
Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*

Under section 41 (Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*), the Government of Canada is committed **to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada; supporting their development as well as fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.**

This commitment is binding on all federal institutions, which are required to ensure that **positive measures** are taken to implement it. The federal institutions must take into account this commitment during their entire activity cycle:

- ✓ strategic planning
- ✓ policy and program development
- ✓ implementation and evaluation

In all instances, federal institutions must keep their finger on the pulse of the official language minority communities, and determine whether their actions have an impact on these communities or on the advancement of both official languages in society.

Federal institutions are called upon to:

- ✓ raise employees' awareness about the needs of these communities and about section 41
- ✓ consult with interested members of the public during the planning and implementation of programs and policies
- ✓ determine whether policies and programs have an impact on the promotion of both official languages and on community development
- ✓ plan on the basis of impacts
- ✓ ensure that steps taken and decision processes are documented

TAKING POSITIVE MEASURES:

The *Official Languages Act* does not define the term "positive measures". The implementation of positive measures takes many different forms, depending on the mandate of each federal institution. Officials in your institution should have the same understanding of the *Official Languages Act* obligations. By continuing to listen to the communities and by demonstrating leadership, your institution will be in a position to identify positive measures.

TAPPING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF YOUR INSTITUTION

You should also optimize the full potential (services, policies, programs, expertise, facilities, etc.) available in your institution to fulfill its mandate. This might involve creating or adapting existing programs to take the needs of communities into account or looking at the possibility of calling on minority community organizations to deliver certain programs or services (what is referred to as the "by and for" approach).

WHAT ARE OFFICIAL-LANGUAGE MINORITY COMMUNITIES (OLMCs)?

Generally speaking, "official language minority communities" (or OLMCs) refer to Anglophones in Quebec and Francophones in the rest of Canada.

These communities are often represented by national and regional organizations such as:

- ✓ [Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada](#)
- ✓ [Quebec Community Groups Network](#)
- ✓ [Linguistic duality Network](#)

They strive to make known, among other things, the reality of their communities, their development priorities and the forms of support they need.

The following are examples of official language minority community organizations representing various sectors of activity:

- ✓ [Réseau.Presse](#)
- ✓ Association des juristes d'expression anglaise du Québec
- ✓ [Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation](#) (CEDEC)
- ✓ [English-Language Arts Network](#) (ELAN)
- ✓ [Fédération culturelle canadienne-française](#) (FCCF)
- ✓ [Fédération de la jeunesse canadienne-française](#) (FJCF)
- ✓ [Fédération des aînées et aînés francophones du Canada](#) (FAAFC)
- ✓ [Fédération des associations de juristes d'expression française de common law inc.](#) (FAJEFCL)
- ✓ [Réseau communautaire de santé et de services sociaux](#) (RCSSS/CHSSN)
- ✓ [Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité](#) (RDÉE Canada)
- ✓ [Société Santé en français](#) (SSF)

APPENDIX

The following are some examples of positive measures taken by federal institutions in support of the implementation of section 41 in accordance with their respective mandates:

- The [Action Plan for Official Languages 2018–2023: Investing in Our Future](#) includes a series of initiatives that represent concrete examples of positive measures.
- In the area of immigration, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada supports the [Francophone Immigration Networks](#), a group of nearly 300 partner organizations and institutions. These networks come from Francophone and Acadian communities and are front-line actors in attracting, recruiting, welcoming and integrating French-speaking newcomers.
- Health Canada funds [Dialogue McGill](#), a language training program delivered by McGill University to improve the capacity of health service providers to better serve the English-speaking population in the province of Quebec.
- Mechanisms are implemented (advisory committees, roundtables, working groups, etc.) to establish an ongoing dialogue with official language minority communities so as to be able to know their priorities and take them into account when developing new programs and services.
- Other federal institutions develop partnerships with minority language universities and colleges to provide Canadian and international students with work experience and research opportunities in the minority language.

For other examples, you can also consult [Canadian Heritage's annual reports on official languages](#) and the [Best Practices Digest: Fostering the Full Recognition and Use of both English and French in Canadian Society](#).