



Hello,

Can you believe it's already spring 2024? With the Month of La Francophonie just behind us, I hope you had a chance to celebrate the French language and Francophone culture. I am proud to present this the 5th edition of *The Reflex*, the newsletter of the Official Languages Branch (OLB) of Canadian Heritage. This newsletter is a great way for me to bring you up to speed on our various files, which are so important for our two official languages and our communities across Canada.

Today, I'd like to speak to you about [Action Plan for Official Languages 2023–2028: Protection – Promotion – Collaboration](#) (the Action Plan). You'll recall that this Action Plan represents a historic investment of \$4.1 billion over 5 years, including \$1.4 billion in new monies to implement 33 new or enhanced initiatives. The implementation of those initiatives, based on a "by, for and with communities" approach, is well underway.

Let me begin with the new [Policy on Francophone Immigration](#) announced by the Honourable Marc Miller, Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship (IRCC), on January 16. I commend IRCC on its work to get this policy adopted, a policy that seeks to foster the long-term vitality and prosperity of the Francophone and Acadian minority communities, and to lay the groundwork for restoring and increasing their demographic weight. The Minister of IRCC's obligation to adopt a Francophone immigration policy flows from the Act for the Substantive Equality of Canada's Official Languages (formerly Bill C-13), which received royal assent on June 20, 2023.

Another Action Plan initiative involves the creation of a Centre for the Advancement of English and French to support federal institutions in taking positive measures in the area of official languages. The creation of this Centre, a joint responsibility of Canadian Heritage and the Treasury Board Secretariat, is intended to boost collaboration among all the partners involved, both federal and social, in order to advance the substantive equality of the two official languages in Canadian society.

In recent weeks, Canadian Heritage held dialogue sessions with official languages stakeholders, including groups representing official language minority communities, to make them aware of the new official languages responsibilities of Canadian Heritage and the Treasury Board Secretariat, the nature and scope of the new Part VII of the Act, and the status of the Action Plan rollout.

In addition, there was a more targeted discussion on the work of the Centre. By virtue of its mandate and functions for the coming years, the Centre will immediately begin establishing, maintaining and cultivating relationships and ongoing dialogue between Canada's official languages stakeholders and federal institutions. We plan to draw up a report that we will be sharing in the coming months.

In the meantime, we continue to implement the *Act for the Substantive Equality of Canada's Official Languages* (C-13). The OLB recently initiated regulatory processes concerning (1) the implementation of the new power of the Commissioner of Official Languages to impose administrative monetary penalties on certain entities subject to the *Official Languages Act* in respect of communications with and services to the travelling public and (2) the implementation of the brand-new *Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Act*, which is not yet in force. These regulatory activities will involve consultations with official languages partners and stakeholders. More on this in the next issue of this newsletter!

If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, contact the OLB at portail41-gateway41@pch.gc.ca.

Enjoy!

Sincerely,

Jalila Bendarhou, for Sarah Boily

New Policy on Francophone Immigration

The modernized *Official Languages Act* provides that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration “shall adopt a policy on francophone immigration to enhance the vitality of French linguistic minority communities in Canada, including by restoring and increasing their demographic weight.”

In response, in January the Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), announced a new [Policy on Francophone Immigration](#) to ensure the future and sustainability of francophone minority communities.

[Action Plan for Official Languages 2023–2028: Protection – Promotion – Collaboration](#) laid out a series of measures to support the immigration continuum, representing \$137.2 million in new investments. These measures are designed to stimulate recruitment, both in Canada and abroad, thereby attracting more French-speaking or bilingual workers to Canada. They are also designed to boost the foreign recruitment and subsequent retention of French teachers, and

to further consolidate the Francophone Integration Pathway, which seeks to facilitate the settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada and bolster the reception capacity of Francophone minority communities.

Check out IRCC's [Policy on Francophone Immigration](#) for a better understanding of how the Government of Canada is responding to the significant demographic and economic challenges facing the Francophone and Acadian communities.

Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Branch will continue to work with IRCC and other institutions to advance our broad official languages objectives.

2024 edition of the Best Practices Forum on Official Languages



Kicked off by a message from Clerk of the Privy Council John Hannaford, the February 5 to 9, 2024, Best Practices Forum on Official Languages was a resounding success! The event was attended by upwards of 2,100 participants, who came together to learn more about best practices during the “Spotlight on the Modernized *Official Languages Act*” panel discussion.

During that discussion, the Deputy Minister of Canadian Heritage reminded the institutions of the federal public service how important it was that they consider the impacts, whether positive or negative, of their decisions, policies and programs on official language minority communities, including the English-speaking community of Quebec, and that, in the event of a negative impact, they identify ways to mitigate that impact.

The virtual workshops offered throughout the week drew 1,400 participants, all curious to learn about the innovative ideas of other federal institutions in the area of official languages. Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Branch and the Treasury Board Secretariat took the opportunity to present the enhancements in the modernized Act to all federal institutions.



International Day of La Francophonie 2024: Let's Talk About French Culture!

In Canada, the [International Day of La Francophonie](#) is celebrated on March 20 of every year. The date was chosen symbolically in reference to March 20, 1970, which marked the creation of the Agence de coopération culturelle et technique, now the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie.

On March 20, 2024, the Canada School of Public Service and Canadian Heritage organized an event open to the general public that received a great deal of interest. The opening ceremony featured a sharing of traditional knowledge by Métis-Algonquin Luce Bélanger, setting the stage for an open and productive conversation with artists Sinem Kara, Naomi, Mimi O'Bonsawin and Trevor Thompson. Whether attending virtually or in person, participants could look forward to enriching conversations about identity, Francophone culture and the appeal of the French language in their artistic careers. What is more, the musical performances lent this event a festive atmosphere fitting of a celebration of La Francophonie!

The modernized *Official Languages Act* calls us to do more to protect and promote the French language, and the discussions as part of the Month of La Francophonie were an opportunity to hear different perspectives on the topic. A big shout-out to everyone who took part in the event or organized celebrations, and a special thanks to organizations, key partners and federal institutions for all their efforts to promote the Francophonie once again this year!

The Canadian Francophonie: a welcoming Francophonie

On February 8, the Ministers' Council on the Canadian Francophonie met to discuss ways of promoting the Canadian Francophonie. The ministers agreed to make additional efforts in this area over the next few years.

During their meeting, they stressed the importance of promoting a welcoming Francophonie, one that contributes to the social, economic and cultural fabric of Canada. In their view, it is important to promote greater use of French and to raise the profile of the French language and Francophone culture in Canada, while being mindful of regional dynamics and peculiarities.

From investing in the economic Francophonie, to educating young people about the importance of preserving their language, to raising the profile of Francophone minority communities and the range of services available in French, the proposals were many and will be studied in order to develop ambitious initiatives to promote the Francophonie in the years to come.



CIRLM-QUESCREN conference organized as part of the 91st Annual Congress of the Association francophone pour le savoir (Acfas)

The 91st Annual Congress of the Association francophone pour le savoir (Acfas) will be held May 13 to 17, 2024, at the University of Ottawa. The theme will be *Knowledge Mobilization in French*. As part of that congress, the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities (CIRLM) and the Quebec English-Speaking Communities Research Network (QUESCREN) are organizing a conference on May 14 and 15 on the theme *Women in Official Language Minority Communities*.

The conference will be an opportunity to develop a better understanding of the issues affecting women in official language minority communities and to bring together the expertise needed to better document and update the research on women in these communities.

We encourage you all to participate! The modernized *Official Languages Act* places greater emphasis on basing positive measures on data and research.

The [CIRLM](#) provides leadership on research on official language minority communities (OLMCs) and guidance for government bodies and stakeholders involved in OLMC development.

[QUESCREN](#) is a collaborative network of researchers, stakeholders, and educational and other institutions that works to foster a better understanding of Quebec's English-speaking communities and enhance the vitality of those communities.

Did you know?

Le saviez-vous ?

French Immersion

- In 2021, in Canada outside Quebec, nearly 700,000 school-age children whose mother tongue is not French were enrolled or had previously been enrolled in a French immersion program. That amounts to just over 1 in 6 (16.9% of) children aged 5 to 17 whose mother tongue is not French.

For more information, check out the Statistics Canada article entitled [Census of Population 2021: Analytical Product on Participation in French Immersion](#), published on February 28, 2024. This article provides the first in-depth analysis on participation in French immersion programs in Canada outside Quebec, using data from the 2021 Census.

Events



- The Rendez-vous de la francophonie (RVF) were held from March 1 to 31, 2024, under the theme “Découvrir aux éclats.” Presented in collaboration with the Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary, this edition of the RVF was an opportunity to highlight young people as agents of change and important cultural drivers in the Francophonie. Overseen by the Canadian Foundation for Cross-Cultural Dialogue and funded by Canadian Heritage, the RVF are among the cultural events surrounding the International Day of La Francophonie on March 20, organized each year to promote the French language and its many manifestations across Canada.

Research

- In November 2023, QUESCREN published a research brief by Shannon Bell entitled [Avoiding the News Desert: Addressing the Challenges Around Community Media in English-Speaking Quebec](#). Drawing on studies showing that the media landscape is changing, and that isolated and/or minority communities are being hardest hit, this research brief presents some innovative local projects that have developed with an emphasis on local ownership.

Statistics and data

- Want to learn more about Canada’s official languages? Visit Canadian Heritage’s [Statistics on Official Languages in Canada](#) site, which presents the demographic picture by province and territory and

reveals that more and more young people are studying their second official language.

- Want even more data? The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada has prepared [Snapshots of Official Languages in Canada](#) based on the 2021 Census data. Each snapshot features data on the use of official languages and includes data and information on official language minority communities in terms of immigration, education, community celebrations, media resources and history.

Mauril

During the Month of La Francophonie, the Mauril team invited its followers on social media to submit their favourite French expression. It could be an amusing expression, a surprising one, a particularly colourful one, or one they didn't understand.

Here are three expressions that the Mauril team explained to users who are learning French:

“Donner son 110 %”

Give it your all, do your best.

As in: “Les joueurs ont donné leur 110 % sur la patinoire hier.”

“Mets-en, c'est pas de l'onguent!”

Go for it, don't skimp on the quantity.

As in: “Je prendrais plus de sauce sur mes pâtes. Mets-en, c'est pas de l'onguent!”

“Lâche pas la patate!”


Hang in there, don't give up.

As in: “Lâche pas la patate, tu vas y arriver!”

To see all the expressions compiled, visit the Mauril [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts!

À la découverte des communautés francophones en situation minoritaire [Discovering Francophone minority communities]

On Mauril's YouTube account, you can also explore a [series of video vignettes](#) highlighting the linguistic diversity of Francophone voices across Canada, based on [meetings between sociolinguistics Ph.D. student Adéla Šebková](#) and Francophones in minority settings. You'll find

content exploring how French speakers perceive their own and others' ways of speaking. 
#MoisdelaFrancophonie (*content in French only*)