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**Chair**

**The Honourable Michael Chong**



## Standing Committee on Official Languages

Tuesday, March 25, 2014

• (0850)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)):** Welcome to the Standing Committee on Official Languages. This is Tuesday, March 25, 2014, and we are holding our 15th hearing.

We are here pursuant to Standing Order 108 to carry out a study on the economic situation of Canada's minority linguistic communities.

Today we will be hearing three groups of witnesses. Mr. Béland and Mr. Murphy represent Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada. Ms. Bossé and Ms. Kenny represent the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada.

[English]

From Youth Employment Services, we have Mr. Aylen and Madam Unger, who are representing that organization.

Without further ado, we'll begin with Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada.

**Mr. Shawn Murphy (Manager, Government Relations, Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wish to begin by thanking you and the committee members for inviting Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada to appear before your committee as you are undertaking a study of the economic situation of Canada's minority linguistic communities.

Before I address the study before us, I wanted to bring to your attention the fact that a new era will soon begin for Canada's cooperative movement with the launch of Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada, or CMC, on April 1. For the first time, cooperatives and mutual enterprises in every sector and every region of Canada will be represented by a single national bilingual organization.

CMC will assume responsibility for the Canada-based work of its two founding organizations, the Canadian Co-operative Association, or CCA, and the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité, the CCCM. The CMC brings together the francophone activities of the CCCM and the anglophone activities of the CCA to form one single national association. A single voice, a common table: this is the cooperative way.

[Translation]

Over the past 125 years, the cooperative formula has been an indispensable tool in the economic development of francophones and Acadians. It allowed them to work and live in their mother

tongue, while introducing measures to respect cultural diversity, and ways of doing things that strengthened the use of their language in all sectors of endeavour.

It also allowed them to preserve and support the dynamic nature of Acadian and francophone communities outside of Quebec. It allowed them to get organized in daily life, and to live in the area that they chose. This dynamic is the cornerstone of the survival and lasting development of francophone and Acadian communities in Canada.

[English]

How does the cooperative model play out in assisting the economic situation of Canada's minority linguistic communities?

Linguistic minority communities often face the challenge of accessing tools and resources that are often not available in their regions. Individuals may have to travel great distances to receive services in their language of choice. This is where we see the benefits of promoting the use of the cooperative model to help the economic situation in minority regions.

Cooperatives bring together individuals with common goals, often when there is a lack of service to meet their collective needs. Language is one of the common elements that can bring people together, even in minority situations, in order to receive the services that they might not have available.

[Translation]

The cooperative model was used by many official language minority communities to sustain their culture, for instance, through cooperative radio in the Maritimes, through a theatre cooperative in Calgary, an Acadian crafts cooperative in Chéticamp, or a francophone publishing cooperative in Regina.

However, cooperatives are not present only in the cultural arena. They are the backbone of the economy in many communities. What would these communities be without the many credit unions, fishers' cooperatives, agricultural and forestry cooperatives? Imagine Embrun without the Embrun Coop, Caraquet without the Caraquet Cooperative, or Saint Boniface without its credit union. Even the annual general meetings of these organizations literally become meeting places for the community. The cooperatives also provide a francophone environment, for instance through housing cooperatives, and we can educate our children in their native language in cooperative daycares such as the one in Chelsea, not far from here.

Finally, these cooperatives are the future of economic life in French in many communities. Indeed, the issue of finding a new generation to take over in business is an open door to the loss of economic assets for official language minority communities. If the executives of a business give it over to someone from outside the community, or worse yet, close it down, there is a far greater danger that the services will no longer be offered in the language of the community than if the community itself takes over the business in the form of a cooperative. A cooperative business will be an asset that it will keep forever, and one that it will benefit from.

[English]

Co-ops have been critical in providing a high level of innovation and services in areas that this government has highlighted as important. This innovation helps improve productivity in a way that specifically meets the needs of communities, including linguistic minority communities. This includes co-ops for food production, health care, child care, seniors' housing, and transportation, as well as grocery stores, funeral homes, and energy production. Co-ops for new agricultural products and domestic food distribution are one of the fastest growing co-op start-ups. The cooperative model of ownership is flexible, responsive, and adaptable enough to respond to many concerns of local communities.

[Translation]

History has shown that in Canada language communities in minority situations have used the cooperative formula for a very long time to give themselves economic and social development tools, and to give themselves services that are at the very heart of the challenges of maintaining and consolidating their community.

The presence of cooperatives in these communities in all sectors of activity bears witness to that most eloquently. The cooperative reflex is deeply rooted in the way of life of the citizens of these communities, who needed to consolidate, to meet and to forge their own development. The cooperatives have molded the history of our country and have been a feature of its identity.

That is why we believe that the cooperative movement is an important partner and supports the federal government in its mandate to promote the development of official language minority communities. The very nature of a cooperative project is implicitly linked to local mobilization and joint action. We think that this groundwork demands some concrete support from the federal government.

How can the cooperative movement support the development of official language minority communities?

• (0855)

[English]

The cooperative movement is a powerful tool in leveraging opportunities for minority groups, such as minority linguistic communities across the country. Co-ops have a well-established member network that can help in outreach and development.

We have 200 professionals who work with new and emerging co-ops on a daily basis from coast to coast to coast, and we have 9,000 co-ops and mutuals in Canada with \$370 billion in assets and more than \$50 billion in annual revenues. Co-ops exist in all economic sectors, including health care, social, renewable energy, finance,

home care, and retail, to name but a few. Cooperatives and mutuals pay out over \$1.2 billion in patronage dividends and donations every year.

[Translation]

There are large enterprises and small ones; there are enterprises in all sectors that often compete with each other on the market; in them there are anglophones and francophones and people from all cultures; people from minority communities and majority communities; all are brought together by cooperation.

We believe that the future of Canadian society goes hand in hand with this capacity to use everyone's potential to meet the common needs of our communities. That is why large cooperatives such as the Co-operators, Agropur or UFA are in favour of and support the small cooperative organizations that work with official language minority communities.

The CMC is happy to support the efforts of the Standing Committee on Official Languages, which is conducting this study at this time. We dearly hope that your work will mean that the cooperative movement will finally be considered as an indispensable economic actor in maintaining and developing official language minority communities.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Murphy.

I will now yield the floor to Ms. Kenny, from the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada.

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny (President, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada):** Mr. Chair and members of the committee, I first want to thank you for having invited the FCFA to address you today.

As the leader of the collaborative networks of francophone and Acadian communities entrusted with seeing to the overall development of these communities, the FCFA is greatly interested in economic issues.

As you may know, the federation coordinates the Leaders' Forum, a group of 43 francophone organizations and institutions that work together to prepare a national strategic plan for communities. In fact, our friends from the CMC are members of it.

The plan has five parts, one devoted to the socio-economic development of francophone and Acadian communities. The objective of the communities in that context is dealing with the aging population and the rural exodus, as well as stimulating employment and economic growth. They want to do so by capitalizing on the dynamic nature of their networks and their private and collective entrepreneurship. They also want to put in place innovative strategies for local development to strengthen human resources, the acquisition of the necessary skills to allow everyone to succeed, as well as the recognition of foreign credentials.

It was with these objectives in mind that the federation addressed the Government of Canada and the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie about the importance of community economic development as a factor in the long-term survival of our communities. The conference and the governments that are a part of that entity provided financial support to the Pan Canadian Forum on Economic Development in the Canadian Francophonie in the fall of 2012.

The integrated action plan developed by that forum takes into account the economic development vision of the various levels of government, the private sector and the community networks. The plan has six main themes, and they are the market and commercialization, entrepreneurship, economic integration, sustainable partnerships, funding and investment, as well as public policy and regulations.

This last element leads me to voice the following basic principle: our communities must absolutely be active players in their own economic development.

Often, certain economic development stakeholders seem to have a tendency to see the communities not as partners but rather as passive recipients of development initiatives. However, the best solutions for social and economic challenges are most often to be found in the rural and local communities themselves, as the government in fact itself recognized, in particular in its 2011 Speech from the Throne.

The second principle is that there are a large variety of community stakeholders who do economic development. Very often, economic development is equated with entrepreneurship. Without wanting to minimize the contribution of business people to the creation of wealth in our communities, it must also be pointed out that the cooperative movement has played a very important role in many development sectors. In 2006, the francophone cooperatives outside of Quebec did more than 7 billion dollars of business.

In addition, economic development is related to employability. We cannot really consider a global economic development strategy without involving colleges and universities, literacy networks and organizations that further the acquisition of basic skills, as well as all of the other stakeholders who contribute to strengthening the human capital of our communities. Indeed, we must not lose sight of the importance of supporting the employability of immigrants as well as of those members of our communities who are unemployed or underemployed.

Finally, let us not forget tourism and culture.

In short, we feel that community economic development has four dimensions. Firstly, there is the entrepreneurial aspect, i.e. the deployment of a variety of production activities and the sale of goods and services. Then there is the enhancement of local resources on a given territory, within the context of partnerships involving both the communities and the private sector, as well as public institutions. The third dimension is the social and economic revitalization of a territory involving employment, housing, training, health and social services and the ownership by the local population of its economic and social development. Finally, the last dimension is that the community must be the both starting point and the final destination as well.

In reality, do things really take place in that way?

• (0900)

I would like to use the few minutes I have left to describe the challenges as the FCFA sees them.

As I mentioned previously, there are a large variety of stakeholders in economic development. Aside from community actors and the private sector there are various levels of government, and interdepartmental relations. The lines of communication and cooperation among the stakeholders are few and the players are not all at the same table. A lot of work gets done in isolation and often without planning that is directly linked to the needs of the community.

For instance, Canada's 2013-2018 official languages roadmap states that the Enabling Fund for Official Language Minority Communities will be informed by a continuous dialogue with the communities. However at the regional level that dialogue is not systematic, and varies greatly from one location to another. Nationally, key players in employability such as the francophone colleges, literacy networks and networks for the acquisition of essential skills, and the organizations that are the spokespersons for our communities, do not participate in that dialogue.

Federal departments that are active in economic development such as Industry Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada regularly organize meetings to discuss things with stakeholders in our communities. These meetings allow for the collection of a great deal of information from the field. However, not much is done with that information, whereas it could be used to better design and plan programs and policies. To our knowledge, that information is not used or is not used very much.

The members of this committee who know the FCFA well know to what extent our organization favours an approach based on cooperation and consultation. Our statement today demonstrates that clearly. We are very insistent on that approach because it gives results. Our communities have best managed to set up services and infrastructures in French when they got organized and concerted their efforts, and coordinated their activities around priorities and specific issues.

The money invested by the federal government in economic development in our communities comes from taxpayers. If you only consider the roadmap, we are looking at a sum of almost \$100 million over five years. Can we really allow ourselves to continue to function in isolation without getting together and without getting the community to participate in its own development so as to produce concrete and sustainable results?

Regarding the roadmap, we are coming to the end of a first year. The 2014-2015 fiscal year which will begin in a few days will see investments in economic development become concrete. So there is still time to correct things by redirecting those investments in an endogenous development perspective, that is to say development by and for communities, by introducing new methods which would be based on collaboration and consultation.

I will conclude with a few concrete recommendations on economic development in our communities.

Firstly, generally speaking, all of the federal departments have to focus more on endogenous economic development and work with their provincial, territorial, municipal and private sector and community partners using a comprehensive and integrated approach. Those partners must work together to plan programs by region and by community, taking into account all of the stakeholders who should be brought in to participate.

Next, we recommend that the support programs managed by the federal departments and regional economic development agencies be flexible, so as to take into account the particular realities and challenges of the francophone and Acadian communities.

Finally, when federal institutions commission studies or investigations on economic development or employability, they should include language questions that would allow them to have an accurate picture of the situation and of the issues encountered by official language minority communities.

I will be pleased to answer your questions later.

● (0905)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Kenny.

[English]

Now we'll hear from Youth Employment Services.

**Mr. John Ayles (President, Board of Directors, Youth Employment Services):** Good morning. First of all, I'd like to speak to you about who we are and what we do, and that will provide a context for our analysis and our conclusions.

Youth Employment Services is a non-profit charity whose mission is to enrich the community by providing English-language services to help people find jobs and start small businesses. YES was founded in 1995 by a group of concerned leaders from the business, education, and corporate communities in response to the youth exodus and in recognition that employment was a major strategy in addressing retention.

Retention and renewal is still our primary mission, and every program or activity we engage in is with the purpose of supporting, retaining, and attracting individuals to Quebec. In the broader sense, we do this using a community development approach, building partnerships, attracting and cultivating volunteers, and creating networks. In concrete terms, we do this by providing support services.

Our services respond to the ongoing needs of our clients and our community. We help people start and grow businesses, find employment, and help artists who need the business skills to succeed economically through their art. We modify and adjust our programs to ensure that our services remain relevant.

We provide over 1,200 workshops at our downtown location and online. We hold events and conferences, provide coaching and counselling—over 5,000 sessions last year—mentors and internships, and we work with over 400 volunteers and a variety of partners and funders.

We pride ourselves on our ability to build strong partnerships with the business community, Broccolini, Aldo, BeaverTails, and Bombardier; with the arts community with David Usher, Lorraine

Klaasen, and Jennifer Gasoi; with the academic community with the universities and colleges; with the community sector with the QCGN members; with the francophone community organizations; and with the media.

We do a regular spots on Global. We're present on CTV and the CBC, in *The Gazette*, and others.

The objective is to bring together networks and our clients. We work with a variety of funders from both the provincial and federal governments, foundations, corporations, and we do our own fundraising and pay-for-services activities.

In 1993 we helped over 120 clients. Today we help over 4,600 individuals who visit our downtown location close to 15,000 times a year. As well, we now have the capacity through technology to service areas outside of Montreal that need English-language services, and we are working closely with many of our regional partners, including Voice of English-speaking Québec, CASA, and others to ensure that English-language services are available in the regions of Quebec.

We also have programs where our coaches are able to provide services at the offices of our regional partners. Each year YES hosts four major conferences, including the largest English-language entrepreneurial conference and the only artists conference.

In 2008 YES did a report on the barriers to employment and self-employment for the OLMC new arrivals and visible minorities entitled, "Self-Employment and Employment in Quebec's English-speaking Cultural Communities and Visible Minorities: Prospects and Problems".

Between 2011 and 2012, YES brought together the OLMC partners to look at the issues of economic development of the OLMC. This research and discussion took place over a two-year span and resulted in a report entitled, "Regional Development of English Language Entrepreneurial Services", which we have distributed today. This was in follow-up to a report done by the QCGN in 2008.

In 2013, YES recognized an increase in mental health issues within our client base and did a study with the support of the CHSSN, "Building Youth Resiliency and Community Vitality within Montreal's English Language Population" to quantify what we were observing.

In 2013, with the support of the Status of Women, YES did a gender-based analysis to better understand the needs of women in the field of technology in Quebec. As a result, we are building exciting new partnerships in the technology industry, including Google and Ubisoft. This week we will be matching 20 women with 20 tech companies at a speed-interviewing event being held at Google.

● (0910)

As a result of these studies, YES has created a variety of programs to respond to all of these reports. We take a holistic approach in our responses. You can see some of these programs in the packages that we have distributed. Research allows our community to quantify the issues that we see emerging and these are an invaluable tool.

YES also heads up the employment services round table, the only coalition of community employment organizations that provide English-language employment services. This table was set up in 1998, when the federal government transferred payments and responsibilities to the provincial government, to ensure the continuity and health of English-language employment services. It continues to meet regularly.

I'll pass you to Iris Unger now.

**Ms. Iris Unger (Executive Director, Youth Employment Services):** What are we currently seeing?

Obviously, the current political situation is having an impact on what we are seeing and hearing, but I would like to address the issue in more general terms.

Youth unemployment and underemployment is often quoted at about 13% for both Canada and Quebec, but this figure, from my perspective, is really not an accurate figure, in that it does not include those who are underemployed or have dropped out of the job market altogether. I would estimate the figure being much higher. Members of the OLMC face even greater challenges as members of a minority community. Many of our clients have university degrees and are living below the poverty level. TD Economics' report on youth unemployment states that the financial impact will be \$23.1 billion in lost wages over the next 18 years. The issue becomes: what impact will this have on our community?

As a result of being unemployed and underemployed many of the young people are facing situational mental health issues. Many feel isolated and have no networks to support them, as demonstrated by the reports that we have just undertaken. I also want to clarify that our organization has grown and most of the clients we see fall between the ages of about 22 to 40 years old, but we also see older people who are coming to us for support for entrepreneurial help, and our artist clientele have no age restrictions.

Many young people who are English-speaking are coming to Quebec for a variety of reasons and can be very instrumental in the renewal of our communities. Many are attracted by the creative economy and in many cases they have been recruited by what's being referred to as creative companies. They often come with families, and they come to Quebec with the hopes of joining this creative economy.

We've worked with the spouses, we've worked with the people who come hoping to get jobs, and many of them find themselves underemployed or working on short-term contracts or underpaid jobs. Many young people as well go to English universities in Quebec and want to stay in Quebec. We also see them at our doors. New government policies have made it a bit easier for these people to remain in Quebec, but they also, again, have the potential of renewing our community and need the support to remain.

It is very difficult for new arrivals to access English-language support, so they either will integrate into the majority community or will leave and use Quebec as an entry point for Canada. There are many people interested in entrepreneurship in the OLMC for a variety of reasons but one of them is their difficulty in finding jobs, so they create their own businesses. Last year we helped more than 700 businesses get launched or sustained.

A large percentage of the OLMC is made up of visible minority communities as well, who are struggling with a whole variety of difficult and systemic issues. They are a minority within a minority.

Youth from the OLMC are reluctant to go into the trades or government jobs for a variety of reasons including: the lack of training for many of the trades, the heavy influence of trade unions in Quebec, and government bureaucracy and forms in French only. If they succeed in getting employment, there is often a sense of exclusion on the job. There is also a perception related to language competencies and complexities related to government positions in the province.

There is also difficulty in accessing English-language services, and much of the funding is going to para-government or government agencies in Quebec that don't necessarily meet the needs, or there is not the perception that they will meet the needs of those in our community.

Many individuals, especially new arrivals from the OLMC, lack networks as identified in all of our studies. There is a skills mismatch between what young people are learning in university and what the needs of employers are. This is a universal issue, but again, it impacts proportionately our community.

Internships work as a vital tool for the OLMC to retain young adults seeking career opportunities in Quebec. They clearly need the community sector's involvement in their success. Thanks to the Youth Employment Strategy we've had great success with those.

I will quickly pass it to John for the conclusion and recommendations.

● (0915)

**Mr. John Ayles:** Community organizations have played and continue to play a crucial role in the vitality of the OLMC as it relates to retention and renewal of the OLMC, whether the group is in Montreal or in the regions. They provide services, a network, an entry point to a community, and a place that makes community members feel part of that community. Groups need the financial support and stability to do their jobs. Project funding is not sustainable.

Community organizations have an important job to do but spend an inordinate amount of time trying to secure funding instead of focusing on their mission. It is an important and economical investment on the part of the government, but we need to also add businesses to the dialogue. Government can possibly look at ways and incentives to encourage businesses to be part of that dialogue. Many of the issues related to renewal and retention—employment and immigration to name two—fall under provincial jurisdictions and this makes addressing already complex issues even more difficult. The federal government may be able to play a role in helping the community build those bridges.

Community organizations, governments, and businesses all need to work together to ensure adequate resources for the community organizations to address issues that are crucial to the health and future of the OLMC. These issues are intergovernmental, interdisciplinary, interdepartmental, and intersectorial, and they need multi-pronged and creative responses. They can't be dealt with piecemeal or hampered by jurisdictions.

Today young people and many business leaders would say this situation needs an organic response because the issues are more complex, are moving quickly, and don't fit into tidy matrix graphs and boxes. We all need to be thinking more organically in our responses to the issue of renewal and retention for the OLMC in Quebec, as it is ultimately having an important impact on our youth, our economy, our province, and our country.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We'll have about an hour and a half of questions and comments from members of the committee, beginning with Mr. Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Before I begin, I want to thank the witnesses for being here with us today.

The committee decided to do a study on the economic situation of official language minority communities. This topic is even more important because the people we have met in these communities have asked us to examine that question. More than ever, those people are asking for solutions to the economic problems their communities grapple with. Indeed, official language minority communities very often have economic problems. So there are good reasons to work together to help those communities.

My first question will be addressed to the cooperative representatives.

In 2012, the Conservative government abolished the Co-operative Development Initiative. What do you think was the main effect of that on the cooperative sector overall in Canada, and on official language minority communities, more particularly in western Canada?

• (0920)

**Mr. Michaël Béland (Manager, Co-operative Development, Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada):** I won't deny that the consequences were very serious. Francophones outside Quebec used to be able to count on francophone provincial councils in seven provinces. I would say that we got kneecapped, not to put too fine a point on it. Several provinces had to stop offering services. For instance, from that day on, a francophone in Nova Scotia would have had to travel thousands of kilometres to receive services to help him to set up a cooperative. Because of that, expertise was lost in several provinces. The consequences were very serious on the service that helped to set up cooperatives, first of all.

We also lost the help offered for innovative cooperative projects and subsidies to help them start up. For a community that wanted to solve a community problem with a cooperative solution, access to start-up funding became much more difficult.

Yesterday, again, I was discussing matters with various francophone provincial councils outside Quebec, who told me that on top of everything the demand is increasing. Communities are asking for new cooperative projects in greater numbers, but there is a lack of resources. People can no longer meet the demand.

So clearly, the consequences are very serious.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** What repercussions did the decrease in human and financial resources at the Cooperatives Secretariat of the Department of Industry have on the Canadian cooperative sector, in your opinion? What will the consequences be for official language minority communities?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** The secretariat did follow-up on the cooperative movement as a whole. When needed it could examine the situation of francophones outside Quebec or of anglophones within Quebec. The latest data go back to 2009. The difficulty in having access to data and painting a current picture of what cooperatives and mutuals represent for the official language minority communities is a good example of those repercussions.

Industry Canada, to which the portfolio was transferred, does do good work. We are satisfied with its work, but there is still much to do. There are very few resources at Industry Canada and there is not a doubt that increasing those resources will be a welcome move.

It is important to point out that official language minority communities and the organizations that work there receive no funding from the roadmap. We thought that this could be rethought and that another solution could be found. The current roadmap has been in existence for a year and not a single dollar was transferred.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** My question is for the FCFA representatives.

You talked about the importance of joint planning between the government and the communities to further community economic development. Can you tell us in a more specific way what you mean by that?

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** Sure. There are national tables in various departments and in several of our organizations. I do not want to just talk about the departments because there are national and local tables too. Our impression is that not all stakeholders participate. There are a lot of economic players, including the co-operatives, of course. There is the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité in the provinces, as well as RDEE Canada at the national level. There are colleges and universities, as well as communities.

For parents, it would be easy to say to their children that they are going to plan the rest of their lives, without having them participate in the planning, and just tell them what they have to do. But things do not work like that.

We should take the time to talk to each other. Each community has an overall development plan. Collectively, we have a national strategic plan for communities. The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie has just held an economic development forum where they came up with an integrated plan. Another strategic plan is being done at the moment. How many strategic plans are we going to have? Can we not all get together and discuss how we are going to go about doing things?

Departments often tell us that they have not thought about the desired objectives. We have had that discussion right here when we had the consultations about the last Roadmap. We want specific, measurable results. Before a program is implemented, can people not sit down with the communities to find out what they need?

If you just want hard-nosed economic development, it will no longer be economic development for minority francophone communities. I am an entrepreneur. I could just go with the majority and drop all this, but I take pride in operating my two businesses in French and in English in minority situations.

When a program is being considered for implementation, can we not make sure that all the stakeholders in economic development are at the national and local tables? I am talking about co-operatives, if there are any, and about colleges and universities, but communities should be at the table too. If community economic development programs are put in place without having the communities participate in the process, there is going to be a serious problem.

• (0925)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Kenney.

Your turn, Mr. Gourde.

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

My thanks to the witnesses for being here this morning.

My first question goes to the representatives from Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada.

Earlier, I heard that francophone and anglophone co-operatives had come together. Can you explain why?

What does the fact of all co-operatives coming together mean in terms of national sales figures? That includes the financial sector, insurance, the service sector and the many agricultural co-operatives all across Canada.

Can you show us how powerful an economic engine co-operatives are in Canada?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** Yes, indeed. Previously, there were two co-operative networks in Canada, one francophone and one anglophone. They had existed for goodness knows how long for historical reasons. Basically, francophones made up about 45% of the co-operatives, 60% of the assets, 60% of the jobs and 50% of the revenue. So it really was split down the middle.

We asked ourselves why we would not come together, why we would not give ourselves a stronger voice to make the co-operative model known, both here in the House and with the public. We also realized that it would allow us to exchange better business practices. Some models existed among francophone co-operatives but not in the anglophone ones, and vice versa. So we decided to co-operate and to see how we could provide each other with more mutual support. It is very important to point out that anglophone co-operatives are now helping francophones outside Quebec and vice versa. This is the true co-operative spirit, for the good of Canadian society.

Our revenue is \$50 billion, with \$370 billion in assets that belong to Canadians. It is important to stress that this is not private money; it is money from ordinary men and women in the street. All of us around this table, for example, hold co-operatives.

Our growth rate in terms of both assets and jobs has been higher than for private enterprise in recent years. Our survival rate is double that of private enterprise. That means that, five or ten years after a

business has been set up, it is twice as likely to continue if it has been set up as a co-operative. The engine is real.

It is also important to know that, during the recovery, it has been shown, in Canada and elsewhere in the world, that co-operative financial institutions have been more stable than private financial institutions. The explanation is that the goal of a co-operative is for the business to be sustainable, to exist in the long term. Profit is not the most important thing; the priority is rather to keep jobs and services in the community.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** The level of success you are telling us about is impressive. However, if I am not mistaken, there is no equivalent in the private sector in Canada. There are no businesses whose activities are so widespread throughout the Canadian economy as a whole. Is there an equivalent, or are you really unique?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** I feel that we are really unique, if only by virtue of the fact that we have a number of areas of activity. As we mentioned earlier, it ranges from insurance to forestry, from culture to a number of other things. We are all together. Co-operatives and mutuals represent about 5% of the GDP. In some provinces, it will be more. I think that it is even higher in Saskatchewan, for example.

To my knowledge, no other sector brings so many things together. We could say, for example, that the mining sector represents 5% of the GDP. But its companies are not linked together with the goal of moving society forward. I feel that this is the only economic coming-together of this scope. I do not think there is anything comparable in business.

• (0930)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Judging by your comments, it means that the co-operative movement in Canada has reached a certain level of maturity, one that is from 60 to 160 years old. In my region of Quebec, Promutual Assurance Lotbinière has been in existence for 165 years, I think. It is an integral part of a Canadian community.

You chose to unite two forces in the co-operative movement, English-speaking and French-speaking. Do you think you are creating economic bilingualism in the short or medium term?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** Actually, we have bilingual co-operatives operating in both languages, just like we have francophone co-operatives and anglophone ones. Things are not always black and white; they are often grey.

Our organization is fully bilingual. Business between francophone and anglophone cooperatives is developing more and more. You are probably familiar with IÔGO, the new brand of yogurt. That is the result of a partnership between a francophone dairy co-operative and an anglophone one. They are working together. Our companies are working together more and more. We want our co-operatives to work together as a sector to become stronger and to develop all communities.

I should emphasize that we have not forgotten minority language communities in this larger picture.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I think Ms. Kenney would like to make a comment as well.

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** I am a big fan of co-operatives. I am a member of a number of co-operatives myself. So I applaud the fact that the new structure is maintaining its mandate in the context of minority communities.

But I would still like to sound a note of caution. In our country, bilingual organizations sometimes tend to become unilingual anglophone. The francophones are absorbed and you are left with an anglophone majority. In my opinion, this note of caution is important. We have to make a distinction between providing bilingual services and creating a bilingual organization. Often, given that the francophone portion is in the minority, it becomes even more so. I would like us to make the distinction between being francophone and anglophone, and providing bilingual services.

That said, as I am bilingual myself, I understand that we want to strengthen both abilities, but we must not lose the francophone component as we do so.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** How would our minority francophone communities in western Canada, which probably subscribe to the co-operative philosophy in large measure anyway, be able to look for an economic advantage in this partnership?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** As we mentioned in our presentation, a co-operative is formed to meet a common need.

Let us take a very concrete example, a theatre co-operative in Calgary. Francophones in Calgary were finding that there were no cultural services in French, or not enough of them, and expressed the desire to have some. What did they do? They came together to create an organization, a company, that would provide them with those services. It really was a project created by francophones for francophones.

It is the same, say, for a daycare. If people want their children to be able to go to a French-language daycare, or an English-language daycare in Quebec, but that service is not provided, they can set one up. Private entrepreneurs are not going to come to set up a daycare in those communities thinking that it will be profitable for them. The community will set up the daycare to meet the community's needs.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Béland.

Ms. St-Denis, you have the floor.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.):** I would like to ask you a final question about that.

What is the percentage of co-operatives in Quebec, compared to the other provinces?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** About 35%. There are 9,000 cooperatives and mutuals in Canada, and about 35% to 40% of them are in Quebec.

In addition, two thirds of all new co-operatives created in Canada each year are created in Quebec. Why? It is not so much because Quebecers are more co-operative than other Canadians. Rather, it is because, in Quebec, there really is support for the development of co-operatives, in terms of expertise, getting started and financial products. The environment in Quebec is a favourable one, and we hope that it will become equally so elsewhere in the country.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** The housing co-operative sector is having a lot of problems because the government is constantly looking at abolishing the program.

In your opinion, do housing co-operatives encourage francophone populations to remain in their minority francophone environments?

• (0935)

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** I think they clearly do, and we have concrete examples to support that. From Regina to Winnipeg to here in Ottawa, we have housing co-ops created by francophones for francophones so that they are able to live in a French environment. Of course, they are businesses, but, more than that, they maintain a living environment for francophones, often elderly francophones as well.

In Cheticamp, a wonderful project for elderly francophones is just getting started. The people there are using a co-operative model to make it possible for them out their lives in a francophone environment. That is another example of a community that wants to create a place for itself where it is possible to live in French.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Let me continue, because I have some other questions, but not a lot of time.

My next question goes to Ms. Unger.

In terms of job creation, do you believe that provinces are knowingly diverting federal funding for minorities to benefit programs for the majority? Are funds set aside for minority programs being used improperly?

For example, the last subject that our committee studied was immersion. Are funds set aside for minority programs used in other ways?

[English]

**Ms. Iris Unger:** I wish I could answer that question. I think it's a question that many of the groups on our employment round table ask. I don't know the answer to that. I wish we did, and I don't know whose responsibility it is to get that information, but we really don't know the answer to that.

The groups get funding now that provide English-language services, minimal funding, and we do what we can with that money. Is it earmarked for the English-speaking community, or for services in English? I really can't answer that question. I wish I could. I think it's a question that a lot of the community groups are asking.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** It really is an important question.

Does the English-language minority in Quebec need a specific integration program for the provincial public service? As you were saying, and as I have seen myself, anglophones are instead turning to areas like finances, or selling houses, but there are few of them in the public service. Do we need to establish a specific program for them?

[English]

**Ms. Iris Unger:** It's possible. I don't know if that would work because as I mentioned there's the whole inclusion issue. So even if there are programs to integrate people into the provincial government services, it has to go beyond that. It has to be a program that's going to work with the people who they're bringing into the government services so that they feel included. I think that's the important piece. We could create all kinds of programs, but if they don't feel part of that system.... There's a lot of perception around the language issues, and a lot of the people we see are bilingual and are capable and able to go into the government. We see that even at the municipal level. We speak to people at the government level in the city, and they have no clue how many anglophones are there, or applying for jobs for there. So even just to start asking those questions and doing some of the research would help.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Does the economic situation for anglophones in Quebec differ depending on whether they live in an urban or a rural environment?

[English]

**Ms. Iris Unger:** It would be difficult for me to answer that question, but I think the opportunities for jobs are obviously greater in Montreal.

I think the rural areas have other issues, and we're working more and more with them to provide services to help with retention and renewal. A lot of their young people leave to go away to university and don't come back, so I think they have different challenges than we do in the city. I think we all have the challenges—

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** In other words, you are not working on that.

[English]

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Right, and I think for young people.... I keep saying that young people are mobile. We have to recognize that it's a global issue, but how do we attract people? I think that's the real issue in Quebec. We are attracting the people, but how do we maintain them and keep them? They want to be there. That's what's really frustrating for us. They want to be there, but there are so many circumstances working against that happening.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Ms. Bossé or Ms. Kenney, could you tell me to what extent Quebec institutions are part of francophone community development in the other provinces? In other words, are francophones in Quebec helping minority francophone groups in the other provinces?

• (0940)

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** There is an agreement with the Quebec government's Secrétariat aux affaires intergouvernementales canadiennes. We have excellent cooperation with the Quebec government. I am talking about all francophone and Acadian communities, not just the FCFA. We share expertise and training. In health education, for example, I can tell you that services are loaned and expertise is shared.

Someone mentioned the Forum pancanadien sur le développement économique en francophonie canadienne. It took place in 2012 and

the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie took part. Quebec was also present and provided a good part of the funding for the forum. At the end of the forum, we had established a strategy for the Canadian francophonie. It included Quebec and the communities outside Quebec.

We ourselves have a branch office in Quebec City, which is largely financed by the Quebec government. Our work has been done in cooperation with the Quebec government for years.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Bateman, the floor is yours.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My thanks to all the witnesses appearing here today. It is very much appreciated. You seem like a very diversified group to me.

You are probably aware that our government is focused above all on job creation, especially for young people, as well as on economic growth and long-term prosperity. This is very important for our generation, but also for all generations to come.

This morning, I was at a meeting put on by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada. It was a book launch. I have to say that chartered accountants—I am an accountant myself—are also focused on financial literacy. I have a quotation here that comes from this morning's presentation. Unfortunately, it is in English only.

[English]

The report identified financial literacy as critical to the prosperity of Canada, pointing out that, "Increasing the knowledge, skills and confidence of Canadians to make responsible financial decisions will help them meet their personal goals, enhance their quality of life and make Canada more competitive."

[Translation]

This morning was the launch of the publication called *Protecting you and your money: a guide to avoiding identity theft and fraud*. They also launched two other books dealing, I think, with financial literacy for young people and for Canadians as a whole.

The objective of the government and of the chartered accountants is to educate people all over Canada in financial matters. I see a close link between what we and your federation are both looking for.

Ms. Bossé, do you want to comment on that?

**Ms. Suzanne Bossé (Executive Director, Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada):** Thank you for asking this question, which is so important. There are various aspects to the answer.

For instance, OECD's international investigations assess the levels of literacy and numeracy, whether it be in computer science, math, science or another field. The results of those investigations conducted under OECD's PEICA were published last fall. Canadian Heritage, Statistics Canada and other departments have joined forces with our community organizations, including Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des connaissances, and with FCFA to see how those data could help us better understand the specific needs of our communities, in order to develop retraining and equivalency programs.

There are linguistic data, but the resulting analysis will not have sufficient sampling of our francophone minority communities to make it possible to know the needs that vary, depending on whether the communities are rural or urban.

Two or three years ago, the same problem came up when Employment and Social Development Canada, Industry Canada, Canadian Heritage and Statistics Canada joined forces to conduct a study on francophone companies to find out how the francophone business community was doing. Unfortunately, it was not possible to put together the databases, because not all the investigations that were carried out included linguistic data. Once again, we do not have access to information dealing specifically with the communities.

It is important to include research that enables us to understand our own challenges and circumstances. That is the only way the federal, provincial and territorial governments can fully understand them as well. We are dealing with a serious challenge.

I hope that answers your question.

• (0945)

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you.

Does anyone else want to answer?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** I will add something quickly.

The caisses populaires and credit unions are leaders in financial literacy. That also includes the caisses in minority settings. In Quebec, we are not in a minority situation, but the co-operative family economics associations provide financial literacy training only. Unfortunately, we only find that model in Quebec.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Daniel now has the floor.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, witnesses, for being here.

I'm going to direct my questions to the YES group.

I want to talk about entrepreneurship a little bit. Can you talk to us about the entrepreneurship funding that YES allocates? What kinds of businesses are anglophone entrepreneurs starting in Quebec? Of the 200-odd businesses that YES funds each year, how many of them are first-time entrepreneurs?

It's a bundle of questions, but please go ahead.

**Mr. John Ayles:** Perhaps I'll answer the last question first.

There has been a shift in the kinds of entrepreneurs that we've seen over the last few years. In prior years of the organization the businesses that people have been forming have been truly nascent cottage industries and home businesses. We are seeing a move to a more truly entrepreneurial profile, where many of our clients now have existing businesses that actually employ people, businesses that are up and running, and expanding. Anglophone speakers don't start anglophone businesses. They start businesses that serve Quebecers, and generally speaking, they serve in the language of their clients.

Another very important issue is that there are at least two kinds of entrepreneurs. There are entrepreneurs who absolutely have a passion for starting a business, being their own boss, and driving a new thing. There are also those people—and there are many—who come to YES, who are frustrated because they cannot find a job, who want to settle or stay in Quebec, and as a second option they try to start a business in order to create the lives they want to create for themselves. That's more common than one might think.

• (0950)

**Ms. Iris Unger:** In terms of the types of business—I'm just looking at our statistics here—about 35% start something in the service industry, about 8% to 10% in e-commerce. Twenty-four per cent are self-employed artists. Retail and hospitality make up 8%, and import-export is about 8%. That gives you some idea. We're seeing a real shift towards the e-commerce. Also, a lot of people are coming to us interested in the whole co-op piece. It's a growing industry, especially amongst young people.

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Along a similar vein, what are your relationships with the Quebec Community Group Network? What kinds of ties exist between your organization and the Quebec Community Group Network and other organizations that deliver services to Quebec's anglophone community?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** We work very closely with the partners in the regions. Right now we have a regional project that's funded through DEC that's been really successful. We're doing a variety of activities that include helping some of those organizations build capacity within their own communities. We're sending our staff there to help train the trainers, peer-to-peer training. We're also doing workshops where our coaches actually go to the regions and do coaching for small businesses. We do things online; we have the technology for this. We have huge equipment at our offices, where we can work with those organizations. So we're working with most of the organizations within that network.

As we mentioned, the issues are so complex. We'll work with organizations in the arts community like ELAN. When we do our arts conference they participate on planning committees.

I think our communities survive as a result of the partnerships that we have, especially within the community network.

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** I have one more quick question for you.

I visited a number of the aerospace companies in the Quebec corridor, in the Montreal area. They plan to expand their businesses by about 30% over the next year or so, yet one of their biggest concerns is about where they can get the engineers, etc., who can fill those positions.

You've been talking about youth unemployment in a big way. How are you doing in terms of assessing what jobs there are versus what skills there are? How are you matching those?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** It's a real challenge. As I mentioned, it's a global issue. We have a lot of unemployed people who are coming to us with liberal arts degrees and arts degrees. It's very difficult, because yes, there are jobs, especially in the creative field where people are looking for programmers, gamers, and all of that, and they're importing people. That's why I was saying that this is a huge potential for our community, if we can figure out ways to support these people and integrate them into our community. A lot of these companies have to go outside the province to get qualified people. For a lot of those people the challenge becomes the family, which is an issue. If their families can't send their children to English schools or can't integrate into an English community, they're not going to stay in those jobs.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Nicholls.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, NDP):** My questions will be directed to Ms. Unger and Mr. Aylen.

First I'd like to congratulate YES on all the successes you have had over the years and for the positive contributions you have made to the community in Quebec. You've come up with a lot of positive proposals, and we should reward that success.

My first question will be fairly simple. Would you recommend increasing federal funding to agencies such as yours? I ask because I'm sure your productivity is hampered by planning private fundraising activities when you could possibly have to worry less about these activities, which would allow you to focus on offering more services to the community.

Would you recommend increasing funding?

• (0955)

**Ms. Iris Unger:** I didn't plant this question—I want to put that on the record—but I would have, if I could have.

Thank you, Jamie, for your question and for your compliments. We all work really hard in the community. Getting a compliment is very much appreciated, so thank you.

As I mentioned, all the community organizations spend much of their time doing grant proposals and reporting. If there is a way that you can facilitate that....

Unfortunately, community organizations are set up with the same standards as businesses, with expectations of evaluation results. But we're not given the resources to do those kinds of evaluations and monitoring and accountability. We take it very seriously—yes, we invest that money—but there's no recognition.

Much of our fundraising goes to providing jobs for people at our organization who can do those things, because we recognize the importance of such people as the accountant, the evaluators, or grant writers. We need those people in order to function or to evaluate whether we are doing a good job and having results. But this is an area for which we don't get funding.

If there were additional funding for the community organizations to help them build their capacity in those areas....

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Great.

John has stated that project funding is not sustainable. You mentioned the transfer in 1998.

Were you referring to the Canada health and social transfer, which exists—?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** For the employment, all the responsibility for employment was transferred from the federal government to the provincial government, so anything to do with employment...and it's very frustrating. If you just mention the word "employment", it has to fall under provincial jurisdiction.

For example, the provincial government gives us enough money to service about 360 clients a year. We see about 2,000 needing help. If you go to any other government body or anybody else and say, we need help to help these people find jobs, you hear that this is provincial jurisdiction and they can't touch it.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Right. That regime started pretty much in 1998 under the previous Liberal government and continued with this one.

Would you recommend that, unlike what was done before, agreements and transfers be accompanied by more robust clauses guaranteeing OLMC services?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Could you state that into the record, as a recommendation that those clauses be included?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** I would suggest that there be clauses for more accountability about where funding regarding employment is being placed.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Great.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Especially if we're talking about youth and jobs and the retention of the OLMC in Quebec, I think it's crucial.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** So there should also be a guarantee that there be funds earmarked, not just that there be transparency, but that they be—

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Funds that are earmarked...which I don't think exists today.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** —yes, earmarked for those services.

John, you also mentioned that the approach needs to be not piecemeal but organic. My understanding of that is that there needs to be a vision or a strategy, and perhaps greater consultation.

**Mr. John Aylen:** Yes. We need to build coalitions and partnerships. We need to build coalitions between industry and organizations such as ours and our universities to ensure that we are preparing people properly to meet the challenges of our economy today and tomorrow.

There is a gap. Partly we are there to close the gap, but we cannot change the gap between the actual training that our students receive and the actual demands that industry has unless we come together to speak, talk, and plan to bring our young people into the workforce with the skills that are needed by the industries that need them.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Now we'll go to Mr. Williamson.

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

We're going in several interesting directions. I have one quick question for the Youth Employment Services, just to clarify.

What kind of federal funding or support do you receive? I'm a bit unclear, in light of the last round and your discussion with Mr. Nicholls about the funding you receive from the Quebec government. But what about Ottawa, the federal government?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** From the federal government we get funding for economic development. We get funding again through Status of Women on a short-term basis. If we look at "core funding"—which I put in quotation marks because even that is not always guaranteed—we get funding through Canada Economic Development, Canadian Heritage, and some occasional funding through Status of Women. We get a little bit from what used to be called HRSDC.

This is one area, if I have to make any recommendations again, internships are really valuable and very successful when you bring the different partners together. I don't know about the youth employment strategy. Luckily the federal government held on to that piece. On an annual basis, we usually get funding to place about 10 interns.

• (1000)

**Mr. John Williamson:** Thank you.

This may be for everyone. It is actually not resonant with my questioning, but you just opened up the subject of internship.

Do you have any comments on the Canada job grant, which was just signed off with many of the provinces, including Quebec? I am curious about it both as to Quebec and then to the communities outside. What are your thoughts?

[Translation]

We could start off with you. I would like to hear what you have to say on the issue.

**Ms. Suzanne Bossé:** About the Canada job grant?

[English]

**Mr. John Williamson:** If you have nothing to say, that's okay as well.

**Mr. Shawn Murphy:** I don't think we really have anything to say on it right now.

Thank you.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Thank you.

[Translation]

**Ms. Suzanne Bossé:** We are very happy that the federal government has used the Canada job grant to give more flexibility to provincial and territorial governments. It is very important. The grant will be fully in effect on July 1st, and the participation of the provincial and territorial governments will go up.

What we are concerned about is the way the provincial and territorial governments are going to organize themselves and

coordinate access to training with employers. For instance, in Nova Scotia, the Université Sainte-Anne currently provides retraining for immigrants and the unemployed. How is the provincial government going to continue working with the same providers? How will our providers know what the needs of employers are?

That sort of goes back to what the gentleman was saying a few minutes ago. It is important to achieve full coordination and co-operation among all levels of stakeholders, provincial governments, service providers and employers alike. Otherwise, there will be negative consequences. First of all, candidates, employees or workers may well not have access to training in French. Then, our colleges may well not be selected by the provincial and territorial governments to provide the training.

For us, the way this whole system works remains a murky area. How are we supposed to ensure access to French-language services and effective co-operation between employers and workers in this new system?

**Mr. John Williamson:** If Service Canada offered this program, do you think that would address some of the language concerns?

**Ms. Suzanne Bossé:** That remains to be seen. We don't really know how Service Canada is going to work with provincial governments. We also don't know whether the importance of having strong and stringent linguistic clauses and of consulting communities will be recognized.

I know that is part of the labour market agreement. However, we must keep a close watch on that, given what has recently happened in British Columbia, where five employment centres that provided services in French closed. They were not able to continue providing their services because the linguistic clauses in the agreement between Employment and Social Development Canada and the Government of British Columbia were not strict enough.

We know that the department has taken steps to deal with and rectify those types of situations. It remains to be seen how this will all play out in practical terms.

• (1005)

[English]

**Mr. John Williamson:** Could I just hear quickly from the YES group as well please?

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Mr. John Williamson:** If you have any comments on the job grant as well, I'd be curious to hear them.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** It's interesting, because I know initially the community was quite concerned about it in Quebec. The fear was that there was a lack of recognition for the role of the community organizations in that model. I think the amount of work that community organizations put into that triangle of the business, the employee, and putting those together was being underestimated.

Regarding people at risk, most of the community organizations work with people who are really difficult to place, and there was a concern that those would be the people who would fall through the cracks. Since then I understand that Quebec has signed the agreement as a status quo situation. The feedback I received at our employment round table was that people were quite satisfied with the entente.

I think there was a fear that moneys taken out of training were going to be coming out of the community organization's funding. I think that was why the community was quite anxious about it.

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Ms. Perreault, go ahead.

**Ms. Manon Perreault (Montcalm, NDP):** Good morning, everyone.

The answers are very interesting and instructive. I have not been on the committee for a long time, but I have learned a lot this morning.

My first question is for Ms. Kenny or Ms. Bossé.

You quickly talked about this earlier. In your speech, you recommended that federal institutions include language issues in their research on economic development and employability. Why is that so important, in your view?

**Ms. Suzanne Bossé:** Thank you.

I briefly referred to the importance of including language issues in the investigations conducted by Statistics Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada on the workforce and other topics. The databases need to be brought together so that we have access to information. At the moment, there is no way to access the information, which makes it impossible to understand the full picture of the economic reality of our communities. Right now, we cannot even define what a francophone company is.

The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, which includes the federal, provincial and territorial governments, organized a forum on economic development in 2012. One of the main issues defined was the importance of research and of including linguistic clauses in federal-provincial-territorial agreements.

**Ms. Manon Perreault:** Is there currently any joint planning between the government and the communities?

**Ms. Suzanne Bossé:** There is the integrated plan of action from the Forum pancanadien sur le développement économique en francophonie canadienne. As Ms. Kenny said earlier, this plan relies on six priority areas for implementation. Now it is a matter of having the right players around the committee table to follow up on this action plan.

Perhaps you have something to add, Ms. Kenny.

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** Another strategic plan is being implemented by the anglophone community in Quebec and by francophone and Acadian communities, in collaboration with economic development organizations, CEDEC and RDEE Canada.

You will understand that we are very concerned by the fact that the economic situation in English-speaking Quebec is not the same as in the francophone and Acadian communities. I would not go so far as to say that everything is rosy in Quebec, but let's just say that Quebec has more English-speaking employers or employers looking for people who speak English than our communities have employers looking for people who speak French.

A strategic plan is taking shape, but what I'm most afraid of is that we are going to end up with a plan that will mix the needs of anglophones in with the needs of francophones.

Also, there has not been a lot of consultation on how to approach the strategic plan that is being developed jointly with CEDEC, RDEE and Air Canada. Neither QCGN nor FCFA were really consulted before being presented with a done deal. That raises a lot of questions for us.

Right now, the survey questions coming out of the boxes from RDEE Canada and CEDEC deal more with entrepreneurship. So the survey questions are targeting entrepreneurs more than the communities.

Just now, I pointed out that communities need to be there, need to be consulted. If you want to talk about my economic development, I need to be there to be able to tell you about my reality, meaning the rural exodus in my community, the shortage of jobs for young people, and entrepreneurship training.

However, the survey that is going around—and in which we encourage our members to participate—deals more with my needs and priorities as an entrepreneur. I think that's a good thing because this is the first time I have ever been asked about it, but the other economic development organizations, of which I am a member, should not be forgotten. Of course, I think it is important that I am surveyed as an entrepreneur, but economic development is not limited to entrepreneurs. When a strategy is prepared, it is important to include organizations such as QCGN, YES and CMC, instead of working in a vacuum.

Earlier, I pointed the finger at the government, but I am also ready to point the finger at some of our francophone and anglophone organizations that decide to work in a vacuum. That serves no one. That is not a good use of taxpayers' money and the needs of communities are not met. Let's try to open things up.

My role is neither to stand up for the interests of an organization, a secretariat or an office, nor to stand up for a budget or for employees. I am sorry, Suzanne, but my role is to stand up for francophone and Acadian communities. If we don't all work together in that direction, we might as well close the doors and go home. I am not ready to do that, even though our organization has a long way to go. The government must encourage everyone to sit at the same table and promote those types of opportunities.

The concept of community-oriented schools implies that the whole community is there. In terms of immigration, I always say that it takes an entire community to welcome an immigrant. The same goes for economic development, culture and other areas. The entire community must participate and be involved.

•(1010)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Gourde.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Kenny, this part of your presentation has been very interesting. I feel that we are really hitting the nail on the head; this is really the issue we want to discuss in our study.

The Standing Committee on Official Languages will probably summon representatives from the organizations you mentioned that work in a vacuum on developing strategic plans. Do you know other organizations that are trying to find points in common or should we count only on our committee to do so?

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** Actually, the majority of organizations work well.

As you know, our funding has not gone up in years. We have the same pie for the same number of organizations, but sometimes we must share it with emerging organizations. As a result, the pieces of the pie are getting smaller while the amount of work is going up.

Unfortunately, some organizations or interest groups have got it into their heads that they should make sure they have their own budget. However, the goal is not to ensure that everyone has their own budget, but rather that, at the end of the day, all the work the organizations do meets the needs of the people in our communities. Let's not protect our budget or our courses at all costs.

As I said earlier, the roadmap anticipates an investment of \$100 million over five years in economic development. However, the government must make sure it specifies what results it expects before it distributes the \$100 million. It is important to specify that everyone is expected to work together to achieve x, y or z results in terms of employability, for instance, or when young people, seniors and women need to be integrated into the labour market, to combat the rural exodus, to create companies and to encourage entrepreneurship.

Right now, we don't have any of that. At the end of the day, it is your money, our money that we are getting. Will this money be used to develop 35,000 strategies without doing anything tangible? Our communities really need economic development. Let's work on it. However, let's first make sure that, when all is said and done, the money distributed will be used for the desired outcome.

•(1015)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** I have one concern about what you are telling me, Ms. Kenny. I think all the organizations have commendable goals. It seems that everyone is working toward economic development, and that's good. However, if all these organizations want to do the same thing, if they all have the same goals and they have to fight for funding, some actions and activities will end up being compromised. If too many activities are compromised, not a whole lot will get done.

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** Actually, economic development is not the only goal. I am referring to all the issues related to communities.

In terms of economic development, there is CMC of course, but there are also colleges, universities and RDEEs. Many organizations are working on economic development. For instance, a women's organization in Manitoba also looks after the employability of immigrants and works with employers. There are many.

It is important that everyone works together, hand in hand, and agrees on the common strategies. However, before all those stakeholders agree on a common strategy, the community must be consulted to find out what its real needs are. That varies from province to province. As I said, the needs are different for our francophones and for our anglophone friends. The needs, the realities and the issues are not the same.

I am not at all saying that economic stakeholders must be eliminated. What I am saying is that we must work together. Some things on the ground are working very well. The co-ops are doing very well, the RDEEs in some communities are doing very well. We just have to work together better.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** How can we put this synergy in place?

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** The departments spending the money should speak to the community before they spend it. As for the governance of that money, it is important to make sure that the representative organizations in place are consulted. If money is being given to CMC, CMC must be required to work with the other organizations that engage in economic and community development. The same thing applies if money is given to RDEE: it is important to make sure they will work with CMC.

**The Chair:** Mr. Béland, you have the floor.

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** I would like to briefly support what Ms. Kenny is saying. We are not entitled to our piece of the pie. As I said earlier, we do not have a budget. Perhaps we are not directly involved in this discussion, but I would like to support what was said. Even so, we can now see that there is a lack of coordination. There are various plans, but at some point, we need to stop planning and start working together. We are not part in this discussion, but we are seeing what is going on around us. I would like to point out that we have also noticed that there is currently a lack of coordination.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Dionne Labelle.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle (Rivière-du-Nord, NDP):** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to talk about credit co-operatives. Amendments were made to the tax act in 2013 concerning credit co-operatives. Under those changes, the statutory tax rate paid on 80% of the revenue of credit unions will increase to 28% by 2016.

Furthermore, the use of foreign subsidiaries by the banks—Ms. Bateman, who is an accountant, will surely be interested in this—enables them to lower their effective tax rate by 9% to 12%, something credit co-operatives cannot do because they do not have subsidiaries in tax havens.

The increase in the effective tax rate will have an impact on you. Might it have an impact on your ability to support your local economy? If so, what will that impact be?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** Indeed, it has an impact. I should say that some credit unions have chosen not to engage in tax evasion for ethical reasons. It is important to understand that a credit union generally has a non-shareable reserve. That means that if we sold the credit union tomorrow morning and we closed the books, members would not be sent cheques. The money would stay in the community; it would be returned to the government.

The second reason why we adopted this measure is that we cannot use the markets to get capital. It is the members, through accumulated funds and prudent financial management, who let us build a credit union.

I won't deny that some co-operatives or credit unions have a greater capacity and face various challenges. The fact remains that smaller credit unions are affected.

• (1020)

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** How do you explain the government's attitude toward the taxes of credit unions, particularly small credit unions in the francophone communities affected? How do you explain that the government removed the credit available for the credit unions? What is the logic behind that?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** Credit unions and co-operatives do not want preferential treatment. We have never asked for special treatment because we are a co-operative or a credit union. We want to be on equal footing with other businesses. In other words, we want to have equal opportunities.

There are measures that allow us to be on equal footing. The question is: how are those measures understood and perceived. Was the tax credit perceived as being an advantage for the co-operatives? I think there is also a question of education. It is important to understand that it is not necessarily an advantage. It's just that we do not have access to the same market mechanisms for funding.

Instead, I see this as a misunderstanding. Perhaps it is also because some credit unions have grown, such as Desjardins. However, the situation is not the same everywhere, in every region or for all credit unions and co-operatives.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Would there be a way to tailor this measure to minimize the negative consequences on credit unions in some official language minority communities or in disadvantaged areas where the economic dynamic isn't like Alberta's?

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** There are institutions like Desjardins or the Credit Union Central of Canada that are a little more advanced in these areas. It would be good to speak to them because they would have more details on this than we do. It would certainly be something to think about.

**Mr. Pierre Dionne Labelle:** Are the credit unions you represent taking action in this regard?

**Mr. Shawn Murphy:** No. What is happening right now, especially with the credit unions, is that the small credit co-operatives are starting to merge using the co-operative model. They are merging because they are aware that their small size is preventing them from doing the day-to-day work, as a result of the new regulations and new taxes.

We are also seeing with credit unions that a lot of groups are merging to expand their network and increase their capacity. Here,

too, this is sort of the co-operative model that is being used. If a credit co-operative is looking for capital and cannot get it through a bank, it will find another way. We are seeing that, even though things on the ground have changed, credit unions are adapting to the situation and finding solutions.

I know that the Credit Union Central of Canada, which represents the credit unions in Canada, is in talks with the Minister of Finance about the possibility of new taxes to help the sector. It is the Credit Union Central of Canada doing that, not us.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Bateman.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My questions today will still focus on prosperity. I think it is very important for everyone.

You spoke about the importance of federal programs in your life and your work, and the positive outcomes. What do you think of the other measures? For example, do you think the tax system and regulatory system are important? Perhaps you could talk about the red tape. Could you comment on this approach of economic development and long-term prosperity and how the two come together?

[English]

**Mr. Shawn Murphy:** To address the issue, when it comes to regulatory changes and other things that would be necessary right now, I think one of the biggest issues that has been touched on is that there's a disconnect between what happens here in Ottawa and what's happening on the ground. Whether it be minority linguistic groups or any, in our particular case, cooperatives, they go into the local Service Canada offices or BDC offices with sound business proposals on what they would like to do. There is a complete disconnect when it comes time because they don't fall within a particular box. I think going back to the financial literacy, there is also a level of education that needs to happen within the civil service, within the bureaucracy, where people understand the realities on the ground and that things change. As we saw, that's why we have—

• (1025)

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Can you give some examples of that, concrete examples? That would be very helpful.

**Mr. Shawn Murphy:** One was here in Ottawa, where a funeral home cooperative wanted to go in and get financing from the BDC. They were told, sure, we'll give you the financing, but you have to give 100% up front. Well, if they had 100% up front, why would they be at the BDC?

So there's that disconnect. Again, they were prepared to offer all kinds of tools and handbooks and everything else, but the bottom line was that they had a sound business proposal. In turn they went out and they were able to finance through other means. We continually hear stories like that, where there's this divide. It's not that there are bad intentions from the government and from the civil servants. It's just that there's this lack of understanding.

Going back to Madame Kenny's statement, we have to bring the people around a common table to try to figure out what's going on. What are the needs, and how do we make the tools? We can make all of the tools in the world, but if it's not addressing the needs then we're falling further behind.

[Translation]

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you.

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** As I said earlier, I myself am an entrepreneur. With respect to red tape, since I was already a manager before I started my company, I had a fairly good idea of the market and the field in question. Still I got in touch with the community economic development organization in our area. I said that I wanted to create a business plan and asked what I would need.

I was given a BDC template to fill out. I came back with this huge brick. I needed someone to help me. I drafted my business plan. Then, I was told that there was no funding available to help me with my business plan and that I had to use a consultant, which would cost me \$5,000. I had already done all that. My plan was very long.

Put yourself in the shoes of young university graduates who want to start their own business because there aren't really any jobs where they live. Nobody is going to help with their business plans. And it will cost them \$5,000. First, we have to wonder where they would get that money and, then consider that they do not necessarily have the experience I had that enabled me to draft most of my business plan myself.

Entrepreneurs' needs vary. If you are a francophone living in Saskatchewan and you want to work in French, it is even more difficult.

You were talking about red tape. I think that access to the funding, education, management, support and expertise the communities need is a very important aspect that is currently lacking.

[English]

**Ms. Iris Unger:** I just want to support that. That's what we do at our organization. We help people through the red tape and through the business plans. We sit with them and it's hours of work.

I think especially for the minority communities, there may be organizations in the community that are set up to help them, but they don't necessarily have the language skills to be able to work with the person who wants to start the small business. For example, in Quebec if you go to your local CLD—

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Forgive me for interrupting—

**Ms. Iris Unger:** CLDs are the local development centres, and I think they're funded—

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** —but if you're spending such a quantity of your time guiding your client group through the red tape, could you give us a list of things we could improve on? It's nobody's intention to be an impediment to progress, but sometimes that gets lost in the translation.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Yes. I think in this case we won't blame the government.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Well, no; I think everyone has good intent

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Yes.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** —but that doesn't mean there aren't blockages, as Shawn pointed out.

Nobody's in business to be an impediment to helping. That's not the intention. So if you can point those out to us at any time, we would welcome that. I would certainly welcome that information.

•(1030)

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Unfortunately, again, a lot of it falls under provincial jurisdiction, so a lot of the forms and paperwork that our clients have to fill out are in French. That's where some of the big challenges are.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Oh, okay.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** The business plans are related to usually going to a bank or a funder, so I don't know offhand if the government is an impediment at this point, in terms of those papers.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** That would not be our intent.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Okay. Thank you so much.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Nicholls.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** You mentioned, Ms. Unger, that the second class of entrepreneurs that you receive are people who are frustrated with no job opportunities existing, so they create their own. We have to applaud those people, but we know that for entrepreneurs to survive, to keep their businesses afloat, they really do need certain characteristics. I'm sure you assist also with training them on how to adopt that mentality. I have a few questions surrounding that.

Was there a spike in clients for YES during the recession from 2008 to...? Well, there's some debate around whether it ever ended.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** I think it's interesting, because we didn't see a huge spike during that period. We saw it after that. I think we see what's happening on the ground before it actually happens in statistics.

When the recession was happening, we were still seeing jobs. There wasn't the same kind of disconnect. There weren't the same kinds of mental health issues that we're seeing now. I think what we're seeing now is worse, quite honestly, than what we were seeing in the recession. I think our numbers are up. The unemployment seems to be greater in Quebec. We're seeing more people struggling and trying to get their businesses off the ground.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** So it's like a shadow effect, I guess.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Yes, a little bit, or a precursor.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Was there a parallel increase in funding to deal with that increased caseload?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** No.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** No.

You also mentioned, interestingly enough, that 24% are self-employed artists. That's a high percentage. I talked with Sylvia of the QCGN, and she said that it's not just the cultural sector, but ELAN and federal funding would certainly help that sector of the population.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** For sure, and I think because we have a specific program for artists for helping them with their business skills—we've had it for about 10 or 12 years—that's why you see that number there. We have a specific business coach who deals with artist clients.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** That's great, but as Sylvia from the QCGN said, it's not just culture that's a challenge. As you know, Canada is an innovation-based economy, according to the World Economic Forum, and I'm thinking more along John's lines when he talked about having this vision. We really have to look to where there is success globally. If you look at Switzerland, you see that they have four languages in a federal system, and they're also consistently number one in terms of competitiveness and innovation. They have something called the Commission for Technology and Innovation. Its mission is to promote scientific research and innovation more generally.

When I look at the YES model and this commission, I see that the commission has three sectors. One is start-ups and entrepreneurship. The second is R and D funding. The third is knowledge and technology transfer between universities and industry. That sounds exactly like what we're looking for here in Canada to promote the health of our economy, whether it be in OLMCs or in the general population. Would you recommend a similar commission for Canada to deal with the problems we're facing in our economy?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** John?

**Mr. John Ayles:** I don't think it's my place to recommend. Certainly, there needs to be more collaboration among industry, education, and companies or groups like ours in order to be sure that it's a win-win-win for everybody; that is, that our young people are coming out of their training programs trained to meet the challenges of industry and there is an understanding of where our economy and our jobs are going.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Yes. The Swiss have pretty much done this. They've put it into one commission. They have things like start-up coaches for entrepreneurs on a national level. They have innovation mentors. It just seems to make sense that you have this all in one area and then fan it out to the different jurisdictions. At least you would have a unified vision of where we're going as a country. Also, the knowledge and technology transfer between universities and industry seems to be working in Switzerland. I know it's not your place to recommend it, but....

• (1035)

**Mr. John Ayles:** Well, I would applaud it, and I have to say that I'm an academic as well as a businessperson and a volunteer at YES. When we talk about dialogue between business and industry, we forget, I think, that both parties have to listen. The universities also have to tell industry, and industry has to tell the universities. I think there's a lot of talking, but there's not enough listening.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Daniel.

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Thank you, Chair.

Once again, thank you to the witnesses. I have a couple of more general questions to ask.

Is there a francophone economic space in Canada? If there is, how do you define it?

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** That's an excellent question.

[*Translation*]

What is a francophone entrepreneur?

[*English*]

We haven't even decided what that is.

[*Translation*]

What makes me a francophone entrepreneur?

[*English*]

Is it my mother tongue? Is it my first spoken official language? Is it the way I operate my business bilingually, or not bilingually? Is it the way I let my employees speak French or English? What is a French business?

I consider my business to be a French bilingual business. The language spoken is French so I operate in French. Mind you, I'm a translation company, so of course, I'm a bilingual company as well.

That being said, we haven't established what it is. So you will have groups that work within employment services that will tell you there are so many English businesses in Quebec and so many French businesses. Basically, I don't know what their numbers are based on because we haven't established what is

[*Translation*]

a francophone business.

What defines a francophone business? Is it the language of work? Is it the language of the owner? I could be a francophone owner and do business in English, but because my name is Marie-France and I am francophone, you could say that my business is francophone.

First, it would be important to define that.

Second, we just said that we've created 30,000 businesses in our communities, but what is that number based on? Is it the owner's mother tongue?

In any event, there is a francophone space. I can say that there is at least one francophone employer in a minority situation, that is to say me, but I know there are many others.

A little earlier, I mentioned some numbers on francophone co-operatives outside Quebec. Their revenue was over \$7 billion. So there is a significant francophone space.

Furthermore, I would say that the francophone space at home, in another business I have that is not a translation business, is also bilingual. Obviously, if I want to do business or seek funding at home in Saskatchewan, I need to go and see anglophones. My francophone space is also bilingual.

The economic contribution of my businesses to my province and the federal government is still quiet impressive, even though they are small businesses.

**Mr. Michaël Béland:** This kind of discussion is taking place on the co-operative side of things as well. What is a francophone, anglophone or bilingual co-operative? We decided that, to be described as a francophone co-operative, you have to at least have governance in French within the board of directors that democratically manages the co-operative. That is where we drew the line.

The same thing is true for the numbers. When we want to determine the presence of co-operatives, the line is difficult to draw. We agreed that it was determined by the possibility of using French, or English in Quebec, within the democratic body when members make decisions as a group about the business. That is where we drew the line.

In any event, it is not so simple. For example, sometimes all the members of a co-operative's board of directors are bilingual. It is not black or white.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Any comments?

**Ms. Iris Unger:** It's interesting. I don't think we have ever had the conversation, but I know John mentioned that we don't consider ourselves helping to start English businesses. I think we help to start businesses, and as part of that we're retaining the community, so I don't think we have ever had that conversation.

We provide English-language services in Quebec and we see people from all over the world. We have people coming who speak Chinese as a first language, Spanish. Our staff speak probably about 10 different languages.

John.

• (1040)

**Mr. John Ayles:** Yes, it's very clear we offer services to people looking for work or to start businesses in English, but our clientele is anyone who needs to use our services and who is able to access our services in English. That's one issue you've brought up.

Another issue, which I think is related, is about defining a community. I think it's very important for the anglophone community in Quebec to have the opportunity to demonstrate that, economically and culturally, we are part of the solution for Quebec, not part of the problem.

I think there has been an image problem—I'm in marketing so I'll describe it as an image problem—that goes back to the Quiet Revolution, or earlier. I think there is a need, and there is need for support in order to demonstrate through facts, knowledge, feelings, and information that the anglophone community in Quebec makes us stronger.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll give the last couple of minutes—we have about two or three minutes left—to Madame St-Denis.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Ms. Kenny said that it was a little different in Quebec and that the minorities are still favoured there.

Why is knowing French still a problem for some anglophones in certain age groups in Quebec? How is it that there is this situation in the anglophone community?

[English]

**Ms. Iris Unger:** Do you want me to answer that?

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Yes.

**Ms. Iris Unger:** I think, to start with, a good portion of our clients are bilingual. I could answer several ways. A lot of people are coming from other countries. They've been invited and accepted into Quebec even though quite often they don't have the language skills in English or French, but they chose English as their second language.

I think Quebec is considered a wonderful place to live. It's got a low cost of living, people enjoy the way of life there, so it's attracting people. I think everybody recognizes that you need to be bilingual, but I think we also have to recognize there are still a lot of senior citizens living there who don't have the language skills, people with disabilities, families who have kids who are disabled and can't learn a language. There are circumstances where people just cannot become bilingual.

I don't know, John, if you want to add to that.

**Mr. John Ayles:** We understand that all our young people who are working in Quebec and are seeking employment don't have a right to do business in the language of their choice. They have to do business in the language of their employers, the language of their clients, and the language of business, if you like. But equally there are disadvantaged people. There are people who by age and by temperament will not or cannot use the language. There are pockets of anglophones who are looking for a nostalgic return to other times, but they are certainly a small minority of our population.

[Translation]

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** There is something that hasn't been discussed at all. I think it would be important to, but it's too late. Acadia has the largest francophone minority in Canada outside Quebec. No one spoke about the situation, of the development or operation of co-operatives. No one raised the problem. However, it is a very poor community that needs a lot of help. No one mentioned it.

**Ms. Marie-France Kenny:** In fact, Ms. St-Denis, I was speaking on behalf of all francophone and Acadian communities. If I'm not mistaken, the same is true of CMC. We represent all these communities.

I would like to clarify something. The government will invest \$100 million over the next five years into the Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018. I understand that the government is implementing strategies in relation to that \$100 million. However, it is being done without consulting organizations like the FCFA, our friends from YES, which is an important organization for Quebec's anglophone community, or the QCGN. They were not at the table to decide how to spend the money that is to be used for their economic development. I would really like us to recognize that something isn't working. It is important that all departments ensure that everyone is consulted.

• (1045)

**The Chair:** On that note, we will stop there.

[*English*]

This meeting is adjourned.

Thank you very much for your testimony.

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