paul d'Entremont (Coordinator, *Réseau santé Nouvelle-Écosse*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 10:50 a.m.

demonstrated their effectiveness as catalysts for community vitality: community health centres, school and community centres and multi-service centres.

4.3.1. Community Health Centres

In Manitoba, the construction of the Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes Health Centre is one of the greatest successes of the *Réseau santé en français*, and is also the best illustration of the leverage effect of an initial investment by the federal government (see Chapter 2). In Alberta, a health infrastructure project, the Saint-Thomas Health Centre, a residence for Francophone seniors requiring assistance in daily living, will soon open. It has been difficult getting this project going, and a more substantial investment was requested of the federal government. The snags in obtaining funding for this centre illustrate the difficulty reconciling respect for community priorities, the limits of federal jurisdiction and the great variability in conditions that may or may not justify funding in a given case.

In 2003, Alberta's Francophone community was asked to identify a few priorities that the federal government could support. The underlying principle was that, depending on the objectives and the budgets set, projects put forward by communities themselves are more likely to meet the community's needs, to be accepted and to be more successful than priorities set in Ottawa.

Our priority is very simple, and it took the community 10 minutes to say that it was the Saint-Thomas Health Centre. That was three years ago. Since then, senior officials have told us that they had the political will, that it may be eligible for funding, but that they did not want to create any precedents within their program.²⁰⁶

After obtaining funding from the provincial government and other backers, construction began in 2006:

Once the centre opens, which should be in the fall of 2007, over 200 residents and an even larger number of external users will be able to access a wide range of services in French, from health care to training and cultural development, under one roof. For the first time in the province's history, health care specialists will be able to practice their profession in a Francophone environment with French as the language of work. The centre will also be able to provide job placements for interns wishing to work in a Francophone environment.²⁰⁷

Even before the building was completed, places were booking up so quickly that the health authority serving the Edmonton area was forced to recognize the extent of the demand for primary health care services in French. Creating this centre will also have all kinds of repercussions in other areas and on revitalizing the French fact in Alberta.

²⁰⁶ Joël Lavoie (Director General, *Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 9:25 a.m.

²⁰⁷ Denis Collette (Project Coordinator, Saint-Thomas Health Centre), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:15 a.m.

In January 2006, an additional \$2.7 million in funding was requested and the provincial government approved it, in view of the strong demand. Of this amount, \$1.2 million had been requested from the Government of Canada. When the Committee stopped in Edmonton in December 2006, the Saint-Thomas Health Centre had still not received a positive reply from the federal government. A few weeks later, however, on January 19, 2007, the Minister for the Francophonie and Official Languages announced a \$750,000 contribution.²⁰⁸

The existence of a fund for infrastructure including construction, which the communities regard as a priority and that is consistent with the Government of Canada's program objectives, would have greatly simplified discussions on the federal government's involvement in this project, which marks a turning point in the development of Alberta's Francophone community and could very well snowball in other parts of the province.

4.3.2. School and Community Centres

A school and community centre is a building that serves as a hub for a wide range of community needs: child care centre, school, gymnasium accessible to the community, performance hall, office space for community organizations. Professor Rodrigue Landry summarizes the benefits of the kind of cooperation involved in establishing a school and community centre:

Education is a provincial jurisdiction. If the provincial government says that it has a duty to attend to the school component and the federal government addresses the community component, we get a good mix, with a great community school centre as a result. That centre would offer community

activities enabling all generations to meet in the context of all kinds of activities. For young people, there'd be a school. We could even add a day care centre to it.

With this kind of institution, you provide what the community is lacking. This is all the more important in the major urban centres, where it's very hard to find a school near home.

This is a good example of cooperation.²⁰⁹

The effects of uncovering unrecognized demand have been apparent wherever these centres have been built. The centre in Prince Edward Island is a good example:

²⁰⁸ See press release at: http://www.pch.gc.ca/newsroom/index_e.cfm?fuseaction=displayDocument&DocIDCd=CR061368

²⁰⁹ Rodrigue Landry (Director, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities), Evidence, June 6, 2006, t 10:20 a.m.

In 2000, the Summerside elementary school had space in our offices. There were four students in Grade 1. That's all. In 2006, we had a great school centre that met a lot of the community's needs. We think it's a model for all other regions. We had four students in 2000, and now we have 65 to 70. At the preschool centre day care for children 22 months to six years of age, there are more than 50 students.

In addition, another school, Carrefour de l'Isle-Saint-Jean in Charlottetown, was built in 1991. The building was constructed to accommodate 150 students. In the first years, there were between 50 and 75 students; now there are more than 250. They have a nice centre, but they've exceeded the school's capacity in 15 years.²¹⁰

The federal government's role is essentially to fund community spaces and those used for preschool child care, since preschool child care does not fall under the responsibility of the French-language school boards. With the school and community centre model, a day care centre and a French-language school can be located together, without requiring separate buildings. In some regions, there are still communities whose schools are in portables, which cannot accommodate a gymnasium or a small laboratory.²¹¹

4.3.3. Multi-Service Centres

Multi-service centres are based on the single-window concept. They make it possible to offer Francophones in a region all the services they need on a regular basis, and ideally includes the various orders of government under one roof, as is the case with the very successful centre in Winnipeg. Such centres can be in addition to a school and community centre or a medical clinic, such as at the *Centre francophone de Toronto*, or they can be separate, while also including a community component. It is this type of centre that the Francophone community of Saskatchewan is especially interested in, since the community is spread out, making it difficult to offer services in one location.²¹²

4.3.4. Other Options

An infrastructure fund could also support the development of post-secondary education, such as the Centre for Excellence that Boreal College, Glendon College and the new School of Public Affairs would like to develop in Southern Ontario.²¹³ The Cornwall

²¹⁰ Lizanne Thorne (Director General, *Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin*), Evidence, November 7, 2006 at 9:30 a.m.

²¹¹ In Alberta, for instance, see testimony of Josée Devaney (school trustee, *Autorité régionale francophone du Centre-Nord no. 2*), Evidence, December 5, 2006,t 11:25 a.m.

²¹² See testimony of Michel Dubé (President, *Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise*), Evidence, December 6, 2006,t 8:35 a.m.

²¹³ See testimony of Louise Lewin (Assistant Director, Glendon College, York University), Evidence, November 9, 2006,t 10:55 a.m.

area is also in great need of a Francophone cultural centre, which could benefit from an infrastructure fund.²¹⁴

The Anglophones of Quebec, especially communities outside Montreal, could also benefit from an infrastructure fund, like the library planned in the Eastern Townships, which would preserve this community's heritage and also serve as a community centre, a multi-service centre and a meeting point fostering community vitality.²¹⁵

An infrastructure fund could also help fund technology infrastructure linking various communities, especially in provinces where minority communities are spread out.²¹⁶

Since official language minority communities have significant catching up to do in order to approach services of equal quality to what the majority receives, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 23

That the Government of Canada establish an infrastructure fund in order to upgrade services that foster the vitality of francophone language minority communities, including early childhood services.

4.4. LINGUISTIC CLAUSES IN FEDERAL TRANSFERS

In areas under provincial jurisdiction, such as education and health, or of shared jurisdiction, such as immigration, the federal government must give provincial governments sufficient leeway to perform their roles. Yet the statutory requirement that the federal government foster the vitality of official language minority communities should also be reflected by a firm commitment in the form of transfer payments to the provinces. Various witnesses stated that such a commitment would have a profound impact on community vitality and would in a way intensify negotiations between the communities and the provincial governments, which are responsible for the services with the greatest impact on vitality.²¹⁷

²¹⁴ Francine Brisebois (*Centre culturel de Cornwall, Stormont, Dundas et Glengarry*), Evidence, December 12, 2006, 10:30 a.m.

²¹⁵ See the description of the project by Jonathan Rittenhouse (Vice-Principal, Bishop's University), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 10:20 a.m.

²¹⁶ See comments by Denis Ferré (Education Director, *Division scolaire francophone numéro 310, Conseil scolaire fransaskois*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:55 a.m.

²¹⁷ See comments by Jean Johnson (President, *Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 8:15 a.m.; also Denis Collette (Project Coordinator, Saint-Thomas Health Centre), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:55 a.m.; Nicole Rauzon-Wright (President, *Réseau franco-santé du Sud de l'Ontario*), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 9:55 a.m.

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 24

That all federal transfer payments to the provinces or territories for a sector under provincial jurisdiction or shared jurisdiction include a clause allocating separate funding in order to work towards equality of services for francophone language minority communities.

Such a clause would also dispel persistent doubts about how federal transfer payments, especially for education, are spent by the provinces and in turn by school boards.²¹⁸ With respect to immigration, such a clause would also direct funding to organizations specifically responsible for the reception and settlement of Francophone immigrants.

We must bear in mind the special status of the three territories which do not have the same areas of jurisdiction under the Constitution, even though negotiations are conducted with them in the same way as they are with the provinces. The Committee is of the opinion that the federal government's greater role in managing the territories should facilitate the application of linguistic policies since the territories cannot offer the same kind of resistance relating to federal and provincial jurisdictions. Yet witnesses indicated that services in French in the territories were very poor and would benefit from greater attention by the federal government to its linguistic obligations to Francophones in the territories. Once again, a productive dialogue appears to be developing in health, while there is stagnation in other areas. The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 25

That the Government of Canada, together with the territorial governments and the Francophone communities of the North, develop a strategy for Francophones in the territories to ensure that satisfactory services are available for all matters under federal jurisdiction, and negotiate specific clauses for Francophones in areas where responsibilities are transferred to the territorial governments.

²¹⁸ See comments by Monika Ferenczy (President, Canadian Parents for French (Ontario)), Evidence, November 9, 2006, t 11:45 a.m.

4.5. BUDGET CUTS IN 2006

4.5.1. Court Challenges Program

All the organizations we met were unanimously and profoundly opposed to Government of Canada's plan to cancel the Court Challenges Program.²¹⁹ We will simply reiterate the main reasons for this outcry:

The communities' use of the CCP forced provincial governments to comply with section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as it allowed them to obtain school governance rights and to keep the Montfort Hospital in Ottawa open, decisions that have become the most striking symbols of the progress made regarding the vitality of official language communities. The communities firmly believe that they would not have been able to obtain a large number of their institutions without this program. The challenges also led to changes to the *Canada Health Act* and the responsibilities of some municipalities, and influenced electoral boundaries.

The Accountability Framework of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* imposes the requirement to "consult affected publics as required, especially representatives of official language minority communities, in connection with the development or implementation of policies or programs."²²⁰ This part of the Plan stems from subsection 43 (2) of the Official

²¹⁹ The following list is just a sample of the most representative calls for the reinstatement of the Court Challenges Program: Marielle Beaulieu (Executive Director, *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada*), Evidence, December 12, 2006, 8:25 a.m. and passim; Mariette Carrier-Fraser (President, *Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario*), Evidence, December 12, 2006, 10:15 a.m.; Louise Aucoin (President, *Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de common law*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 7:25 p.m.; Nicole Robert (Director, *Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Est de l'Ontario*), Evidence, October 19, 2006, 9:55 a.m.; Denis Ferré (Education Director, *Division scolaire francophone numéro 310, Conseil scolaire fransaskois*), Evidence at December 6, 2006, 8:55 a.m.; Michel Dubé (President, *Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:45 a.m.; Wilfrid Denis (sociology professor, *Collège St-Thomas More, Université de la Saskatchewan*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 9:45 a.m.; Jean Johnson (President, *Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 9:35 a.m.; Luketa M'Pindou (Coordinator, *Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de l'Alberta Society*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:20 a.m.; Donald Michaud (Director General, *Réseau santé albertain*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 9:35 a.m.; Daniel Thériault (Director General, *Société des Acadiens et Acadiennes du Nouveau-Brunswick*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:45 p.m.; Marie Bourgeois (Director General, *Société Maison de la francophonie de Vancouver*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 9:15 a.m.; Jean Watters (Director General, *Conseil scolaire francophone de Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:55 a.m.; David Laliberté (President, *Centre francophone de Toronto*), Evidence, November 9, 2006, 9:20 a.m.; Achille Maillet (First Vice-President, *Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:50 p.m.; Jean-Luc Bélanger (as an individual), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:55 p.m.; Josée Nadeau (Director, *Association francophone des parents du Nouveau-Brunswick*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:45 p.m.; Josée Dalton (Coordinator, *Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador*), Evidence, November 6, 2006, 11:15 a.m.; Lizanne Thorne (Director General, *Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 9:25 a.m.; Paul d'Entremont (Coordinator, *Réseau santé Nouvelle-Écosse*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 10:55 a.m.; Louis-Philippe Gauthier (President, *Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick*, as an individual), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:25 p.m.; Josée Devaney (school trustee, *Autorité régionale francophone du Centre-Nord no. 2*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 10:50 a.m.

²²⁰ The Next Act: New Momentum for Canada's Linguistic Duality. *Action Plan for Official Languages*, Accountability Framework, art. 17, p. 70.

Languages Act, which requires Canadian Heritage to “take such measures as that Minister considers appropriate to ensure public consultation in the development of policies and review of programs relating to the advancement and the equality of status and use of English and French in Canadian society.” The communities maintain that they were not consulted before the Court Challenges Program was cancelled.

There are currently no alternatives to this program, since the Commissioner of Official Languages derives her authority from a federal statute and not the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, just as the Canadian Human Rights Commission has authority over matters under federal jurisdiction only. The provincial jurisdiction over education would thus preclude the Commissioner from having jurisdiction over provincial decisions relating to education and health.

The fact that exercising the rights granted under section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* depends on sufficient numbers²²¹ could create an additional burden since it would then be a collective right, which would mean that the very existence of the holder of this right would have to be demonstrated, unlike equality rights, which are the rights of individuals.

The Committee recognizes that such a program can create fundamental problems since it appears to introduce inequality in access to justice for some individuals or groups. There might however be a distinction to be made between the defence of equality rights funded by the CCP and the defence of linguistic rights, which are in part collective. It is also clear that access to justice for groups and not for individuals is at the heart of this complex debate. It could be helpful to explore what recourse is available for other kinds of collective rights, for instance by examining the type of funding provided for recourse by the First Nations where collective rights are involved, or whether a similar program could be based on the “Fonds d’aide aux recours collectives” program in Quebec, which provides funding to non-profit organizations for legal action on behalf of individuals with the same problem.

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 26

That the Government of Canada reinstate the Court Challenges Program or create another program in order to meet objectives in the same way.

²²¹ Subsection 23 (3) reads as follows: “The right of citizens of Canada under subsections (1) and (2) to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of a province (a) applies wherever in the province the number of children of citizens who have such a right is sufficient to warrant the provision to them out of public funds of minority language instruction; and (b) includes, where the number of those children so warrants, the right to have them receive that instruction in minority language educational facilities provided out of public funds.”

4.5.2. Literacy Program

The other cut that was strenuously opposed was the one to Human Resources and Skills Development's Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program. The program was not specifically designed for minority communities, but the cuts could have a greater impact on these communities given the lower literacy rate among Francophones in Canada in general and in Francophone minority communities in particular. Fifty-six percent of Canadians, whose first language is French, do have the desired level of literacy, and this figure reaches the worrisome level of 66% in New Brunswick, 40% of whom are under the age of 40.²²² For Anglophones in Quebec, this figure is 43%, compared to 39% for Anglophones in all the other provinces.

The chief concern is that the *Action Plan for Official Languages* allocated \$7.4 million for early childhood literacy programs, which is one of the Plan's components that produced meaningful results, as highlighted in the 2005-2006 Annual Report by the Commissioner of Official Languages.

Recalling that the Minister for the Francophonie and Official Languages informed this Committee with respect to the *Action Plan for Official Languages* that: "As a government, we have no intention of ever providing less than what the communities have obtained in this area,"²²³ the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 27

That the Government of Canada maintain its commitments in the Action Plan as to funding for early childhood literacy initiatives.

Following Canada's contribution to the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey, it was surprising that a majority of individuals that Statistics Canada considered Francophone chose to respond to the survey in English, even though they had the choice to respond in French:

One might have expected, given that the people were Francophone, that they would have answered the questions in French, but some of them felt more at ease in English. Some told us that they thought they had to choose English because the call had come from the federal government, because that was the language of work. These people live in a minority community. So we are talking about vitality. If there had been more

²²² Jean-Pierre Corbeil, Statistics Canada, "Study: Literacy and the Official Language Minorities 2003," *The Daily*, December 19, 2006, pp. 6-8.

²²³ The Honourable Josée Verner, Minister for the Francophonie and Official Languages, Evidence, June 8, 2006, 9:35 a.m.

confidence in French and more vitality, people would have answered in French. We think that it is a clear sign of the challenge that awaits us.²²⁴

Aside from families where the parents have limited knowledge of French and that want to encourage their children to learn French, the other clients of these programs who might suffer the most are seniors, for whom the *Action Plan for Official Languages* did not contain any specific measures.

If seniors do not have access to appropriate programs in every area, how can they be expected to read prescriptions or even properly complete the forms they need to fill in to receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement? The government noted that over 200,000 Canadians were not receiving the supplement because they did not know they were entitled to it. Information about it had not reached seniors. And because seniors do not necessarily read well or perhaps have trouble reading, we used this program [literacy]. By making it impossible for them to complete such tasks, which are so familiar to us, are we not jeopardizing the independence and health of Francophone seniors in Canada?²²⁵

The low literacy rate of Francophones outside Quebec also has a historical dimension:

In Northern Ontario, there is a tradition: people live off the land, or from mining or forestry. In the past, they didn't necessarily need training. But the market has changed radically; it's a bit like the fisheries in Eastern Canada. The people we call Ontario's first generation are not a first generation of new Canadians; they are the first generation not to have access to a post-secondary education. The rate in Northern Ontario is among the highest. We just cannot continue like this. If our youth are unable to write their own name or prepare their own resume, try and imagine what their chances of survival are, either in the trades or any other type of employment. It's an impossible situation.²²⁶

Francophone minority communities are therefore at a significant disadvantage when it comes to the growth of technology and the knowledge-based economy. This affects rural communities more than others, especially those in New Brunswick:

How are we in New Brunswick, given the realities of our Francophone communities with respect to the labour force, going to be able to cope with needs for ultra-qualified workers in context of globalization, and given our high illiteracy rate? You mentioned a key project, one that would have a direct impact on Canada's economy and on Canada's positioning from a global standpoint.²²⁷

²²⁴ Gaétan Cousineau (Director General, *Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français*), Evidence, December 12, 2006 at 8:30 a.m.; see also comments by Louis-Philippe Gauthier (President, *Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick*, as an individual), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:25 p.m.

²²⁵ Willie Lirette (President, *Fédération des aînées et aînés francophones du Canada*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, at 1:30 p.m.

²²⁶ Denis Hubert (President Collège Boréal), Evidence, November 10, 2006, 10:20 a.m.

²²⁷ Louis-Philippe Gauthier (President, *Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick*, as an individual), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 2:20 p.m.

Considering once again that the Government of Canada has an obligation to foster the vitality of official language minority communities, the Committee recommends:

Recommendation 28

That the federal government establish a literacy program, in partnership with the provinces, territories and communities in order to offer Francophone communities outside Quebec and the Anglophone community of Quebec better opportunities to contribute to Canada's knowledge-based economy.

4.6. PROMOTION OF FRENCH

The Constitution of Canada has guaranteed the equality of French and English in the parliamentary institutions of Canada and Quebec since 1867, of Manitoba since 1870 (abolished, then re-established in 1979), and of New Brunswick since 1993. Since 1969, the *Official Languages Act* has guaranteed that same equality in federal services to and communications with the public in institutions of the Government of Canada in regions designated bilingual, where numbers warrant, and in regions designated bilingual for the purposes of work in the institutions of the Government of Canada. Since 1988, the *Official Languages Act* has committed the federal government to enhancing the vitality of the language minorities and supporting their development, and to promoting full recognition and use of French and English within Canadian society. In 2005, that commitment became an obligation to take positive measures.

The principle underlying the Constitution, and the *Official Languages Act* of 1969, was formal symmetry between the two languages. The addition of Part VII of the Act in 1988, by announcing a commitment to enhance the vitality of the linguistic minorities and promote full recognition and use of the two languages, introduced a principle that requires asymmetrical action in favour of French. The reason is quite simple: English, as the international language of communication around the world and the first language of virtually all North American, exerts a pull on Canada's 7 million Francophones incomparably more powerful than any pull that French could exert on Canada's Anglophones. In other words, the effort needed to maintain that formal equality will have to be greater in the case of French and minority Francophones than of English and minority Anglophones.

That in no way diminishes the problems that Quebec's Anglophone communities face, particularly those outside the Montreal area, whose efforts to maintain their vitality have met with mixed success. On the contrary, the advantages that these communities benefited from in the past, as well as the relatively enviable situation of Anglophones in Montreal compared to Francophones outside Quebec, masks the decline of the communities in the rest of the province, and means that their claims are met with less sympathy than perhaps they should be. Unlike the Francophone minority communities, which are beginning to believe that it may be possible to consolidate their gains, the

Anglophones of Quebec are grappling with an inability to act that does not even allow them to view the future with optimism. An admittedly fragile, yet real, balance seems to have been reached in the acceptance of the need for Quebec to adopt legislative measures that can in part counter English's gravitational pull. It must be recognized however that this balance was achieved at the price of tools important to the vitality of the Anglophone communities, in particular their inability nowadays to accept Anglophone immigrants into their school system. We have no intention of questioning the inestimable value of that linguistic balance; we are simply recognizing that the loss of certain tools to ensure their vitality might produce a sense of resignation among some of those concerned about the vitality of that community.

Moreover, their under-representation in the federal public service in Quebec is seen as a sign of the lack of attention paid to this community in the federal policy framework on official languages. This objection is also the only one involving Part VI of the *Official Languages Act* (equal opportunities in the public service), since Francophones have an advantage pursuant to this Part of the Act.

But we have to face facts and state clearly that promoting linguistic duality essentially means promoting French, both outside Quebec and in Quebec even for Anglophones, which at the same time means accepting the fact that the Francophone minority communities are eminently more fragile than the Anglophone communities as a rule.

In the section on education, we saw that the effort to promote French had to begin with the parents who have the option of sending their child to a French-language school. Such an awareness-raising campaign, if successful, would be likely to have a long-term effect on the vitality of the communities, and this effort to raise awareness should be a priority.

In conjunction with that awareness-raising, it became evident during the Committee's cross-Canada tour that recognition of French was more often than not connected with multiculturalism policies that accord French no special place. The members of the Committee were pleased to note that acceptance of French among Anglophones has made noteworthy progress. However, this acceptance seems to be based on a principle of openness to cultural diversity that threatens to dilute the privileged place that French should be accorded as an official language. In other words, French outside of Quebec and New Brunswick should not be considered one language among all the rest. Francophones are not a cultural community. Along with the First Nations and Anglophones, they are a founding people who define the Canadian identity as a whole, from one end of the country to the other.

The comments that the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages made during her appearance before the Committee strike a similar chord:

There is a consensus with respect to official languages: Canada's linguistic duality represents an essential component of Canadian identity and an extraordinary richness for all society.²²⁸

Professor Wilfrid Denis of the University of Saskatchewan neatly summed up the Committee's thinking:

We need to find a way to ensure that French is not only an official language, but also a national language. In order to do this, communities and the federal government need to make a concerted effort to increase the visibility of the French language across Canada, particularly in regions where this language is weaker.²²⁹

We were given examples of this tendency to consider Francophones a cultural community or ethnic group in several provinces, but it was surprising to see so many instances in Ontario:

New immigrants in Ontario tend to settle in certain areas. For instance, Chinese immigrants will move to places where there are a lot of Chinese already, and as a result they can say that they represent 10% or 13% of the population. Consequently, regional organizations or public health organizations will translate their documents in Chinese or in Italian, but not in French.²³⁰

Before the addition of Part VII in 1988, the role of the federal public service was essentially to be able to offer service in French where it was obliged to do so. In other words, the public service was in the passive position of reacting with annoyance to a real or potential demand. The objective of the amendment of the Act in 2005, and the obligation to take positive measures, should be to transform the public service into an agent for the promotion of French, and at the same time to revive the mandate of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages to promote linguistic duality.²³¹

Echoing the statement of the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages that "the government's support of linguistic duality, as a foundation of Canadian society, remains unequivocal,"²³² the Committee recommends:

²²⁸ The Honourable Josée Verner, Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages, Evidence, June 8, 2006 at 9:15 a.m.; see also similar comments by Dyane Adam, Commissioner of Official Languages, Evidence, June 6, 2006, 10:15 a.m.

²²⁹ Wilfrid Denis (Professor of Sociology, St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan), Evidence, December 6, 2006 at 9:10 a.m.; see also the remarks of Marc Arnal (Dean, St-Jean Campus, University of Alberta), Evidence December 5, 2006 at 8:25 a.m.; and Denis Ferré (Director of Education, *Division scolaire francophone no. 310, Conseil scolaire fransaskois*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 10:20 a.m.

²³⁰ Nicole Rauzon-Wright (President, *Réseau franco-santé du Sud de l'Ontario*), Evidence, November 9, 2006 at 9:40 a.m.; see also the anecdote told by Marcelle Jomphe-LeClaire (*Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario*), Evidence, November 9, 2006, t 9:30 a.m.

²³¹ Marc Arnal (Dean, St. Jean Campus, University of Alberta), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 8:45 a.m.

²³² The Honourable Josée Verner, Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages, Evidence, June 8, 2006, 9:15 a.m.

Recommendation 29

That the Government of Canada, with the support of the regional offices of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, launch a campaign directed at Anglophones to promote French as a national language in support of the efforts made through the federal-provincial-territorial agreements for French as a second language instruction.

4.7. MEDIA

The *Action Plan for Official Languages* does not make reference to the media. Yet the community media play an important role in supporting the vitality of official language minority communities. They are a catalyst, a beneficiary and an indicator of that vitality. Their contribution to community life is not fully recognized by the federal government, which should use them more to fulfill its own commitment to community vitality.

For instance, community newspapers subsidize cultural events and support community involvement in educational institutions, and this commitment by the media, rather than being a cooperative effort with the federal government as part of its obligation to support community development, is in response to the federal government's lack of involvement. The media finds itself supporting the federal government's mandate and, in some cases, doing the work in its place.

A subscription costs \$42. We charge the Collège Boréal \$12. Therefore, the college receives a \$30 subsidy per subscription [...] The same holds true for the Théâtre du Nouvel-Ontario, which buys \$6,000 worth of advertising per year, but pays us only about \$600. We provide the balance for free. Thanks to us, community organizations are able to survive up to a certain point. However, if we cannot bring on board young people today who often only read this newspaper, which is their only source of French at home.²³³

The same community cooperation exists in Manitoba:

We have an agreement with the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine. Every week, we offer two pages of content on students' activities in the schools. We call that the 'Dans nos écoles' pages. That automatically enables all the families that have children in a French school to subscribe. That's been in place in our paper for four or five years.

The paper is also investing a great deal in this project. Our agreement with the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine doesn't come close to covering costs, and we're very much aware of that.

We also have the *Journal des jeunes*, a monthly publication inserted in the paper that's intended for young people and provides news written in a way that young people can read. The *Journal des jeunes* has subscribers. It's distributed by mail outside the

²³³ Réjean Grenier (Publisher and Editorial Writer, *Journal Le Voyageur*), Evidence, November 28, 2006, 10:30 a.m.

province, and we have customers scattered across Canada: teachers subscribe to it and use it as a basis for their teaching.²³⁴

The Anglophone community media outside Montréal are also very involved in community development; take the Québec City region:

There are 15,000 anglophones living in a region with a population of 700,000. We have a weekly anglophone newspaper called The Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph, which is very helpful to the community [...] We organize special evening activities. We organized one last week at which 12 newcomers came to talk about their experience in Quebec City [...] They think our efforts to preserve institutions are important [...] It takes an effort, but it also takes money, because we need time and people to get this work done.²³⁵

The same holds true for community radio:

A number of our community radio stations are located in community centres or schools. For example, a new radio station has just opened in Saint-Jean. The station is located in the school. The studios are on the inside, an antenna on the outside. It is the same at the community centre in Fredericton [...] Our community radio stations in New Brunswick [...] have reached an agreement with the schools in order to create radio stations for students in the schools. In our opinion, this is a solid foundation for recruiting future volunteers for community radio.²³⁶

The Committee members want to highlight the commitment of the community media to fulfilling what is, after all, the federal government's obligation. This shows that the media are very well placed to act as the Canadian government's agent. In return, this contribution should be recognized and supported financially, because this contribution, in whatever amount, will produce substantial savings compared with what it would have cost the federal government to do similar work with its own resources.

The presence of dynamic and innovative media is a necessary condition for the vitality of official language minority communities, as the Director of the Manitoba newspaper *La Liberté* put it:

I believe that if there weren't any communications in French, the community wouldn't see itself reflected anywhere. The majority media don't cover matters of interest to Francophones or what they do. If you read the Winnipeg Free Press, if you look at the English-language television networks or if you listen to English-language radio, you won't hear about the people from Saint-Pierre-Jolys or Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes.

As a result, we heard about the official opening of the Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes health centre one week before the first sod was turned, and we've been monitoring this file for a long time. People won't find that in other newspapers. The community media obviously

²³⁴ Sylviane Lanthier (Director and Editor in Chief, *La Liberté*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:15 p.m.

²³⁵ Robert Donnelly (President, Voice of English-Speaking Québec), Evidence, November 8, 2006, 11:30 a.m.

²³⁶ Roger Ouellette (President, *Alliance des radios communautaires du Canada*), Evidence, June 20, 2006, 10:20 a.m.

play an essential role. People see themselves reflected back home and don't see themselves elsewhere.²³⁷

Many think that community radio is of secondary importance to Radio-Canada's involvement in the Francophone minority communities. The Committee recognizes that Radio-Canada does not do enough to promote the vitality of Francophone minority communities. That said, the national broadcaster's objective and scope are very different from those of community radio, as Steven Watt, from the Newfoundland and Labrador newspaper *Le Gaboteur*, so aptly put it:

Le Gaboteur newspaper [...] is the only French-language newspaper — and almost the only francophone media channel — in Newfoundland and Labrador. Of course, there is a Radio-Canada radio and television journalist here, in St. Johns, but Radio-Canada tends to produce more news stories about what is happening in Newfoundland for the rest of Canada. For our part, we provide Newfoundlanders with true coverage of activities here in Newfoundland.²³⁸

Because of the importance of its national mandate, the support for community development that Radio-Canada can provide will be limited by its obligation to serve a larger audience. The federal government's efforts to support community vitality will therefore of course include Radio-Canada, given its regional penetration, but it will also have to rely on the proximity and local roots of community media, which is an excellent way for the federal government to reach out to Francophone communities directly.

The review of the management framework following the lifting of the moratorium on advertising created major administrative hurdles that disadvantage community media, given that campaigns must be prepared several months in advance.²³⁹ Most of the media representatives that the Committee met felt that advertising was the best way to fulfill any mandate that the Government of Canada might give the community media. The reason is that community media are not necessarily non-profit organizations, which would limit their ability to obtain grants or contributions.²⁴⁰ The members of the Committee are certainly sympathetic to that difficulty, but they also feel that if, as was often mentioned, a media outlet's minority status makes it impossible to access a sufficiently large local advertising market to ensure its development, then running a for-profit undertaking might not seem the wisest choice, and it is not up to the government to correct that choice.

Moreover, the dispersion of their clientele forces the print media to use mail subscriptions and the radio stations to multiply the number of small transmitters. The

²³⁷ Sylviane Lanthier (Director and Editor in Chief, *La Liberté*), Evidence, December 6, 2006 at 7:40 p.m.; see also Francis Potié (Director General, *Association de la presse francophone*), Evidence, November 28, 2006, 9:15 a.m.

²³⁸ Steven Watt (Editor and Director General, *Le Gaboteur*), Evidence, November 6, 2006, 9:55 a.m.

²³⁹ See the comments of Étienne Alary (Director, *Le Franco d'Edmonton*), Evidence, December 5, 2006 at 11:15 a.m.; also Roger Ouellette (President, *Alliance des radios communautaires du Canada*), Evidence, June 20, 2006, 9:00 a.m.

²⁴⁰ Francis Potié (Director General, *Association de la presse francophone*), Evidence, November 28, 2006, 9:15 a.m.

development of Internet media may prove promising, but for the moment it seems that these media are effective primarily in support of other media, following the logic of convergence, and not as main sources. In the case of radio stations, and if the community deems it a priority, access to the infrastructure fund that the Committee is recommending be created could prove one option. In the case of the print media, it is necessary to maintain the Publications Assistance Program, which subsidizes postal fees for newspapers and periodicals, and which was previously funded on a 75/25% basis by Canadian Heritage and Canada Post:

La Liberté is a paper with a provincial mandate; it has circulation of 6,000 copies. Half of our readers are in Winnipeg, and the other half are scattered across Manitoba. For us, Canada Post is the only possible way to distribute the paper.²⁴¹

Canada Post has announced it is withdrawing from the Program, thus threatening the survival of a large number of community newspapers.²⁴²

Since the communications sector was not included in the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, and considering how much the Plan itself could have benefited from a considerably more sustained media campaign, the role of the community media could prove essential to raising awareness of and promoting a second phase of the Action Plan.

The Committee recommends that:

Recommendation 30

The Government of Canada ensure that publications primarily serving the official language minority communities do not suffer financially from Canada Post's decision to withdraw its contribution to the Publications Assistance Program and that Canadian Heritage confirm that it is maintaining the program beyond 2008.

The Committee also recommends that:

Recommendation 31

The presence of community media be considered an important element of support to the vitality of the official language minority communities, and that the Government of Canada make these media major partners

²⁴¹ Sylviane Lanthier (Director and Editor in Chief, *La Liberté*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:10 p.m.

²⁴² Francis Potié (Director General, *Association de la presse francophone*), Evidence, November 28, 2006, 9:20 a.m.; see also the comments of Sylviane Lanthier (Director and Editor in Chief, *La Liberté*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:10 p.m.; Daniel Boucher (President and Executive Director, *Société franco-manitobaine*), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 8:45 p.m.; Étienne Alary (Director, *Le Franco d'Edmonton*), Evidence, December 5, 2006, 11:15 a.m.

in its efforts to fulfill its mandate to promote linguistic duality and support community development.

4.8. ARTS AND CULTURE

The field of arts and culture was, with media, the other glaring absence in the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, even though it is unquestionably an essential element in community vitality. It is also an element in the development plan of many of the communities that the Committee visited, in Newfoundland and Labrador, for instance:

Although culture has always been a prior[it]y in our development plans or in our annual programs, we have not always had full-time human and financial resources assigned to this file in particular. Culture, since this was my file before becoming the interim director general, was done through financial administration and this part of the infamous sentence 'performs other duties at the request of management.

Phase I of the cultural position project sponsored by the Fédération culturelle canadienne française made us realize that we have a relatively diverse and vibrant cultural and artistic life. We have musicians, story tellers, painters, writers, poets, gallery curators, as well as guardians of our history and heritage. We want to give them a voice, we want to give them tools and, in particular, we want to promote them.²⁴³

The development of a dynamic cultural and artistic environment is directly linked to the vitality of the community networks on which this report places a great deal of emphasis. This is a two-fold challenge for the communities, as the Director General of the Centre culturel francophone de Vancouver explained:

We have to find the necessary funding to sponsor the arts, and at the same time we have to find niches in order to promote and distribute them. There, too, funding sources are always inadequate. I don't think it's a lack of will or poor public reception, because the comments and our interactions with the Anglophone majority are always or nearly always positive. We're taking advantage of a climate of openness here, in British Columbia. I don't exactly know all the statistics, but I think that most people in British Columbia come from elsewhere. This is a land of immigration, and that creates a favourable prejudice toward other cultures.²⁴⁴

Cultural initiatives depend in large part on the community resources available, because very few things can be organized on a strictly commercial basis. The people in place thus struggle to keep a few cultural projects going. The growth of other activities puts more and more demands on these same people, while the funding for community organizations has not kept up with growth. Given this, until there is a significant reinvestment in support for community organizations, it is almost utopian to envisage a

²⁴³ Cyrilda Poirier (Interim Director General, *La Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador*), Evidence, November 6, 2006, 9:45 a.m.

²⁴⁴ Alexandre Houle (Interim Executive and Artistic Director, *Centre culturel francophone de Vancouver*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 11:05 a.m.

structured plan to support cultural initiatives. The situation in Prince Edward Island is typical:

Since our communities are growing exponentially, demands are becoming greater and greater. We now have community school centres in certain regions, which add to the challenge of managing those bodies.

We don't have the necessary critical mass, like in other provinces, for cultural development to become self-sufficient. Our clientele isn't large enough to pay the inherent expenses of high-quality entertainment or trainers [...] To really contribute to the development of our communities, you have to learn the language, of course, but you also have to adopt the culture. In that respect, we have an enormous lack of human and financial resources to achieve our goals and meet the needs of our clientele.²⁴⁵

The *Fédération culturelle canadienne-française* has suggested a number of interesting potential solutions, including the creation of an official languages in culture program complete with a strategic fund, and the integration of an “arts and culture” component into the second phase of the Action Plan.²⁴⁶

The Committee recommends:

Recommendation 32

That the arts and culture be considered essential elements for the vitality of the official language minority communities, that this be reflected in the follow-ups to the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, and that Canadian Heritage add adequate funding for arts and culture projects and the corresponding infrastructures in the “Community Life” component of its official languages support programs.

²⁴⁵ Lizanne Thorne (Director General, *Société Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin*), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 9:35 a.m.

²⁴⁶ Pierre Bourbeau (Director General, *Fédération culturelle canadienne-française*), Evidence, December 12, 2006 , 9:30 a.m.

In order to support the local artistic communities, the Committee also recommends:

Recommendation 33

That Canadian Heritage, when investing in major infrastructure projects related to the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, add 1% of the value of the investment in order to include an arts project in the infrastructure.

4.9. JUSTICE

The justice sector is one part of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* that has been most favourably received by the communities involved:

The Action Plan has had the following results: a revitalization of FAJEF and its network; the appointment of a number of bilingual judges; legal training is now offered in French in a number of regions of Canada; legal work instruments are now being prepared in French for practitioners; the promotion of careers in law and justice; the promotion of legal services in French to Francophone litigants; more legal popularization in French and significant networking with Anglophone and Quebec legal associations such as Éducaloi [...] We believe that this progress, which we consider significant, would not have been achieved without the action plan.²⁴⁷

Of the \$45.5 million set aside for the field of justice in the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, \$18.5 million was for targeted measures to improve access to justice in the two official languages, including funding of federal-provincial-territorial initiatives, funding of associations of French-speaking jurists, the creation of a mechanism for consultation with the communities, and the development of educational tools for legal advisors in the Department of Justice. The rest was earmarked for enforcing rulings that modified certain of the Government of Canada's legal obligations.

Three elements were presented as a priority in order to continue the progress made in this sector: the training and retention of legal professionals capable of working in French,²⁴⁸ the development of tools to support jurists working in French — raising the awareness of institutions involved in the administration of justice, for instance — and the establishment of a mechanism to identify Francophones in order to create a pool of potential jurors. This final element would involve an amendment to the *Statistics Act* or an amendment to the questionnaire submitted under the *Canada Elections Act* to add a question such as this: "Would you agree to having information compiled about official

²⁴⁷ Louise Aucoin (President, Federation of Associations of French-speaking Jurists of Common Law), Evidence, December 6, 2006, 7:20 p.m.

²⁴⁸ Pierre Gagnon (Chairman of the Board, *Association des juristes d'expression française de la Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:20 a.m.

languages you have learned and still understand for the purpose of drawing up lists of potential jurors?"²⁴⁹

The Committee accepted this suggestion and recommends:

Recommendation 34

That the Government of Canada continue the effort begun under the *Action Plan for Official Languages* to facilitate access to justice in both official languages and recommend the most appropriate method for establishing pools of Francophone jurors, in cooperation with the Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de common law.

4.10. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There's something else that I always tell my Anglophone counterparts, and that's that, if we work together, we speak the two most powerful languages in the world in economic and political terms. So it's worth the trouble for us to work together: if there's one thing that Anglophones understand, it's the economy. So when we're able to show that our presence has an economic impact, suddenly we're accepted, not only because it's the law, but because we contribute something.²⁵⁰

The economic development of the official language minority communities nowadays is closely linked to the dynamism of the *Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité* (RDÉE) and their provincial and territorial components. This organization was created in 1998.

The creation of the Enabling Fund in March 2005 bolstered the efforts of the *Réseaux de développement économiques et d'employabilité* (RDÉE) and the Community Economic Development and Employability Committees (CEDEC), after the review of the mandate of the Official Language Minority Communities Support Fund, by more effectively coordinating applications for assistance to various federal institutions. The Enabling Fund, managed by Service Canada, has an annual budget of \$12 million for the last three years of the Action Plan. Many are worried about the survival of the RDÉE after 2008.²⁵¹

The RDÉEs provide communities and business people, that before did not have any, with a range of services in order to support sustainable job creation and the growth of

²⁴⁹ This recommendation was presented by Pierre Gagnon (Chairman of the Board, *Association des juristes d'expression française de la Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:25 a.m.

²⁵⁰ Donald Cyr (Executive Director, *Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique*), Evidence, December 4, 2006, 8:45 a.m.

²⁵¹ Such as Louis-Philippe Gauthier (President, *Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick*, As an Individual), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 1:25 p.m.

an entrepreneurial culture with a community spirit. One of the RDÉE's most spectacular achievements occurred after the terrible floods in Manitoba in 1998:

[translation] [Following these events], the Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities, the CDEM, created its first vision plan, a community economic development planning model [...] Over 300 organizations: business groups, community associations, research and educational institutions, cooperatives, municipalities and provincial and federal departments, community futures development corporations and over 7000 individuals participated in local public planning meetings. The projects that arose from this unprecedented mobilization generated extraordinary benefits in Manitoba alone between 1999 and 2005: 225 new businesses, 3746 temporary jobs, 1159 permanent jobs, 133 community economic development projects, an investment totalling almost half a billion dollars. Each dollar invested had a leverage effect of 650%. A first in our rural communities!²⁵²

The problem for the RDÉEs is that the level of awareness of the official language minority communities can vary markedly among the various federal organizations involved in economic development. It often depends on the openness shown by a few people in the upper echelons of the public service. For example, the cooperation of Service Canada and Canada was exemplary:

Agriculture Canada had a program called Vision and it was a small subsidy of \$25,000 allocated to a rural community so that it could pay for the services of a professional consultant and define its assets, its needs, its prospects, and the threats it faces, and so that it can mobilize a little. The program was not used in the Francophone communities. When we realized that, at our table with the federal representatives, we told them that we could perhaps sell the program a little for them. We made sales for them: we sold the Vision programs for \$1,500,000. Sixty programs. The communities accepted that easily. And that produced exceptional benefits in Manitoba's case. Now, the communities are really structured.²⁵³

It seems that cooperation was more difficult with Industry Canada, which manages over 150 programs for small and medium-sized businesses. Reflecting on the best way to offer these programs to the official language minority communities would help attain the programs' objectives more fully and would be an excellent way for the Department to fulfil its obligations to take positive measures for community development.

It also seems that the federal government's involvement is essentially limited to the steps prior to actual development: "Feasibility studies and business plans are mainly being done, and there's not really any money to pursue projects."²⁵⁴

²⁵² Roger Lavoie (Director General, *Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité* (RDÉE) Canada), Evidence, January 30, 2007, 9:00 a.m.

²⁵³ Pierre Bélanger (President, *Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité* (RDÉE) Canada), Evidence, January 30, 2007, 10:05 a.m.

²⁵⁴ Rodrigue Landry (Director, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistics Minorities), Evidence, November 7, 2006, 9:05 a.m.

The Committee recommends:

Recommendation 35

That the Government of Canada maintain the Enabling Fund beyond 2008.

Recommendation 36

That the Government of Canada develop a policy framework for the economic development of the official language minority communities:

- **That is focused on the active offer of programs and start-up funding for projects, based on the specific characteristics of the communities;**
- **That is under the control of the provinces and territories, while being developed in partnership with the Réseaux de développement économique et d'employabilité and the Community Economic Development and Employability Committees and with the federal economic promotion agencies and the departments involved in economic development.**

4.11. RESEARCH

The many gaps observed in the information available on the official language minority communities, particularly regarding health and immigration, mean that research must be given a great deal more support. The issue of the vitality of these communities also raises the question of how best to measure it. It is a complex question to which the former Commissioner of Official Languages gave much thought and on which significant preparatory work has been done:

The government and the communities must adopt a consistent approach to vitality based on indicators and research to arrive at better-targeted actions and achieve concrete results for the benefit of Canadian society. We will have to document the measures taken and clarify the objectives by identifying vitality indicators that are relevant and appropriate to the specific circumstances of official language communities.²⁵⁵

The avenues for research are known and are particularly numerous. It is now time for action. Therefore, the Committee recommends:

²⁵⁵ Dyane Adam, Commissioner of Official Languages, Evidence, June 6, 2006, t 9:05 a.m.

Recommendation 37

That the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages ensure that all federal institutions, consistent with their respective mandates, develop a community vitality strategy based on factual data and sustained researched and focused on practical results, and that a permanent fund be created to subsidize research on the official language minority communities.

CONCLUSION: RENEWAL OF THE ACTION PLAN

This study on the vitality of official language minority communities had three primary objectives:

- To evaluate the results of the *Action Plan for Official Languages* as to specific benefits for communities, since the revised *Official Languages Act* now makes the government's commitment to fostering community vitality and promoting Canada's linguistic duality binding.
- To reflect the communities' concerns by making recommendations to the Government of Canada regarding follow-up on the Action Plan as of April 1, 2008, and on any other matters fostering community vitality.
- To cultivate closer ties with the communities in order to establish a productive dialogue that will be essential to the success of new initiatives put forward as of 2008.

Of the initial investment of \$751.3 million over five years set out in the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, starting in fiscal year 2003-2004, over half or \$381.5 million was allocated to education, including \$209 million for federal/provincial/territorial agreements for minority-language education, \$137 million for federal/provincial/ territorial agreements for second language instruction, and \$33.5 million for summer bursary and second language monitor programs. These investments were in addition to those already set out under regular programs, so the funding for these regular programs was at least maintained at the 2002-2003 level.

Progress has been constant with respect to minority language education, namely, funding for kindergarten to Grade 12 at French-language schools outside Quebec, but not because of the Action Plan. The Plan's significant investment in this area was offset by a nearly equivalent decrease in the investment under regular programs. This progress would thus have been achieved even without the Action Plan. A significant shortfall of about \$115 million is expected when the Action Plan expires at the end of fiscal year 2007-2008.

The picture is very different for second-language instruction because the investments for this purpose under regular programs were maintained, in addition to those made under the Action Plan, which nearly doubled the total amount for this component of the program between 2002-2003 and 2005-2006. Since the communities only feel the effect of these investments indirectly because they are directed to majority

language communities, they served primarily to promote linguistic duality. As to the objective of fostering community vitality, they are not as important as those for minority language education, except perhaps in Quebec where they help retain Anglophones.

The second sector in which significant investments were made is health, at \$119 million, and the Committee analyzed this in detail in Chapter 2. The results for the networking and access to primary care components are convincing in all respects. The Committee is of the opinion that the Government of Canada should vigorously support the implementation of projects identified under the "*Préparer le terrain*" initiative. With respect to the training and retention of health care professionals, which accounts for two-thirds of the investment in this sector under the Action Plan, the results also exceed expectations, although some matters are still in question, such as the role of the provinces and territories, the ambiguity of the federal government's role, and the lack of financial analysis. With respect to these three components, the *Société Santé en français*, the Quebec Health and Social Services Network and the *Consortium national de formation en santé* expressed serious concerns that the investments in health might not be renewed when the Action Plan expires.

The third most important investment was made in the public service, at \$64.4 million. The Committee did not look into this aspect in great depth because the bilingual capacity of the public service has an impact on communities especially in the National Capital Region, and Francophones are well represented in it. Moreover, there are various problems with access to federal services, but these are well documented in the reports by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. The main problem with respect to community vitality relates to the Anglophones of Quebec who, pursuant to Part VI of the *Official Languages Act*, are underrepresented in the federal public service in Quebec. Some concerns were also raised about the use of the \$14 million from the Innovation Fund, which is managed by Treasury Board.

In the justice sector, the \$45.5 million investment had little direct impact on daily life in the communities, but representatives from the recipient organizations maintained that it is worthwhile and effective.

The Action Plan provided \$33 million for economic development, under the direction of Industry Canada. The stakeholders did not directly address this aspect of the Action Plan and it would make an interesting topic for a separate study by the Committee. However, the creation the Enabling Fund in 2005, with an investment of \$36 million over three years in addition to the Action Plan, was viewed extremely favourably. Economic development and employability networks and CEDECs in Quebec benefited a great deal from this investment and expressed concern that this funding might not be renewed as of 2008-2009.

The Support for Communities component of the Action Plan was mentioned often during the Committee's meetings. This component received funding of \$33.5 million, including \$19 million for projects fostering community vitality. The remaining \$13.5 million

was allocated to the agreements through which the federal government helps the provinces and territories improve the services they offer in the minority language. Overall, this component of the Action Plan did not produce results for community vitality, primarily because the expected investments did not materialize. The Community Life component of Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Support Program was the only one whose budget was cut since 2002-2003. The investments made under the Action Plan were almost completely offset by decreased spending under the Strategic Fund and decreased spending under the regular program for federal/provincial/territorial agreements to improve services.

Moreover, the fact that the former Canada-community agreements were not renewed was often cited as a factor preventing community organizations from planning for the medium term. Without these agreements, funding is provided to organizations on an annual basis. In 2005-2006, the total amount provided to organizations was at the 2002-2003 level, after a decrease in the two intervening years. In other words, community organizations, which are in charge of many initiatives under the Action Plan, had to manage more projects despite a real reduction in their funding.

It was very clear to Committee members that the vitality of official language minority communities depends on support for community organizations. These organizations are more effective in identifying and implementing positive measures that are most likely to help the federal government fulfil its commitments under the *Official Languages Act*.

Another aspect of the Support for Communities component of the Action Plan was literacy programs and child care services. Community representatives criticized the thorough reorganization of these programs. Their greatest concern relates to early childhood services, which is the communities' first priority for enhancing vitality. Various witnesses indicated that early childhood services are the real key to future community vitality and should be the cornerstone of the renewed *Action Plan for Official Languages*.

The last component of the Action Plan that the Committee examined is immigration. Despite a modest investment of \$9 million, the Committee were of the opinion that special efforts should be made in this regard when the Action Plan is renewed. This is why an entire chapter in this report was devoted to it. The measures announced were received very positively, but the results were felt in Manitoba only, primarily because of the greater role played by the provincial government. In addition, the objectives of the Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Communities, unveiled in September 2006, are seen as very sound. This Strategic Plan is however based on data that is much too fragmentary and its targeted results are too confused to produce any improvement. The communities certainly welcome the \$307 million investment announced for the reception and settlement of all newcomers to Canada, but it is impossible to know at this time how much of this money will go to minority communities.

On the whole, the Action Plan for Official Languages furthered community vitality, but its results fell well short of initial expectations, except for in the health sector and, to a lesser degree, justice and economic development.

Aside from these mixed results of the Action Plan, various other important aspects of community development were raised in our consideration of the follow-up to be taken on the Action Plan as of 2008-2009.

The first consideration is the renewal of the Action Plan itself. Various witnesses expressed concern that nothing had been done so far for its renewal, although it will expire in just one year. Moreover, various targets in the Plan, relating in particular to education, were based on the assumption that it would continue until 2012-2013. The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 38

That the Government of Canada immediately establish a high-level committee, comprising representatives from government, the communities, provinces and territories, to prepare the second phase of the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, so that it may be included in the 2008-2009 budget.

Another consideration raised by the communities pertains to how the federal government should reorganize its efforts in order to fulfil its obligation to foster community vitality and promote linguistic duality. For Francophone communities, the key is parents' decision to enrol their children in French-language schools. It would be much easier for them to make this decision if preschool services are available, at a school-community centre for instance. This infrastructure should be supplemented by an awareness campaign targeted to Francophone parents regarding the benefits of enrolling their child in a French-language institution as the best guarantee of bilingualism, by far superior to immersion, and that this decision will in no way limit their child's career options, on the contrary, in fact.

Efforts must be made through a campaign to promote French to Anglophones, with special attention to Anglophones in Quebec who need additional support to encourage them to learn French. Postsecondary institutions as well as the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages could be called upon to play a role in promoting linguistic duality in this regard.

For administrative reasons relating to the constitutional division of powers, it is often difficult to identify the appropriate source of funding for infrastructure. There may be good will at all levels, but the program criteria are not flexible enough to combine the federal responsibility to communities with the provincial jurisdiction in areas where a

federal role would be more appropriate. Committee members and the communities were in favour of the creation of an infrastructure fund in which the provinces and territories could participate.

On a related topic, it is clear that one of the best ways of monitoring the federal commitment to communities would be to include a clause on minority communities in all agreements through which the federal government transfers money to the provincial and territorial governments.

Some sectors that are essential to community vitality were not mentioned in the Action Plan, including the media and the arts and culture. These sectors foster and reflect community vitality. The community media were seen as a potential partner for the federal government that was underutilized. As to the arts and culture, they are directly linked to the strength of the community networks that support most initiatives in this sector.

Finally, the Committee's more detailed analysis of the health and immigration sectors revealed some significant gaps in the knowledge on which the Action Plan should be based. Some of these gaps will be addressed by Statistics Canada's post-census survey on the vitality of official language minority communities. The avenues that these findings open must be pursued by adding a "research" component to the Action Plan.

This evaluation of the *Action Plan on Official Languages* and the consideration of future measures have served to identify the primary condition for the success of its renewal, namely, encouraging a broad approach to fostering community vitality. This broad approach should include at least two aspects:

1. The full participation of the communities, provinces and territories and the federal government in developing Phase II of the Action Plan, in implementing it and in evaluating its results. It was evident that the success of health care initiatives was linked to this difficult but nevertheless very productive partnership. The communities cannot join forces with the federal government against the provinces or territories without generating resistance that would threaten the success of these initiatives.
2. Greater flexibility in identifying specific sectors (health, education, etc.) to which funding is allocated. Allocating budgets to specific sectors can lead to inflexibility and "one size fits all" programs, which do not consistently meet community needs. This was a recurring theme in the testimony the Committee heard. What is good for one community is not necessarily good for another one. Programs must be tailored to regional realities, but the relative importance of the various programs should also be flexible. Part of the funding could then be allocated as a lump sum for a specific

community, and the various partners would agree on the redistribution of the funds depending on priority sectors, without any obligation to spend more or less than necessary due to set amounts for each sector.

The Committee therefore recommends:

Recommendation 39

That the Government of Canada adopt a broad approach in its renewal of the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, including in particular:

- **Active involvement of the communities, provinces, territories and federal government in developing, implementing and evaluating the Action Plan;**
- **Flexibility in identifying the key sectors targeted, for which the amount of funding can vary with the priorities set by the communities.**

The Committee's decision to embark on a cross-Canada tour marked a turning point. This was the first time it had travelled to visit communities, although the Committee and its predecessors have existed for 25 years. This decision was welcomed by community representatives and discussions were open and honest.

This openness and honesty was reflected most strikingly in the organizations' generalized objection to the cancellation of the Court Challenges Program. This announcement in September 2006 was seen as an outright denial of the communities' right to fight for the constitutional guarantees provided under section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the resulting case law, and subsection 43 (2) of the *Official Languages Act*, which sets out the government's commitment to consult the communities before developing or amending programs that affect community vitality. The members of the Committee were divided on this matter, and no compromise was reached despite their general agreement on most other subjects.

Finally, the Committee members cannot overemphasize the warm reception they received at these meetings, especially at the various locations that exemplify community vitality. This vitality is in large part bolstered by the community organizations that would long ago have ceased to exist without the tireless dedication of the volunteers who have carried the torch through every adversity possible. It is thanks to these volunteers that schools, community centres, health centres, postsecondary institutions and economic development organizations were founded during the last 30 years and have now become the very foundation of community vitality.

There are still significant challenges ahead, since negative demographic growth, dispersion and urbanization continue to threaten the survival of a number of these

communities in the medium term. It is once again the volunteers who will ultimately do what it takes to support community vitality in the future, especially as regards the development of early childhood services, immigrant reception, and following through on health care projects identified as priorities by the communities.

The Committee wishes to dedicate this report to all these people on whom the communities' future depends. We hope that we have helped strengthen the bridge between the communities and the Government of Canada and would very much like to see our recommendations accepted so that our two national languages may thrive throughout the country in communities that are stronger than ever.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter 2: Health

Recommendation 1

That the Government of Canada suggest that the provinces include the language variable in health records, while respecting their jurisdiction, and that Statistics Canada use oversampling of official language minority communities in its next National Population Health Survey.

Recommendation 2

That Health Canada immediately confirm its commitment to provide a minimum of \$10 million in funding for the initiatives under the “primary care transition” sub-component of the health component of the Action Plan for Official Languages, for fiscal year 2007-2008.

Recommendation 3

That as soon as possible Health Canada indicate its clear commitment to provide, through transfers to the provinces and territories, the networks coordinated by the *Société Santé en français* and the Community Health and Social Services Network the resources needed to carry out the key initiatives identified under *Préparer le terrain* projects, in the form of increased long-term funding, starting in fiscal year 2008-2009.

Recommendation 4

That Health Canada renew and increase its long-term funding for the language training programs currently coordinated by McGill University under the “training and retention” sub-component of the health component of the Action Plan for Official Languages, starting in fiscal year 2008-2009.

Recommendation 5

Subject to:

- clarification of the respective responsibilities of member institutions, provincial and territorial governments and the federal government;

- an in-depth evaluation of the use of the funding allocated in order to compare the cost of training a student outside the CNFS to that of training a student within the CNFS;
- and finally including a spokesperson from each province and territory on the CNFS Board of Directors.

That Health Canada show openness to the funding proposal to be submitted in 2007 by the *Consortium national de formation en santé* (CNFS) for Phase III of its projects extending from 2008-2009 to 2013-2014.

Chapter 3: Immigration

Recommendation 6

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada, together with the provinces and territories:

- Ask Statistics Canada to oversample Francophone immigrants in the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada;
- Ask Statistics Canada to conduct a rigorous demographic study of Francophone immigrants in minority communities and the factors in their mobility;
- Identify best practices for their harmonious integration into Francophone minority communities;
- Completely re-evaluate the targets and definitions in the Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, specifically the anticipated increase in the number of immigrants settling in Francophone minority communities following the implementation of the Strategic Plan;
- Establish a time frame and develop a rigorous follow-up mechanism in order to regularly verify the results obtained.

Recommendation 7

That, pursuant to his obligations under Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, in making transfer payments to the provinces and territories under the Immigrant Settlement and Integration program, invite the provinces and territories other than Quebec to allocate to the Francophone community a proportion of these transfers that is at least one percentage point above the proportion of the province's residents whose first official spoken language is French.

Recommendation 8

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada invite the provinces and territories other than Quebec to designate at least one community organization per province and territory to coordinate the integration and settlement of Francophone immigrants and that this agency be able to conduct independent recruitment initiatives.

Recommendation 9

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada intensify its efforts to recruit Francophone immigrants through its foreign embassies, and support Francophone minority communities' recruitment efforts by adequately training and raising the level of awareness of embassy staff, and by guaranteeing the availability of printed information in both official languages.

Recommendation 10

That the Government of Canada negotiate an agreement with Quebec, the other provinces and territories, and postsecondary institutions, to find a formula that is satisfactory to all parties to encourage the recruitment of international Francophone students throughout the country in an equitable manner.

Chapter 4: Community Development

Minority-Language Education

Recommendation 11

That the Government of Canada fully respect the undertakings made in the *Action Plan for Official Languages* and increase the amounts in the federal-provincial-territorial agreements for

minority-language education so that they reach \$ 460.9 million between April 1, 2007 and March 31, 2009.

Early Childhood

Recommendation 12

That the 125,000 daycare spaces, whose creation the Government of Canada announced in the 2006-2007 Budget, include a specific number for Francophone minority communities, in a proportion that is at least equivalent to the proportion of Francophones living in each province or territory.

Recommendation 13

That, when the education agreements with provinces and territories other than Quebec are next renewed or when the budgets for minority-language education are not spent completely, these amounts can be used by the provinces and territories to fund the upgrading of French-language early childhood and preschool services.

Promotion of Education in French

Recommendation 14

That the Government of Canada, with the consent of the provinces and territories, conduct an awareness and information campaign directed at the Francophone minority communities with the following objectives:

- a) to raise parents' awareness of the benefits of enrolling their child in a French-language preschool and primary institution;
- b) to encourage the continuation of French-language education at the secondary level as an asset in the child's future career opportunities in an Anglophone majority environment.

Second-Language Programs

Recommendation 15

That the Government of Canada maintain its current level of funding at the least for second-language instruction programs, including immersion programs, and support the provincial and territorial governments' efforts to set up adequate administrative

structures in order to reduce the problems with access and accountability, all with the cooperation of recognized organizations that promote second-language learning.

Recommendation 16

That the Government of Canada increase the level of its investment in the agreement on English as a second-language instruction between the federal government and the government of Quebec.

Retention of Young Professionals

Recommendation 17

That the Government of Canada create a program, in partnership with the provincial and territorial governments and post-secondary institutions, to offer internships that will encourage the retention and return of Francophone students to the official language minority communities.

Support to Community Organizations

Recommendation 18

That the regular program funding of the Cooperation with the Community Sector subcomponent of the Community Life Component, Development of Official Language Communities Program, be increased by 50% for fiscal year 2007-2008 compared to current levels of financing, and then be increased proportionally with the overall budgets for Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Support Programs, in order to reflect the additional effort required of organizations once projects are in place.

Recommendation 19

That all the funding provided to organizations under the regular program of the Cooperation with the "Community Sector" subcomponent of the "Community Life" component that is not for specific projects be provided in the form of grants.

Recommendation 20

That Treasury Board consider the specific characteristics of official language minority communities, including the obligation to take positive measures to foster the development of these communities, and introduce greater administrative flexibility in the development of its policy on transfer payments.

Recommendation 21

That the proportion of total funding for the Cooperation, with the “Community Sector” subcomponent of the “Community Life” component of Canadian Heritage’s Development of Official Language Communities Program, that is allocated to Quebec’s Anglophone community be increased and that priority be given to community organizations outside the Montreal metropolitan area.

Recommendation 22

That, insofar as it respects the spirit and criteria of the program concerned, Canadian Heritage, under the “Community Life” component of the Development of Official Language Communities Program, commit to respect the priorities set by the organizations representing official language minority communities and specifically include them in these agreements.

Infrastructure Development

Recommendation 23

That the Government of Canada establish an infrastructure fund in order to upgrade services that foster the vitality of francophone language minority communities, including early childhood services.

Linguistic Clauses in Federal Transfer Payments

Recommendation 24

That all federal transfer payments to the provinces or territories for a sector under provincial jurisdiction or shared jurisdiction include a clause allocating separate funding in order to work towards equality of services for francophone language minority communities.

Recommendation 25

That the Government of Canada, together with the territorial governments and the Francophone communities of the North, develop a strategy for Francophones in the territories to ensure that satisfactory services are available for all matters under federal jurisdiction, and negotiate specific clauses for Francophones in areas where responsibilities are transferred to the territorial governments.

Court Challenges Program

Recommendation 26

That the Government of Canada reinstate the Court Challenges Program or create another program in order to meet objectives in the same way.

Literacy

Recommendation 27

That the Government of Canada maintain its commitments in the Action Plan as to funding for early childhood literacy initiatives.

Recommendation 28

That the federal government establish a literacy program, in partnership with the provinces, territories and communities in order to offer Francophone communities outside Quebec and the Anglophone community of Quebec better opportunities to contribute to Canada's knowledge-based economy.

Promotion of French

Recommendation 29

That the Government of Canada, with the support of the regional offices of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, launch a campaign directed at Anglophones to promote French as a national language in support of the efforts made through the federal-provincial-territorial agreements for French as a second language instruction.

Media

Recommendation 30

The Government of Canada ensure that publications primarily serving the official language minority communities do not suffer financially from Canada Post's decision to withdraw its contribution to the Publications Assistance Program and that Canadian Heritage confirm that it is maintaining the program beyond 2008.

Recommendation 31

The presence of community media be considered an important element of support to the vitality of the official language minority communities, and that the Government of Canada make these media major partners in its efforts to fulfill its mandate to promote linguistic duality and support community development.

Arts and Culture

Recommendation 32

That the arts and culture be considered essential elements for the vitality of the official language minority communities, that this be reflected in the follow-ups to the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, and that Canadian Heritage add adequate funding for arts and culture projects and the corresponding infrastructures in the "Community Life" component of its official languages support programs.

Recommendation 33

That Canadian Heritage, when investing in major infrastructure projects related to the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, add 1% of the value of the investment in order to include an arts project in the infrastructure.

Justice

Recommendation 34

That the Government of Canada continue the effort begun under the *Action Plan for Official Languages* to facilitate access to justice in both official languages and recommend the most appropriate method for establishing pools of Francophone jurors, in cooperation with the Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de common law.

Economic Development

Recommendation 35

That the Government of Canada maintain the Enabling Fund beyond 2008.

Recommendation 36

That the Government of Canada develop a policy framework for the economic development of the official language minority communities:

- **That is focused on the active offer of programs and start-up funding for projects, based on the specific characteristics of the communities;**
- **That is under the control of the provinces and territories, while being developed in partnership with the Réseaux de développement économique et d'employabilité and the Community Economic Development and Employability Committees and with the federal economic promotion agencies and the departments involved in economic development.**

Research

Recommendation 37

That the Minister for la Francophonie and Official Languages ensure that all federal institutions, consistent with their respective mandates, develop a community vitality strategy based on factual data and sustained researched and focused on practical results, and that a permanent fund be created to subsidize research on the official language minority communities.

Conclusion

Recommendation 38

That the Government of Canada immediately establish a high-level committee, comprising representatives from government, the communities, provinces and territories, to prepare the second phase of the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, so that it may be included in the 2008-2009 budget.

Recommendation 39

That the Government of Canada adopt a broad approach in its renewal of the *Action Plan for Official Languages*, including in particular:

- **Active involvement of the communities, provinces, territories and federal government in developing, implementing and evaluating the Action Plan;**
- **Flexibility in identifying the key sectors targeted, for which the amount of funding can vary with the priorities set by the communities.**

APPENDIX A LIST OF WITNESSES

Organizations and Individuals	Date	Meeting
Alliance de la francophonie de Timmins Pierre Bélanger, Chairman of the Board Sylvain Lacroix, Executive Director	2006/11/28	29
Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de l'Alberta Society Luketa M'Pindou, Coordinator	2006/12/05	31
Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise Michel Dubé, President Denis Desgagné, Executive Director	2006/12/06	32
Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario Marianne Carrier-Fraser, President Jean Comtois, Vice-President	2006/12/12	34
Association acadienne et francophone des aînées et aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick Jean-Luc Bélanger, President	2006/11/07	23
Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta Jean Johnson, President Joël Lavoie, Executive Director	2006/12/05	31
Association canadienne française de l'Ontario du grand Sudbury Suzanne Roy, Executive Director, Community sector development	2006/11/10	26
Association des enseignants et enseignantes francophone du Nouveau-Brunswick Richard Caissier, Executive Director	2006/11/07	23
Association franco-yukonnaise Marianne Théorêt-Poupart, Communication Coordinator	2006/12/04	30
Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick Achille Maillet, First Vice-President	2006/11/07	23
Association francophone des parents du Nouveau-Brunswick Josée Nadeau, Director	2006/11/07	23
Association des francophones du Nunavut Daniel Hubert, Director, Santé en français du Nunavut	2007/01/30	35

Association des juristes d'expression française de la Colombie-Britannique Pierre Gagnon, Chairman of the Board	2006/12/04	30
Association de la presse francophone Francis Potié, Executive Director	2006/11/28	29
Autorité régionale francophone du Centre-Nord no.2 Martin Blanchet, Trustee Josée Devaney, Trustee Paul Dumont, Trustee	2006/12/05	31
Canadian Parents for French (Ontario) Monika Ferenczy, President Betty Gormley, Executive Director	2006/11/09	25
Centre francophone de Toronto Jean-Gilles Pelletier, Executive Director David Laliberté, President	2006/11/09	25
Centre culturel de Cornwall, Dundas et Glengarry Francine Brisebois, President	2006/12/12	34
Centre culturel francophone de Vancouver Alexandre Houle, Interim Executive and Artistic Director	2006/12/04	30
Centre de santé Saint-Thomas Maurice Gaudet, President Denis Collette, Project Coordinator	2006/12/05	31
Chambre de commerce franco-colombienne de Vancouver Pierre Senay, President	2006/12/04	30
Collège Boréal Denis Hubert, President Renée Champagne, Vice-President	2006/11/10	26
Collège universitaire Glendon – Université York Louise Lewin, Associate Principal	2006/11/09	25
Comité directeur Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada – Communautés francophones en situation minoritaire Marc C. Arnal, Co-Chair, Community Side Daniel Jean, Co-Chair, Government Side	2006/10/03	13
Commission nationale des parents francophones Murielle Gagné-Ouellette, Director General	2006/12/12	34

Conseil communauté en santé du Manitoba Charles Gagné, President Léo Robert, Director General	2006/12/06	33
Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick Louis-Philippe Gauthier, Director General	2006/11/07	23
Conseil des ministres de l'éducation (Canada) Raymond Thériault, Director General	2006/11/09	25
Conseil scolaire francophone de Colombie-Britannique Marie Bourgeois, Chairwoman of the Board Jean Watters, Director General Paul de la Riva, Director of Communications	2006/12/04	30
Conseil scolaire fransaskois Bernard Roy, Superintendent of Education Denis Ferré, Director of Education, Division scolaire francophone n° 310	2006/12/06	32
Consortium national de formation en santé Gilles Patry, copresident	2006/10/31	19
Department of Citizenship and Immigration Hon. Monte Solberg, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Daniel Jean, Assistant Deputy Minister	2006/10/24	17
English Language Arts Network Guy Rodgers, Executive Director	2007/02/01	36
Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français Gaétan Cousineau, Director General	2006/12/12	34
Fédération des aînées et aînés francophones du Canada Willie Lirette, President	2006/11/07	23
Fédération des aînés et des retraités francophones de l'Ontario Marcelle Jomphe-LeClaire	2006/11/09	25
Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de Common Law Louise Aucoin, President Rénald Rémillard, Executive Director	2006/12/06	33

Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique	2006/12/04	30
Michelle Rakotonaivo, President		
Yseult Friolet, Executive Director		
Jamal Nawri, Coordinator, Immigration		
La Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador	2006/11/06	21
Cyrilda Poirier, Interim Director General		
Fédération des parents francophones de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard	2006/11/07	22
Nicole Drouin, Director General		
Fédération des parents francophones de Colombie-Britannique	2006/12/04	30
Pauline Gobeil, Vice-President		
Marc Gignac, Director of Strategic Development		
Fédération des parents francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador	2006/11/06	21
Marie-Claude Thibodeau, Director General		
Fédération Franco-TéNOise	2007/01/30	35
Léo-Paul Provencher, Executive Director		
Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada	2006/12/12	34
Marielle Beaulieu, Executive Director		
Fédération culturelle canadienne-française	2006/12/12	34
Pierre Bourbeau, Director General		
Fédération provinciale des fransaskois	2006/12/06	32
Maria Lepage, President		
Health Canada	2006/10/26	18
Roger Farley, Executive Director, Official Language Community Development Bureau, Intergovernmental Affairs Directorate		
Marcel Nouvet, Assistant Deputy Minister		
Hôpital général St-Boniface	2006/12/06	33
Michel Tétreault, President and CEO		
Impératif français	2007/02/01	36
Jean-Paul Perreault, President		
Institut canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques	2006/11/07	22
Rodrigue Landry, Director		

Journal Le Voyageur Réjean Grenier, Publisher and Editorial Writer	2006/11/28	29
La Cité Collégiale Andrée Lortie, President Linda Cloutier, Director of Health sciences	2006/10/24	17
La Liberté Sylviane Lanthier, Director and Editor in Chief	2006/12/06	33
Le Franco d'Edmonton Étienne Alary, Director	2006/12/05	31
Le Gaboteur Steven Watt, Editor and Director General	2006/11/06	21
Partenariat communauté en santé du Yukon Sandra St-Laurent, Coordinator	2007/01/30	35
Quebec Community Groups Network Peter Riordon, Treasurer	2006/11/08	24
Quebec English Literacy Alliance Ilze Epnors, President	2007/02/01	36
Quebec Protestant Education Research Project Roderick MacLeod, Director	2007/02/01	36
RDÉE Canada Pierre Bélanger, President Roger Lavoie, Director General	2007/01/30	35
Réseau communautaire de santé et de services sociaux James Carter, Coordinator	2006/11/08	24
Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador Josée Dalton, Coordinator	2006/11/06	21
Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Est de l'Ontario Nicole Robert, Director Marc Laflamme, Coordinator, Francoforme Project	2006/10/19	16
Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard Julie Gilman, Coordinator Jeannita Bernard, Member	2006/11/07	22
Réseau des services de santé en français du Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario Marc-André Larouche, Director General	2006/11/10	26

Réseau franco-santé du Sud de l'Ontario	2006/11/09	25
Nicole Rauzon-Wright, President		
Jean-Marc Boisvenue, Executive Director		
Réseau santé albertain	2006/12/05	31
Denis Vincent, President		
Luc Therrien, Director General		
Donald Michaud, General Director		
Réseau santé en français de la Saskatchewan	2006/12/06	32
Soraya Côté, Director		
Roger Gauthier, Elected Member and Treasurer		
Réseau santé Nouvelle-Écosse	2006/11/07	22
Alphonsine Saulnier, President		
Paul d'Entremont, Coordinator		
Réseau TNO Santé en français	2007/01/30	35
Jean de Dieu Tuyishime, Coordinator		
RésoSanté de la Colombie-Britannique	2006/12/04	30
Brian Conway, President		
Yves Trudel, Coordinator		
Société des Acadiens et Acadiennes du Nouveau-Brunswick	2006/11/07	23
Daniel Thériault, Director General		
Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique	2006/12/04	30
Donald Cyr, Executive Director		
Société franco-manitobaine	2006/12/06	33
Daniel Boucher, President and Executive Director		
Ibrahima Diallo, Chairman of the Board		
Société Maison de la francophonie de Vancouver	2006/12/04	30
Marie Bourgeois, Executive Director		
Société Saint-Thomas –d'Aquin	2006/11/07	22
Lizanne Thorne, Director General		
Société Santé en français	2006/10/05	14
Donald DesRoches, Administrator, Member of the Board of Directors, Delegate of the Minister for the Acadian Business and French-speaking person of Prince Edward Island		
Denis Fortier, Administrator, Member of the Board of Directors, Regional office of the Health of the Center		
Hubert Gauthier, President and Director General		

Société santé et mieux-être du Nouveau-Brunswick	2006/11/07	23
Norman Gionet, President		
Gilles Vienneau, Director General		
Statistics Canada	2006/10/17	15
Jean-Pierre Corbeil, Senior Population Analyst, Demography Division		
Marc Hamel, Assistant Director, Population Health Surveys, Health Statistics Division		
Townshippers Association	2006/11/08	24
Michael Van Lierop, President		
Rachel Garber, Executive Director		
Université Bishop's	2006/11/08	24
Jonathan Rittenhouse, Vice-Principal		
Université de l'Alberta	2006/12/05	31
Marc Arnal, Dean, St-Jean Campus		
Université de la Saskatchewan	2006/12/06	32
Wilfrid Denis, Professor of Sociology, St-Thomas More College		
Université d'Ottawa	2006/10/19	16
Louise Bouchard, Professor, Director of PhD Program, Population Health		
Université de Régina	2006/12/06	32
Dominique Sarny, Director, Institut français		
Voice of English-Speaking Québec	2006/11/08	24
Robert Donnely, President		

APPENDIX B LIST OF BRIEFS

Organizations and Individuals

Alliance de la francophonie de Timmins

Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de l'Alberta Society

Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise

Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta

Association des francophones du Nunavut

Association franco-yukonnaise

Association francophone des municipalités du Nouveau-Brunswick

Association des juristes d'expression française de la Colombie-Britannique

Autorité régionale francophone du Centre-Nord n° 2

Canadian Parents for french (Ontario)

Centre culturel francophone de Vancouver

Centre francophone de Toronto

Centre de santé Saint-Thomas

Chambre de commerce franco-colombienne de Vancouver

Collège Boréal

Communauté acadienne et francophone de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

Community Health and Social Services Network

Conseil communauté en santé

Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique

Conseil scolaire fransaskois

Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse

Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de Common Law

Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique

Fédération Franco-TéNOise

Fédération des parents francophones de Colombie-Britannique

Hôpital général Saint-Boniface

Impératif français

Institut Canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques

Jack Jedwab

L'association canadienne-française de l'Ontario du Grand Sudbury Inc.

La Liberté

Le Canard Réincarné

Le Franco

Le Voyageur

Partenariat communauté en Santé du Yukon

Provincial Health Services Authority in British-Columbia

Quebec English Literacy Alliance

Réseau des services de santé en français de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard

Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) Canada

Réseau franco-santé du sud de l'Ontario

Réseau santé albertain

Réseau Santé en français de la Saskatchewan

Réseau Santé – Nouvelle-Écosse

Réseau TNO Santé en français

Réso Santé Colombie-Britannique

Société franco-manitobaine

Société Santé et Mieux-Être en français du Nouveau-Brunswick

Townshippers Association

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. 13 to 19, 21 to 26, 29 to 36, 38 to 40, 42, 44 to 53](#)) are tabled.

Respectfully submitted,

Guy Lauzon, MP
Chair

Supplementary Opinion

Conservative Party of Canada

The Conservative Members of the Committee would like to thank the witnesses that have appeared before this Committee for this study and wish to reiterate the support of the Government to the official language minority communities.

One of the recommendations of the report pertains to the elimination of the Court Challenges Program, following the expenditure review process. The Government ensures that tax dollars are spent effectively, in a reasonable manner, and that we are accountable for its use. We support measures contributing to the development of official language minority communities. The \$30M contribution to official language minority communities and for linguistic duality announced in the last Budget is another example of our firm commitment.

Supplementary Opinion from the Bloc Québécois

The Bloc Québécois would first like to thank all of the witnesses who appeared before the Standing Committee on Official Languages during the tour and at public hearings in Ottawa.

The Bloc Québécois supports the report's objectives and applauds all parliamentarians for their concern about the future of official-language minority communities, especially French-language ones, in Canada.

The situation of the anglophone minority community in Quebec cannot be compared to the francophone minority community in the rest of Canada, which is threatened by assimilation and whose language of use has been at risk over the years. Moreover, the anglophone minority in Quebec has become almost as large as the francophone minority across all of Canada combined.

The challenges these two communities face are therefore very different. It seems simplistic to us to make recommendations that ignore these differences. Furthermore, the anglophone community in Quebec has a comprehensive school system including three universities, health facilities and a wide range of English radio stations and television channels, which is not the case for francophones in English Canada. We believe that the passage of Bill 101 in Quebec led to a particular sensitivity to the treatment of the linguistic minority in Quebec. It is therefore understood that, while the public language is French, the rights of the English minority will be respected and protected. Francophone communities face far greater challenges.

Risks of centralization

The Bloc Québécois notes that the Committee's work and recommendations often addressed issues under provincial jurisdiction. Health, education, culture

and regional development are good examples of this. The Committee's recommendations therefore frequently tend to be too centralist and disrespectful of areas of provincial responsibility. The Bloc Québécois has always argued that jurisdictions must be respected and questions the direction of this report.

With respect to Quebec, the Bloc Québécois demands full control and the right to opt out with compensation, as the case may be, for all recommendations addressing sectors having provincial responsibility.

However, if we can have agreement among the provinces, the Bloc Québécois believes that, in the interest of francophone communities and given the risks they face, the report's recommendations are constructive and could effectively contribute to the development of these communities.

However, we feel that the solution cannot be found at the federal level and that the provinces must work hard so that their minority communities develop and flourish. Francophone communities are full of drive and evolving, connected to the new realities of the 21st century and vital to English Canada and Quebec. They are a unique voice that we must continue to defend and make heard everywhere.

Francophone communities contribute to the influence of French throughout North America and around the world. They are a living example of the need for and importance of cultural diversity. The Bloc Québécois will continue to defend francophones across Canada, as it has always done.

The Bloc Québécois hopes this report will help enhance their vitality.