

Official Languages Lens – Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*

Federal institutions' commitments and duties

The federal government commits to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada, supporting, and assisting their development and to fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society. Every federal institution has the duty to ensure that positive measures are taken for the implementation of these commitments. These linguistic minorities are also referred to as official language minority communities (OLMC).

Legal duty → take positive measures:

- enhancing → the vitality → and support the development → of OLMCs
- fostering the full recognition and use → English and French

What is a positive measure?

A concrete action taken with the intention of having a positive impact.

An example of positive measures to foster the full recognition and use of English and French in Canadian society :

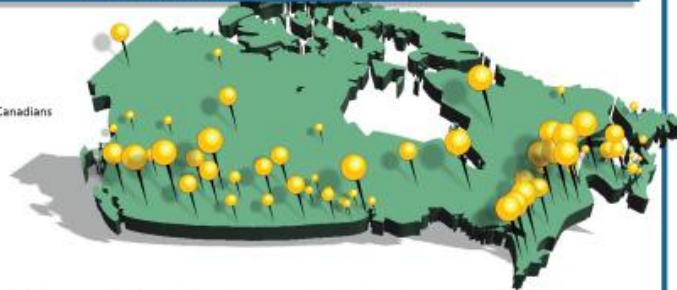
→ Include the obligation to acknowledge the source of federal funds in both official languages in all funding agreements.

An example of positive measures to enhance the vitality of OLMCs :

→ Make OLMCs a priority in calls for proposals.

Official Languages Minority Communities (OLMC)

More than 2 million Canadians belong to an OLMC



OLMCs are defined by both their geographic location (where they are situated) and collective identity associated with the use of an official language in a minority setting, that is when the language spoken by the majority is the other official language. There are national, provincial, territorial and sectoral stakeholders representing OLMCs.

Examples of English-speaking OLMCs representatives :

- Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) ;
- Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC) ;
- Regional Development Network (RDN).

Examples of French-speaking OLMCs representatives :

- Fédération des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada (FCFA) ;
- Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité du Canada (RDEE Canada) ;
- Fédération des aînés et aînées francophones du Canada (FAAFC).

How to determine whether an OLMC is present?

School The presence of a school that provides instruction in the minority official language.

Buralis Buralis database offers information on whether the federal government provides bilingual service at its service points in a given region.

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Official Languages comparative analysis (OLCA)

As a tool, the OLCA allows to discern the potential impacts of programs, projects and initiatives on OLMCs, to understand their needs and to identify relevant positive measures.



Intersectionality

OLCA enables a number of identity factors to be taken into consideration in order to better understand the diversity within OLMCs.

Steps

Strategic Planning

- Identify the region
- Determine the needs
- Determine the relationship between the objectives and the needs.

Implementation

- Facilitate implementation

Accountability

- Accountability

Questions to ask

Is there an OLMC (School, bilingual federal offices, representatives)?
Do they experience any issues or trends?
Did a literature review help identify any particular needs?
How to adapt the program to those needs?
What positive measures could be implemented?

What performance indicators have been selected?
Are they taken into account with regards to the funded activities?
Are the needs identified taken into consideration in the call for proposal?
Does the funding agreement contain an official language clause?

How did the program meet the needs of OLMCs?
What are the results in light of the selected performance indicators?
Do the funded activities have a positive impact?
Does the evaluation indicate that adjustments are needed?

Part VII Implementation

How to write a Part VII (OLA) conclusion in a Memorandum to Cabinet or Treasury Board submission?



Funding Agreement

The funding agreement must contain a description of how the recipient's activities will meet the federal government's Part VII obligations. The inclusion of an official languages clause in the agreement is strongly encouraged.

Identify, consider, document

Take notice of the Directive on transfer payments requirements;

Do a OLCA;

- Provide an evidence-based conclusion :
- Support the conclusion with evidence based facts (literature review, consultations, guides, representatives' websites, etc.);
 - Showcase the relationship between the programs' objectives, the potential impacts et OLMCs' needs;
 - Clearly identify what positive measures have been implemented.



Part VII Centre of Expertise

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📄 [Official Languages Lens – Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*](#)

📄 [Guidance tool for Official Languages Considerations when Developing Cabinet Documents](#)

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGES LENS – PART VII OF THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*

Why develop an Official Languages Lens?

- The Lens is part of Employment and Social Development Canada's efforts to support the implementation of the *Official Languages Act (OLA)*;
- To raise awareness about Part VII of the *OLA's* specific requirements;
- Provide employees responsible for policies and programs with a tool to take its specific requirements into account;
- Provide employees with training on how to apply the Lens to meet legal obligations.

Available on GCpedia:

[https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/File:ESDC - Official Languages Lens -
Part VII of the Official Languages Act \(Summary\).pdf](https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/File:ESDC_-_Official_Languages_Lens_-_Part_VII_of_the_Official_Languages_Act_(Summary).pdf)