



FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION IN ONTARIO

White Paper

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SUMMARY

The success of the professional, economic, social and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants throughout Ontario is a key element in the vitality of Ontario's Francophone community and the future of Ontario. Successful Francophone immigration requires access to a complete Francophone immigration continuum including the promotion of Ontario's Francophone communities and the recruitment, intake and settlement of Francophone immigrants to their full inclusion in welcoming, dynamic and inclusive Francophone communities.

In Ontario, Francophone immigration is a shared responsibility between the provincial and federal governments, both of which rely on community collaboration to succeed and fulfill their respective mandates. Ontario's 2012 Ontario Immigration Strategy established a 5% target for Francophone immigration, while the Government of Canada is committed to increasing the proportion of Francophone economic immigrants in Francophone minority communities (FCM) to more than 4% by 2018.

Statistics show that the number of Francophone newcomers in Ontario has been declining every year since the adoption of the Ontario government's 5% target and that the current Francophone immigration rate is below 2%.

The legislative and constitutional framework that guides the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario in immigration matters confirms the commitments made to the Francophone minority communities, to the Ontario population and to Canadian citizens by both governments. They take positive measures to promote the development and the vitality of Canada's Francophone minorities and to promote the equality of official languages and official language communities. The government of Canada's *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* promotes the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the evolution of the nation and the shaping of all sectors of society, and pledges to help them remove any barriers to such participation.

The intake, successful integration and inclusion of Francophone immigrants in Ontario's Francophone communities is a complex issue and requires the commitment and leadership of a number of players, including the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario, employers, the private and public sectors, municipalities and francophone communities across the province. Despite some progress in recent years, efforts to increase Francophone immigration to Ontario are not achieving the expected results and do not meet the expectations and needs of local communities and, especially, of Francophone immigrants.

Recognizing the importance of Francophone immigration and the urgency to act, the Assemblée de la Francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO), in cooperation with the three Ontario Francophone Immigration Support Networks, has launched a wide-ranging provincial consultation with Francophone communities and immigration workers in Ontario. The purpose of the consultations



was twofold: to provide an overview of the issues and challenges faced by Francophone communities in attracting, welcoming and ensuring the successful integration of French-speaking immigrants in all regions of Ontario and to recommend concrete measures to achieve the objectives of the 2025 Francophone community's Strategic Plan as well as those of the provincial and federal governments in the realm of Francophone immigration.

Provincial community consultations and a review of relevant literature led to the production of this White Paper.

Community consultations were held between December 2016 and February 2017 with community leaders, citizens, civil servants and people of immigrant background, as well as Francophone and Anglophone service providers in eleven different cities across Ontario. These consultations led to a number of findings, to a broad consensus around core principles as well as important measures and specific courses of action for the successful settlement of Francophone, Allophone and Francophile immigrants.

The review of relevant literature helped to situate Francophone immigration in a more general framework around the following elements:

1. the constitutional and legislative framework for official languages and Francophone immigration in Ontario and Canada;
2. the evolution of Francophone immigration in Ontario;
3. the systemic issues of Francophone immigration for an official language minority community;
4. the current modes of community governance in Francophone immigration;
5. immigration programs and services in Ontario; and
6. the results of relevant research and studies.

Analysis of the results of the community consultations and the review of the relevant literature led to the following four overall conclusions. There is a disconnected and incoherent approach by the various levels of government in Francophone immigration, an insufficient number of Francophone immigrants attracted and recruited to Ontario, a trajectory filled with obstacles and inequities for the Francophone immigrant, and a fragmented or incomplete Francophone immigration continuum.

These findings largely explain why targets are not being met and why there has been an annual decline in Francophone immigration to Ontario since 2012.

To reverse the negative trends of the past years and focus on achieving desired outcomes for newcomers and local Francophone communities, the Government of Ontario, the Government of Canada and the entire Francophone community in Ontario must mobilize and work together to achieve the following four objectives:

1. Provide a collective framework to align and coordinate the efforts of all actors in Francophone immigration.



2. Increase the number of immigrants who choose to settle in the local Francophone communities in all regions of Ontario.
3. Establish a comprehensive continuum of immigration services “by and for” Francophone communities that is equivalent to that established for the Anglophone majority.
4. In keeping with the principle of substantive equality¹ of official language communities, equitably and adequately fund the organizations and institutions of Francophone communities in Ontario so that they have the capacity to manage the infrastructures, the resources and the whole range of services required to accommodate, support and effectively include all categories of immigrants and their families.

This White Paper puts forward 11 important measures to achieve the four command objectives arising from the overall conclusions.



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1 Substantive equality/ égalité réelle: Substantive equality is achieved when one takes into account, where necessary, the differences in characteristics and circumstances of minority communities and provides services with distinct content or using a different method of delivery to ensure that the minority receives services of the same quality as the majority. **This approach is the norm in Canadian law.** Analytical Grid. Canada Treasury Board. <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/values-ethics/official-languages/public-services/analytical-grid-substantive-equality.html>. Consulted March 15, 2017.



CONTEXT

The number of Francophone newcomers in Ontario has been declining every year since the adoption of the Ontario's Immigration Strategy². The 2012 strategy aims to achieve a 5% target for Francophone immigration. The current rate is less than 2%.

In a report published in January 2017, Statistics Canada released alarming projections of the decline of the French language in Canada by 2036. In Canada, with the exception of Quebec, the population with French as its first official spoken language could fall from 3.9% in 2011 to between 3.0% and 3.6% by 2036. In addition, the proportion of Canadians outside Québec having French as a first language could decrease by 3.8% as it stands in 2011, to between 2.7% and 2.8% in 2036.³

In Ontario, our population is getting older, birth rates are low, workers are retiring and forecasts say there will not be enough new workers to meet the demand. In addition, federal government policies have restricted the number of skilled immigrants coming to Ontario.⁴

Francophone immigration is therefore a key element in maintaining or even increasing the demographic weight of Francophones and in ensuring the vitality of the Francophone population in Ontario and thus contributing to the prosperity of Ontario.

Despite some progress in recent years, efforts to increase Francophone immigration to Ontario and to successfully achieve settlement are not showing the expected results and do not meet the expectations and needs of local communities and, especially, Francophone immigrants.

There is an urgent need for a major push and a significant shift towards concrete, coherent and effective strategies and measures to ensure the success of the Francophone immigrant and to reach the target for Francophone immigration in Ontario.

2 Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. A New Direction. Ontario's Immigration Strategy. 2012. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/imm_str.shtml. Consulted March 16, 2017.

3 Statistics Canada. Thematic Series on Ethnicity, Language and Immigration. Language Projections for Canada, 2011 to 2036. January, 2017. Consulted March 17, 2017. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-657-x/89-657-x2017001-eng.htm>.

4 A New Direction. Ontario's Immigration Strategy. 2012. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/imm_str.shtml. Consulted March 16, 2017.



1. THE LEGISLATIVE AND CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

**Disclaimer: The information provided in this section is to provide context and does not constitute legal opinion.*

In Ontario, Francophone immigration is a shared responsibility between the federal and provincial governments, both of which rely on the cooperation of communities thus helping them to succeed and fulfill their respective mandates.

Ontario

The **Ontario Immigration Act, 2015** states that the Ontario government is committed to *enabling all communities across Ontario, including Franco-Ontarian communities, to attract, welcome and integrate immigrants*⁵.

In 2012, the Ontario government sets a new direction for attracting highly skilled workers and their families, supporting diverse communities and growing a globally-connected economy. In addition, this new strategy ⁶ aims to achieve a 5% target for Francophone immigration.

In 2015, following a recommendation from the Office of the French Language Services Commissioner⁷, a Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016 is put in place in order to⁸:

- identify key challenges to Francophone immigration and immigrant integration;
- identify Francophone minority communities' immigrant and integration needs;
- recommend new and innovative solutions to help address Francophone immigration and immigrant integration challenges; and
- develop considerations for setting Francophone immigration policy, program, and intergovernmental priorities for Ontario over the next one to five years.

The Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration was convened by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI) to make recommendations on ways to increase Francophone immigration

5 Ontario Immigration Act, 2015, S.O. 2015, c. 8 - Bill 49. <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/s15008>.

6 Ontario Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/french/keyinitiatives/imm_str/strategy/goex_report.shtml#Recommandations. Page consultée le 22 février 2017.

7 Joint Report: Time to Act for the Future of Francophone Communities: Redressing the Immigration Imbalance. November, 2014. <http://csfontario.ca/en/articles/5187>.

8 Ontario Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship. Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016. November, 2016. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/imm_str/strategy/goex_report.shtml#Recommandations.



to Ontario in order to reach this target. The Group of Experts released a report⁹ in November 2016, which included 13 recommendations on how to achieve the 5% target for Francophone immigration. Several of the recommendations in this paper are in line with those proposed in the Group of Experts' report.

The **Ontario's French Language Services Act**, adopted in 1986, states the following:

"Whereas the French language is an historic and honoured language in Ontario and recognized by the Constitution as an official language in Canada; and whereas in Ontario the French language is recognized as an official language in the courts and in education; and whereas the Legislative Assembly recognizes the contribution of the cultural heritage of the French speaking population and wishes to preserve it for future generations; and whereas it is desirable to guarantee the use of the French language in institutions of the Legislature and the Government of Ontario, as provided in this Act;"¹¹

Francophone immigration represents a unique opportunity to strengthen the demographic vitality of Ontario's Francophone community, preserve cultural heritage for generations to come and ensure the sustainability of Canada's linguistic duality.

Currently, the **French Language Services Act** applies to 26 designated areas of the province limiting the possibilities for the settlement of the Francophone immigrant. This situation underlines the importance of making improvements in the anticipated renewal of the Act.

Canada

Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act¹² includes language provisions which stipulate that the interpretation and application of the said Act:

- (d) ensures that decisions taken under this Act are consistent with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including its principles of equality and freedom from discrimination and of the equality of English and French as the official languages of Canada;
- (e) supports the commitment of the Government of Canada to enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada.

...although Ontario is home to nearly 70% of Francophone immigrants outside Quebec, the province does not receive funding to support Francophone immigration from the federal government as some provinces do under the Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018.¹⁰

9 Ontario MIC. Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016. November, 2016. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/imm_str/strategy/goex_report.shtml#Recommandations.

10 Time to Act for the Future of Francophone Communities. <http://csfontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Time-to-act-for-the-future-of-francophone-communities.pdf>.

11 <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90f32>

12 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (S.C. 2001, c. 27). <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-2.5/>.



The Government of Canada is committed to have Francophone newcomers make up at least 4% of all economic immigrants in Francophone Minority Communities (FCM) by 2018. The overall target for Francophone immigration in FSMs is 4.4% by 2023.¹³

In 2006, Canadian Immigration and Citizenship launched the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Communities in a Minority Situation*, a five-year plan outlining the challenges posed by Francophone immigration outside Quebec and identifying the key priorities that would guide the choice of initiatives for implementation.¹⁴ The plan sets out three main objectives:

1. Improving the integration of immigrants who have already settled in the communities.
2. Recruiting new immigrants.
3. Integrating new immigrants into the communities, helping them become established, and retaining them.

The plan states that: *the implementation of this Strategic Plan relies on the creation of solid partnerships between community organizations, the federal government and its departments, provincial and territorial governments, municipalities, schools, the private sector, professionals orders, etc.*¹⁵

In 2013, the Government of Canada launched *Canada's Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018*¹⁶. The Roadmap is built around three pillars: Education, Immigration and Communities; which makes immigration one of the three priority areas for action.

As for *Canada's Canadian Multiculturalism Act*¹⁷, it aims to:

- 3 (1) c)** promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the elimination of any barrier to that participation;
- 3 (1) i)** preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada; and,
- 3 (1) j)** advance multiculturalism throughout Canada in harmony with the national commitment to the official languages of Canada.

Part VII of the Official Languages Act sets out the federal government's commitment to fostering the vitality of Canada's English and French linguistic minorities and to supporting their development and to promote the full recognition and use of the two Languages in Canadian

13 IRCC. Attracting newcomers to Canada's francophone communities outside Quebec. March, 2016. <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1041109>.

14 IRCC. Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Communities in a Minority Situation. 2006. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/plan-minority.pdf>.

15 Page 7. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/pub/plan-minority.pdf>

16 <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1456932837796/1456932898448>

17 <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-18.7/>



society. To implement this commitment, federal institutions must take **positive measures** to promote the equality of official languages in Canadian society and to foster the development and vitality of official-language minority communities. As Commissioner of Official Languages Graham Fraser pointed out in his 2010-2011 Annual Report on Positive Measures: “This is essentially a measure that has a real and constructive effect on the vitality of official language communities.”¹⁸

Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement

The *Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement*¹⁹ (COIA) establishes the framework for a long-term partnership between Canada and Ontario with respect to immigration. It defines the respective roles and responsibilities of Canada and Ontario relating to immigrants and temporary residents. The Agreement, signed in 2005, expired in March 2010. In 2011, an extension agreement was signed to allow for the negotiation of a new agreement. However, the Agreement has not been renewed since.

The **Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement** refers to subsection 3 (1) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) and states that the purpose of the Canada-Ontario Agreement is to:

1. support the development of a strong and prosperous Canadian economy in which the benefits of immigration are shared across all regions of Canada;
2. enrich and strengthen the social and cultural fabric of Canadian society, while respecting the federal, bilingual and multicultural character of Canada; and
3. support and assist the development of minority official languages communities in Canada.

In addition, the Agreement stipulates that:

1.12 AND WHEREAS the *French Language Services Act* of Ontario indicates that the Legislative Assembly recognizes the contribution of the cultural heritage of the French speaking population and wishes to preserve it for future generations.

1.13 AND WHEREAS Canada and Ontario share a mutual interest in:

1. maximizing the contribution of immigration to the achievement of the social, demographic and economic goals of both Canada and Ontario;
2. ensuring immigrants have the opportunity to fully utilize their skills within the Canadian labour market as quickly as possible;
3. achieving family reunification and humanitarian goals through the immigration program;
4. fostering partnerships and the participation of municipal, community and private sector stakeholders in immigration; and
5. increasing program effectiveness and minimizing costs.

¹⁸ Early Childhood: Fostering the Vitality of Francophone Minority Communities. <http://www.officiallanguages.gc.ca/en/publications/other/2016/early-childhood-report>. 2016.

¹⁹ The Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement. <http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/coia/coia1.shtml>. Consulted March 14, 2017.



The objectives of the Agreement are as follows²⁰:

1. to foster an effective partnership between Canada and Ontario for the recruitment, selection and admission of immigrants and temporary residents, as well as the settlement and integration of immigrants in Ontario;
2. to ensure that Canada's immigration policies and programs respond to Ontario's social, economic development and labour-market priorities;
3. to optimize the economic benefits of immigration through co-operation in promotion and recruitment, facilitating the entry of skilled workers, temporary workers and international students, and reducing barriers to the labour market integration of immigrants in Ontario;
4. to ensure the effectiveness and integrity of programs of Canada and Ontario in respect of immigration by fostering co-operation in research, evaluation and information sharing;
5. to share responsibilities between Canada and Ontario for achieving the successful social and economic integration of immigrants in Ontario, including adequate, fair, and ongoing federal funding for settlement and integration services based on needs and the proportion of Canada's immigrants arriving in Ontario;
6. to foster effective cooperation between Canada and Ontario on the development and implementation of policies and programs to support the development of minority official languages communities in Ontario;
7. to foster partnerships with, and the participation of stakeholders including municipal governments, community-based organizations, minority official languages communities and the private sector in the recruitment of immigrants and temporary residents, and in the settlement and integration of immigrants; and
8. to establish and develop new governance mechanisms to support a collaborative approach to policy development, operational delivery and program accountability for immigration to Ontario, and settlement and integration in Ontario.

It is important for the Government of Ontario to continue its negotiations with the Canadian government to conclude a new immigration agreement. A separate agreement could recognize the specific realities of the Francophone community in Ontario and provide for **specific** and **positive measures** to be taken with respect to Francophone immigration in Ontario.

²⁰ The Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement. <http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/coia/coia1.shtml>.



2. AN OVERVIEW OF FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION IN ONTARIO

Highlight on progress in recent years

It is important to highlight some examples of the progress made in recent years through the leadership of the actors involved:

1. The Government of Ontario sets a 5% target for Francophone Immigration in Ontario's Immigration Strategy²¹ of 2012.
2. The Province of Ontario implements an *Express Entry French-Speaking Skilled Worker Stream*²² designed for skilled Francophone workers with a good level of English who want to live and work permanently in Ontario. This component is a pathway to permanent residence and shows that Ontario is seeking to attract Francophone immigrants.
3. *Ontario's Adult Non-Credit Language Training Program*²³ provides immigrants with free access to French as a second language (FSL) and English as a second language (ESL) courses through CLARS (Coordinated Language Assessment and Reference System) centres that assess their language skills and directs them to the nearest language training provider best suited to their needs. The program exists in at least four French-language school boards in Ontario.
4. *Ontario Bridging Programs*²⁴ help skilled newcomers obtain a license or certificate in their profession or trade so they can find a job that matches their skills and experience in the province. Some of these programs include language training related to employment.
5. The three Ontario Francophone Immigration Support Networks, established in each of the three major regions of Ontario, mobilize, consult and coordinate the multiple efforts of more than 130 community institutions, organizations and groups to create the conditions for the success of Francophone immigration in the province.
6. The Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada and the Ontario French Language Services Commissioner jointly produce the report *Time to Act for the Future of Francophone Communities: Redressing the Immigration Imbalance*²⁵ in November, 2014.

21 Ontario Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship. A New Direction: Ontario's Immigration Strategy. 2012. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/imm_str/strategy/goex_report.shtml.

22 Ontario Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship. http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/pnp/OI_PNP_EE_FRENCH_QUALIFY.html.

23 Ontario MIC. <https://news.ontario.ca/mci/en/2016/10/province-providing-free-language-training-for-ontario-immigrants.html>. Consulted March 17, 2017.

24 <http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/bridgetraining.shtml>

25 Joint Report: Time to Act for the Future of Francophone Communities: Redressing the Immigration Imbalance. November, 2014. <http://csfontario.ca/en/articles/5187>.



7. Following a recommendation by the French Language Services Commissioner, the Government of Ontario establishes the Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016. This group, made up of 9 members of the Francophone community and two ex-officio government representatives representing different sectors, geographic areas, and areas of expertise, was mandated to examine ways to attract, recruit, welcome, integrate and retain Francophone immigrants in Ontario.
8. The Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016 published a report and made 13 recommendations on how to achieve the 5% target for Francophone Immigration in Ontario²⁶.
9. Through the *International Mobility Program*²⁷, the federal government introduced the *Mobilité francophone*²⁸ program, which is designed to facilitate the recruitment of Francophone workers in provinces where there are Francophone minority communities.
10. The Ontario Government's *Municipal Immigration Information Online Program (MIIO)*²⁹ was put into place to increase online capacity, and facilitate access to resources and information provided to immigrants by municipalities. The websites highlight local labour market gaps, foster employer engagement, and provide useful information for international students and Francophone immigrants.
11. The French-language schools' admission criteria in Ontario are expanded to accommodate newcomers including allophones into Francophone communities. Eligibility criteria for English as a second language programs are modified to include French-speaking immigrants at the provincial level.³⁰
12. The Government of Ontario adopts a new, inclusive definition of "Francophone".

While some significant progress has been made over the past few years, statistics show that efforts to increase successful Francophone immigration in Ontario are not achieving the expected results.

26 Ontario MIC. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/french/keyinitiatives/imm_str/strategy/goex_report.shtml.

27 <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/tools/temp/work/opinion/francophone.asp>

28 As of June 1, 2016, foreign nationals who have been recruited through a Francophone immigration promotional event coordinated between the federal government and Francophone minority communities, and who are destined for a province or territory outside of Quebec and qualified under a National Occupational Classification (NOC) 0, A or B, may be eligible for an exemption from the Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) requirement under paragraph 205(a) of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations.

29 Ontario Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship. <http://www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantOpportunities/OSAPQA005152.html>.

30 Ontario Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship. Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/imm_str/strategy/goex_report.shtml.



Obstacles in the Trajectory of the Francophone Immigrant

Participants in the community consultations identified major barriers that not only prevented Ontario and Canada from reaching their targets, but also slowed down or even prevented the successful integration and inclusion of Francophone immigrants and their families in the Francophone communities in Ontario. The barriers faced by Francophone newcomers are as follows:

1. The intake, referral and settlement process is fragmented, incomplete or Anglophone, which slows down or prevents the integration of newcomers into the Francophone community and favors their assimilation to the Anglophone majority.
2. The language requirements for the Ontario component of the Express Entry System are unfair and inequitable for a number of Francophone candidates who do not already possess the required level of English language skills³¹.
3. There is limited access to the French Assessment Test (FAT), costs are higher than the Canadian English Language Proficiency Assessment Program, and wait times for FAT results are much longer.
4. Front line service providers offer little or no information to immigrants about available Francophone services, including intake, referral and settlement services.
5. Immigrants have little or no knowledge of the realities of Canadian bilingualism and those of Francophone minority communities.
6. There are significant challenges in the recognition of immigrant qualifications, credentials and experience, particularly with regard to professional regulatory bodies.
7. Limited access to employability measures and labor market integration in a job that corresponds to their skills and knowledge, as well as language barriers, constitute significant obstacles for the francophone immigrant.
8. Immigrants do not receive sufficient support in the workplace to ensure successful economic integration.
9. International students, temporary workers, candidates for the *Francophone Mobility* program and immigrants with a secondary migration status are not eligible for the IRCC-funded Settlement Program for Permanent Residents.
10. Francophone immigrants do not have an effective and coherent referral service to local Francophone services.

“Another big problem: Francophone immigrants, when they arrive in Ontario, do not always know that their children can attend French-language schools or that there is health care in French in the province.”

Alain Dobi,
Réseau de soutien à l'immigration
francophone du Centre-Sud-Ouest
Radio-Canada, November 2, 2015

³¹ *Application Guide for Ontario Human Capital Priorities Stream*. 3.3 Language requirements. You must demonstrate official language proficiency equivalent to the Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) for each language competency ... in either English or French. http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/pnp/OI_PNP_EE_CAPITAL.html. Consulted February 14, 2017.



11. Francophone communities are not sufficiently aware of the benefits of Francophone immigration and there is a lack of funding to provide training in cultural, intercultural and cross-cultural skills development.
12. In Ontario, the *French Language Services Act* applies only to designated areas, limiting the possibilities for the settlement of the Francophone immigrant. This situation underlines the importance of making improvements in the anticipated renewal of the Act.

An Ontario study focused on settlement and integration services conducted in 2012 by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)³², where 135 Francophone immigrants completed a questionnaire or participated in a focus group, laid out the challenges most commonly experienced by Francophone immigrants in terms of intake and settlement:

- lack of timely, adequate and appropriate information in French;
- services not available in the official language of their choice; and
- services too far from home or lack of transportation services.

According to the information provided by the focus group and individual interviews, the settlement challenges experienced by French-speaking immigrants are similar to those of other immigrants in many regards, but made more complex on some issues by their francophone status.³³

Obstacles for Francophone Communities

From a perspective of substantive equality of official language communities, Francophone communities in all regions of Ontario are able to participate in promotion and recruitment efforts. They have the capacity to create and support intake, orientation and settlement services as well as the full range of Francophone services that lead to the successful professional, economic and socio-cultural inclusion of Francophone immigrants. It is also important to remember that *Francophone minority communities have a double mandate to respond effectively to the needs of the Francophone immigrant population and also to contribute to the vitality and sustainability of Francophone communities.*³⁴

1. Efforts to promote Ontario's Francophone communities and to attract and recruit Francophone immigrants abroad are insufficient and are not tailored to facilitate reaching established targets. High potential pools of Francophone population are overlooked.

32 Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). Making Ontario Home. 2012. <http://www.ocasi.org/MOH>.

33 Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). Making Ontario Home. 2012. <http://www.ocasi.org/MOH>. Page 12.

34 Loose translation. Sommaire des consultations nationales en matière d'immigration francophone. Sessions avec les intervenants communautaires février-mars 2015. Immigration, Réfugiés et Citoyenneté Canada (IRCC).



2. There is no mechanism for the identification and follow-up of French-speaking immigrants at the outset of their immigration project and throughout their trajectory (for example, a selection certificate like in Québec).
3. There is an insufficient number of Francophone service providers for the intake, orientation and settlement of Francophone immigrants in all regions of Ontario and, for existing Francophone providers, funding is often insufficient.
4. The funding formula based on the volume of immigrant intake is not appropriate for linguistic minority organizations.
5. There is an insufficient number of Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) in some regions and in other regions, there is no service at all.
6. Funding is sporadic, unstable, inadequate and fragmented, limiting the capacity of Francophone organizations and institutions to succeed in Francophone immigration as well as restricting their long-term planning capabilities.
7. Organizations, groups and institutions feel pressured to compete for funding, often because of the precariousness of their own financial conditions.
8. Employers are not sufficiently aware of the benefits of hiring francophone or bilingual immigrants.
9. Employers do not benefit sufficiently from ongoing support in the workplace to ensure the success of the Francophone immigrant's integration.
10. There is no specific strategy to promote and raise awareness among municipalities and chambers of commerce about the added value of Francophone immigration within their communities.
11. There are challenges in accessing quantitative and qualitative data related to the number of Francophone immigrants and their immigration process thereby limiting evidence-based decision-making by Francophone communities and organizations.

As can be seen, despite some progress over the past few years, there are many obstacles to overcome in the Francophone immigration continuum for newcomers as well as for Francophone communities who wish to host them.

A disconnected and inconsistent approach between the intervention levels

The Francophone community in Ontario also deplores the lack of coordination; first between the provincial government and the federal government, and then between the various departments that are called upon to support Francophone immigration. Francophone immigration must be planned from a global and systemic perspective and jurisdictional silos must be eliminated. It is equally important that all of these jurisdictions be well aware of their respective responsibilities in achieving the 5% target in Ontario and the 4.4% target of federal government with respect to Francophone Immigration.



The Francophone community underlines the importance of municipalities in promoting Francophone communities, in the orientation of newcomers towards Francophone services and in the provision of services such as access to public transit and affordable housing.

There is no concerted, integrated and coordinated action plan between the various levels of government and the French-speaking community in Ontario to achieve better results for immigrants and to reach the target of 5% the government has set for Francophone immigration.

There is no concerted, coordinated and coherent interdepartmental strategy (among others: immigration, health, education, justice, social services, economy) at the federal, provincial and local levels to facilitate integration and inclusion of Francophone immigrants.

The work of raising awareness of the specific realities and challenges of Francophone minority communities is a constant need in the ministries responsible for immigration.

3. FOUR OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the results of the community consultations and the review of the relevant literature led to the following four overall conclusions:

A disconnected and incoherent approach by the various levels of government in Francophone immigration: There is a lack of coordination and cohesion between the various government departments and between the federal, provincial and municipal levels to facilitate the attraction, selection, recruitment, settlement, integration and inclusion of Francophone immigrants in Francophone communities.

An insufficient number of Francophone immigrants attracted and recruited to Ontario: the number of Francophone newcomers in Ontario has been falling every year since the adoption of the Ontario government's 5% target in 2012. The current rate oscillates around a little less than 2%.

A trajectory filled with obstacles and inequities for the Francophone immigrant. The current immigration system was designed for the English-speaking majority. Thereafter, some adjustments were made for the Francophone linguistic minority (For example, the francophone lens). This approach impedes all stages of integration of the French-speaking immigrant and even facilitates his or her assimilation to the Anglophone majority. There are inequities in access to Francophone services essential to the newcomer's professional, economic and socio-cultural integration. Too often, Francophone immigrants are not referred to Francophone services, do not know Francophone services are available or the Francophone service simply does not exist.



A fragmented or incomplete Francophone immigration continuum: disconnected government approaches and measures, as well as inadequate and unstable funding, limit the capacity of Francophone organizations and institutions to effectively establish a comprehensive and coherent continuum of Francophone immigration because of fragmented government programs as well as inadequate and unstable funding. In addition, the allocation of government funding according to the number and type of newcomers welcomed means that newcomers too often are not directed to Francophone services by Anglophone intake organizations.

These findings largely explain why targets are not being met and why there has been an annual decline in Francophone immigration to Ontario since 2012.

4. A RENEWED VISION OF FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION IN ONTARIO

A Consensus Around Core Principles

The community consultations identified a number of core principles that should guide Francophone immigration decisions, policies and initiatives in Ontario on both the community and government levels.

1. The adoption of an **immigrant-centered approach** taking into account his or her needs and aspirations.

In an **immigrant-centered approach**, the continuum must take into account what the person lives “on a daily basis”, his or her needs, realities and aspirations. Immigrating to Ontario must not be a painful and challenging experience but rather a journey that opens the door to unique and enriching opportunities in a welcoming, inclusive and dynamic community.

It is therefore necessary to prepare for the arrival of the immigrant and to meet his needs according to a model based on Maslow’s pyramid.

Based on Maslow’s pyramid of human needs, the continuum should seek to meet the needs of the immigrant, his or her physiological needs as well as his or her needs for security, belonging, self-esteem that lead to a sense of accomplishment and self-actualization.

Responding to the needs of Francophone immigrants also means meeting the needs of family and friends who are accompanying them or who would like to join them. The intake and support of young people, spouses and elders are equally essential to successful settlement. Families establish their roots and settle permanently and a new generation enriches both culture and society, building strong and dynamic communities.



The Francophone immigrant will want to feel that he or she is welcomed and accepted from the outset in a Francophone community that is open, inclusive, diverse, dynamic and constantly evolving. A community that is deeply rooted in its achievements, history and heritage, and whose culture is transformed and enriched with the arrival and contribution of newcomers. The Francophone immigrant will want to feel included in this Francophone space as an empowered citizen in the community.

2. The application of the principle of substantive equality³⁵ and fairness in service delivery: the political will of all levels of government to offer French-speaking immigrants, within Francophone infrastructures the same opportunities and services to which English-speaking immigrants are entitled.
3. The application of the “by and for” Francophones principle to support the revitalization of francophone communities throughout Ontario and to direct services towards needs.

The concept of “by and for” Francophones

The concept of “by and for” Francophones implies that the policies and measures taken by governments foster dynamism and strengthen the capacities of Francophone communities through infrastructures and institutions governed and managed by and for these communities.

The concept of “by and for” Francophones also implies that communities are actively involved in the decision-making process that affects them.

The concept of “by and for” Francophones calls for the implementation of constructive, specific measures to foster the development and sustainability of Francophone communities in minority situations.

The concept of “by and for” Francophones underlines the difference between a francophone service offered within a Francophone community setting and a service delivered in French that is often merely a translation and lacks the Francophone community context.

4. The practice of an ethical, inclusive and collaborative leadership by all actors responsible for Francophone immigration: the desire to understand the issues in a more global or systemic perspective and the will to act in an equitable, integrated, collaborative and coordinated manner to carry out real transformations that are beneficial to all Francophone communities.

³⁵ **Substantive equality/ égalité réelle:** Substantive equality is achieved when one takes into account, where necessary, the differences in characteristics and circumstances of minority communities and provides services with distinct content or using a different method of delivery to ensure that the minority receives services of the same quality as the majority. **This approach is the norm in Canadian law.** Analytical Grid. Canada Treasury Board. <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/values-ethics/official-languages/public-services/analytical-grid-substantive-equality.html>. Consulted March 15, 2017.



Four Common Objectives

The Government of Ontario, the Government of Canada and the entire Francophone community in Ontario must mobilize and work together to achieve the following four objectives:

1. Provide a collective framework to align and coordinate the efforts of all actors in Francophone immigration in Ontario.
2. Increase the number of immigrants who choose to settle in the local Francophone communities in all regions of Ontario.
3. Establish a comprehensive continuum of immigration services “by and for” Francophone communities that is equivalent to that established for the Anglophone majority.
4. In keeping with the principle of substantive equality³⁶ of official language communities, equitably and adequately fund the organizations and institutions of Francophone communities in Ontario so that they have the capacity to manage the infrastructures, the resources and the whole range of services required to welcome, support and effectively include all categories of immigrants and their families.

While IRCC is taking steps to increase the number of francophone immigrants, it has adopted a program-by-program approach. This approach merely fragments Francophone immigration and reduces cooperation and innovation. Furthermore, it would seem the principle of real equality is not always applied because some programs still lack a “francophone lens” and some officials do not understand that francophone immigration is part of the plan to strengthen FMCs.

Toward a New Action Plan for Official Languages and Building New Momentum for Immigration in Francophone Minority Communities.
Report of the Standing Committee on Official Languages.
December, 2016.

A Coherent and Integrated Approach: Governments - Community

Francophone immigration to Ontario should be undertaken with a comprehensive and systemic approach³⁷ to achieve two overarching goals: to ensure successful integration of immigrants into Francophone communities and to have a positive structuring effect in these communities. This requires the commitment and leadership of several players, including:

- MCI;
- IRCC;
- municipalities;
- provincial and national ministries and agencies;
- francophone communities in the three major regions of Ontario;

³⁶ Substantive equality/ égalité réelle: Substantive equality is achieved when one takes into account, where necessary, the differences in characteristics and circumstances of minority communities and provides services with distinct content or using a different method of delivery to ensure that the minority receives services of the same quality as the majority. **This approach is the norm in Canadian law.** Analytical Grid. Canada Treasury Board. <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/values-ethics/official-languages/public-services/analytical-grid-substantive-equality.html>. Consulted March 15, 2017.

³⁷ System approach can be defined as a well-planned and documented system based on a set of principles and best practices necessary to achieve goals. Translation. Société canadienne des directeurs d'associations. <http://www.csae.com/fr/Ressources/Articles-et-outils/View/ArticleId/1099/Approche-systemique-au-developpement-du-membership>.



- AFO;
- Ontario Francophone Immigration Support Networks (3);
- francophone settlement centers and settlement service providers;
- private sector employers;
- the public sector;
- all stakeholders in the development sectors of Ontario's Francophone community, such as health, early childhood education, justice, economic development, arts and culture, community development, etc, and
- general public.

Each of these partners must embrace a common vision of Francophone immigration in Ontario and be given the mandate of developing, in its field of expertise and jurisdiction, the conditions, programs, initiatives, and services required to achieve the intended results. Of course this needs to be done in close collaboration with all other partners in Francophone immigration.

The adoption of specific, coherent policies for Francophone immigration by the Canadian and Ontario governments is a first step in this collaboration. It is an act of ethical, inclusive and collaborative leadership respecting the provisions in the legislative framework and it will also facilitate the subsequent Canada-Ontario-Community Agreement on Francophone Immigration. It will ensure that the Francophone immigrants will have equitable access to a range of integrated francophone services to facilitate their successful integration and, that Francophone communities can benefit from the impact of Francophone immigration.



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5. KEY MEASURES AND COURSES OF ACTION TO GIVE NEW IMPETUS TO FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION IN ONTARIO

Several courses of action were also provided by state elders during consultations. They have been grouped under the appropriate objectives and measures.

To provide a collective framework for the efforts of all actors in Francophone immigration

The following two measures aim to align and harmonize the strategies and actions of the actors involved in Francophone immigration in Ontario.

MEASURE 1

That the Government of Ontario adopt and implement an official Policy for Francophone Immigration and that this policy be aligned with the Government of Canada's strategies for Francophone immigration in order to ensure the cohesion and effectiveness of the joint efforts to increase the number of Francophone immigrants who choose to settle or resettle in Ontario and to ensure the success of Francophone immigration in Ontario.

Courses of Action on the Provincial Level

- a) Appoint an advisory committee to advise and support the MIC in matters of Francophone immigration.
- b) Establish a Francophone Secretariat within MIC to ensure the implementation and follow-up of the outcomes and impact of the Policy and to ensure continuing knowledge and understanding of Francophone minority community issues within the Ministry.
- c) In consultation with Francophone communities, identify qualitative and quantitative performance indicators for the successful recruitment, intake, settlement, integration and inclusion of Francophone immigrants in Ontario.
- d) Implement the recommendations resulting from the work of the Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016³⁸.

³⁸ Ontario's MCI. Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/imm_str/strategy/goex_report.shtml.



MEASURE 2

That the Government of Canada reaffirm its commitment to Francophone immigration by adopting an Official Policy for Francophone immigration as recommended by the Standing Committee on Official Languages in its report *Towards a New Action Plan for Official Languages and a New Impetus for Francophone Immigration in Minority Settings*³⁹, published in December 2016.

Courses of Action on the Federal Level

- a) Provide financial support to the three Ontario Francophone Immigration Support Networks in their efforts in support of the Policy and, in particular in the establishment of the Welcoming Communities Program;
- b) Through the Ministry of Canadian Heritage, in collaboration with the Francophone community in Ontario, adopt and implement an interdepartmental action plan to complement the infrastructure and services needed to better welcome newcomers to Francophone communities in each region of Ontario (East, North, and Central-Southwest).

Considering that immigration is a shared responsibility of Canada and the Province of Ontario and that these two levels of government must rely on the Francophone community in Ontario to achieve their objectives in terms of attraction, recruitment, Integration and settlement of Francophone immigrants, the White Paper recommends the following:

MEASURE 3

That the goals and commitments for Francophone immigration, of the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario and the Francophone community in Ontario be negotiated in a tripartite process and form the contents of a *Canada-Ontario-Community Agreement on Francophone Immigration in Ontario 2017-2022*.

In a systemic approach, Francophone immigration stakeholders in Ontario need to make informed, evidence-based decisions. These actors need to be equipped to produce, disseminate and share relevant knowledge, lessons learned and best practices in Francophone immigration in Ontario.

To align and coordinate collective efforts in Francophone immigration, stakeholders must also develop accountability tools to monitor the evolution, outcomes and impact of their interventions.

Community actors must also be equipped to conduct field research to accurately assess the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of their strategies and action plans. While respecting the Privacy Act, there is also a need to facilitate access to statistics that MCI and IRCC may have on the number of candidates who have French as their first official language and who wish to settle in Ontario.

³⁹ Government of Canada. <http://www.publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.829199/publication.html>.



Finally, Ontario's three Francophone Immigration Support Networks are particularly well positioned to play a key role in collecting, analyzing and communicating knowledge in their respective regions. The AFO must have the capacity to centralize and disseminate these data to government partners and to the Francophone communities in Ontario.

MEASURE 4

That the three parties to the *Canada-Ontario-Community Agreement on Francophone immigration in Ontario* develop a coordinated evaluation framework to monitor the impact of the policies and of the Agreement on immigrants and Francophone communities and, that a mechanism for data collection and sharing be established to support research and inform decision-making on Francophone immigration in minority situations.

Courses of action for research and knowledge mobilization

- a) Facilitate access to data as well as sharing of data on Francophone immigration (e.g. Statistics Canada, IRCC, University Chairs, etc.).
- b) Fund research and action research programs on various issues related to Francophone immigration, for example, on the Francophone immigrant profile, the challenges of integration and inclusion in a linguistic minority situation.
- c) Designate three regional data collection points, for example, the three Francophone Immigration Support Networks, and a central point for data collection on Francophone immigration in Ontario, for example, the AFO.
- d) Provide research capabilities on Francophone immigration for the future French-language University of Ontario.

The promotion of Francophone communities and the attraction, recruitment and selection of French-speaking immigrants – *Destination Ontario francophone!*

The successful integration and full inclusion of Francophone immigrants in Francophone communities in Ontario must be supported by multiple specific measures that are part of a fair, consistent and comprehensive Francophone immigration continuum.

Attraction and recruitment are part of this continuum and a key step is to inform potential Francophone immigrants that there is a possibility of living in French in Ontario and that Francophone Ontario “**is yours to discover**”. Potential immigrants need to discover Ontario's Francophone attractions and assets. This requires that government and community partners take a proactive and targeted approach to reach potential Francophone immigrants in their country of origin or transition, or even in their first destination in Canada, and invite them to immigrate to Ontario.



To increase the number of Francophone immigrants in all regions of Ontario

MEASURE 5

That the Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship (MIC) develop and implement a pro-active strategy to promote Francophone communities and, as proposed by the Group of Experts on Francophone Immigration⁴⁰, hold an annual *Destination Ontario francophone* mission in collaboration with the three Ontario Francophone Immigration Support Networks.

Proposed Courses of Action for Promoting Francophone Communities

- a) Ensure the effective dissemination of information to potential immigrants on linguistic, social, cultural and economic realities in Ontario.
- b) In collaboration with MCI, train members of the Francophone community in Ontario who are familiar with the realities and specificities of Francophone Ontario communities to participate in the international recruitment of immigrants.
- c) Promote the attractions and assets of each region of the province of Ontario - employment, economy, education, justice, health, social services, quality of life, and services in French.
- d) Adequately fund the conceptualization, production and dissemination of promotion and recruitment tools by francophone communities in the three major regions of Ontario.

Achievement of the targets set in Ontario and Canada depends first and foremost on reaching out to potential Francophone immigrants where they are, i.e., in Francophone populations and, the ability to inform them about the real opportunities represented by the various Francophone communities in Ontario to meet their aspirations for security, personal growth and cultural, economic and social development.

Francophone communities in Ontario's three major regions need to be involved in this initiative because they know more about the attractions and assets of their respective communities. They are able to communicate to potential Francophone immigrants a fair and realistic picture of life in French in their respective communities.

MEASURE 6

That the Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship (MIC) in cooperation with Immigration, Refugees and Canadian Citizenship (IRCC) develop and implement a targeted recruitment effort in countries where there are large Francophone population pools that have not been recruited in the past (e.g., West Africa and Central Africa). Ontario must take advantage of its membership in the International Organization of La Francophonie⁴¹ to further develop these recruitment pools.

40 Ontario Ministry of Immigration and Citizenship. Groupe of Experts on Francophone Immigration 2015-2016. http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca/english/keyinitiatives/imm_str/strategy/goex_report.shtml. Consulted March 15, 2017.

41 Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. <https://www.francophonie.org/Welcome-to-the-International.html>. Consulted March 15, 2017.



Proposed Courses of Action to Improve the Recruitment of Francophone Immigrants

- a) Negotiate a collaboration agreement with Québec to intensify and increase the recruitment of Francophone immigrants abroad.
- b) Expand the collaboration agreement with Québec to improve follow-up and support of secondary migration of Francophone immigrants that relocate in Ontario within five years of their initial landing in Canada.
- c) Take advantage of Ontario's membership in the International Organisation of La Francophonie to negotiate bilateral agreements with the countries of La Francophonie in order to facilitate pre-departure services, recognition of diplomas, upgrading of skills, access to employment, access to postsecondary education, etc.
- d) Establish a mechanism whereby the immigrant is identified from the outset as a French-speaking immigrant and that French is his or her official language, preferably for his or her entire journey from intake to integration. Inevitably, this mechanism must meet the standards of the Privacy Act.
- e) Provide logistical support (collaboration with embassies and high commissions) and financially support Francophone communities in Ontario to participate in the *Destination Canada* initiative.
- f) Establish, expand and adequately support pre-departure and pre-arrival Francophone services to better prepare immigrants for their arrival in Ontario's Francophone communities.

Continuum of Francophone Immigration “by and for” Francophone Communities

The continuum of Francophone immigration in Ontario must focus on the quality and effectiveness of the Francophone immigrant's journey, which begins in his / her country of origin and which results in a full inclusion in a Francophone community as well as provide a real opportunity to contribute to the evolution of the Francophone community, to the prosperity of the province and the wellbeing of Canadian society.

In order to successfully achieve the objectives of Francophone immigration in Ontario, community and government partners must make an unequivocal and timely commitment to hone and harmonize the Francophone immigration continuum. This must be done in an approach based on the real equality of official language communities, on strengthening the structures and capacities of Francophone communities in Ontario, and on the management of Francophone immigration in Ontario by Francophones in the province, in collaboration with all levels of government and other stakeholders.



To implement a comprehensive continuum of immigration services “by and for” francophone communities

MEASURE 7

That IRCC, in cooperation with MIC, adequately finance a comprehensive infrastructure governed and managed by and for francophone communities to support a comprehensive and effective continuum of Francophone immigration for the benefit of Francophone, Allophone or Francophile immigrants. Increase the number of Francophone intake centers and settlement service providers in each of the major regions of Ontario. A development plan for each major region can be found in the appendix.

Proposed Courses of Action for Intake and Settlement Services

- a) Increase financial support for existing Francophone service providers to increase the range and the reach of settlement services. Encourage and support one-stop facilities to offer integrated services - this encourages the creation and development of Francophone welcome centers such as the Centre francophone de Toronto (CFT), the Centre de santé communautaire of Hamilton-Niagara (CSCHN) and the Economic and Social Council of Ottawa-Carleton (CÉSOC).
- b) Ensure an initial presence and initial Francophone contact with newcomers at the airports and other entry points into the province, and ensure the referral of Francophone immigrants to Francophone welcome centers and settlement service providers in Francophone communities.
- c) Ensure and adequately finance the provision of settlement services for Francophone temporary workers and Francophone international students, as well as for persons with a secondary migration status.
- d) Work with all municipalities, which are key actors in the welcoming, settlement and integration of newcomers, to support newcomers in both official languages (bilingual posting and referral to Francophone services).
- e) Fund a research project to find a way to develop, disseminate, apply and Language assessments that are better adapted to Canadian linguistic realities for Francophone immigrants. Mobilize the universities of the *Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne* (ACUFC)⁴² and the future French-language university of Ontario in this initiative.
- f) Establish and fund programs for the intake of Francophone refugees (PAR francophone) in order to welcome Francophone, Allophone and Francophile refugees in Francophone communities.

MEASURE 8

That IRCC in cooperation with MIC and the AFO establish, expand and fund the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program in all Francophone schools in Ontario over 12 months of the year.

⁴² <http://www.acufc.ca/about-us/acufc>



Professional and Economic Integration

The economic and professional integration of Francophone immigrants must be consistent with the objectives of Ontario's Immigration Strategy to⁴³:

- attract a skilled workforce and building a stronger economy;
- help newcomers and their families achieve success; and
- leverage the global connections of our diverse communities.

Ontario's recent admission to International Organisation of La Francophonie⁴⁴ represents an exceptional opportunity for Ontario to promote Ontario's Francophone communities, attract and recruit Francophone immigrants, and establish agreements facilitating the process of recognition of prior learning and diplomas as well as faster access to employment with Francophone countries.

Access to employability measures, integration into the labor market in a job that corresponds to their skills and experience, and easy access to language training are essential conditions for the economic integration of the immigrant worker or professional into Ontario's workforce. The immigrant must be able to benefit from personalized and sustained support throughout his or her integration process.

To improve employment prospects for immigrants, potential employers need to be made aware of the benefits of hiring Francophone or bilingual immigrants. When they hire an immigrant, they must be confident that they will be able to benefit from ongoing support throughout the economic integration process of the immigrant.

Community organizations working in the areas of employability, essential skills development, economic development, entrepreneurship and cooperation and the social economy must be equipped to improve employment opportunities for Francophone immigrants with Francophone, bilingual and Anglophone employers in all regions of the province.

Information and research results on the training needs for Francophone adult immigrants need to be better centralized. Training providers for Francophone adult immigrants, such as basic and skill development organizations, school boards and postsecondary institutions, need to focus more efforts on improving services and better informing immigrants, intake centres and settlement service providers of available programs and services.⁴⁵

There is also a need to improve and accelerate the process of recognition of an immigrant's qualifications, credentials and experience, particularly in regards to professional regulatory bodies.

"My husband is a psychologist. He has been looking for a job in his field or a related field for 6 years. He delivers pizza right now."

Wife of a Francophone Immigrant

43 Ontario MIC. A New Direction: Ontario's Immigration Strategy. 2012.

44 <https://www.francophonie.org/Welcome-to-the-International.html>

45 Coalition ontarienne de formation des adultes (COFA) et Partenaires d'éducation et de formation des adultes (PÉFA). Analyse des besoins de formation pour les immigrants adultes francophones en Ontario. Étude effectuée par la firme Brynaert, Brennan et Associé.e.s. Mars 2015. <http://www.coalition.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/31-mars-2015-Besoins-de-formation-des-adultes-immigrants-francophones..pdf>. Page consultée le 11 mars 2015.



Francophone communities and French-speaking citizens need to have better access to qualified and specialized Francophone professionals, particularly in the areas of health and education.

To increase employment prospects, support the economic integration of immigrants and facilitate international, national and interprovincial mobility: professional and economic integration.

MEASURE 9

That IRCC, in cooperation with MIC and the AFO, implement and adequately finance a systematic strategy of information, awareness and recruitment of employers and provide adequate support measures for employers and Francophone immigrants throughout their integration process.

Proposed Courses of Action to Improve Professional and Economic Integration

- a) Develop and implement a strategy in both official languages to raise awareness and mobilize private sector employers by promoting the benefits of employing Francophone or bilingual immigrants for the growth of their businesses, increasing diversity (source of innovation and productivity) and facilitating their participation in the global economy.
- b) Review the language requirements of the *Ontario Express Entrance Program: Francophone Skilled Worker* component that is not the same for an English-speaking applicant and a Francophone applicant - more demanding for the Francophone applicant.
- c) Maintain, expand and enhance Ontario's Bridge Training Programs at La Cité collégiale and Collège Boréal. These programs help skilled newcomers to obtain a license or certificate in their profession or trade, to find employment opportunities and to obtain employment appropriate to their skills and experience or in a related field. Some of these programs include language training related to employment.
- d) Draw on Québec's incentive approach to facilitate the transition of international students to permanent residence.
- e) Provide support services for companies recruiting Francophone immigrants or temporary workers, for example: a sponsorship and mentoring program in the workplace.
- f) Encourage and facilitate entrepreneurship, cooperative and social economy initiatives among Francophone newcomers to increase employment opportunities in Ontario, for example: explore the concept of "Francophone immigrant investors" or "Francophone immigrant employers" in the establishment or takeover of businesses.
- g) Increase awareness of the Francophone services available within Francophone communities themselves, for example: through the production of a regional or local directory of services for Francophone immigrants.
- h) Expand the *Ontario's Adult Non-Credit Language Training Program*⁴⁶ that provides immigrants with free access to French as a second language (FSL) and English as a second language (ESL) courses through CLARS (Coordinated Language Assessment and Reference

⁴⁶ Ontario MIC. <https://news.ontario.ca/mci/en/2016/10/province-providing-free-language-training-for-ontario-immigrants.html>. Consulted March 17, 2017.



System) centres that assess their language skills and directs them to the nearest language training provider best suited to their needs. The program exists in at least four French-language school boards in Ontario;

- i) Create and fund a specific collaboration mechanism to better identify the education and training needs of the various categories of Francophone adult immigrants, promote existing Francophone programs and services, design additional training programs required and plan delivery services and programs in all regions of the province. The *Study of Training Needs for Francophone Adult Immigrants in Ontario*, conducted in March 2015 by Brynaert, Brennan and Associates, on behalf of the Ontario Coalition for Adult Education (COFA) and Education Partners and Adult Education (AFET), explores various avenues to improve the provision of services.⁴⁷

MEASURE 10

That MCI mobilize the regulatory agencies, unions and post-secondary institutions that provide Francophone programs, in order to improve and accelerate the process of prior learning recognition and skills upgrading for Francophone immigrants, with the aim of Facilitate and accelerate the entry of immigrants into the labor market.

Proposed Course of Action to Improve and Accelerate the Process of Recognition of Credentials, Prior Skills and Competencies

- a) Mobilize Ontario's colleges and universities that offer French-language programs around a pilot project to develop better and shorter skills upgrading programs in certain professions where there is a shortage (e.g. teachers, health care and architects).

The socio-cultural inclusion of immigrants in more welcoming and inclusive Francophone communities

It is through an equitable access to a range of integrated, quality Francophone services in a Francophone community in one of Ontario's three major regions that the Francophone immigration continuum becomes a reality. It is in the connection and complicity between the Francophone immigrant and the members of the Francophone community that the results are achieved: a successful immigration for the immigrant, an enriched and revitalized community, a strengthening of society and of the linguistic duality for Ontario and Canada.

This White Paper calls for the mobilization and cooperation of Francophone communities in all regions of Ontario to work together to create communities that are more attractive, welcoming and inclusive and that are able to welcome, serve, create positive links, build meaningful relationships with all newcomers and refugees in their communities. Newcomers must find an environment that meets their aspirations and allows them to make a living with their family

⁴⁷ http://www.coalition.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/31-mars-2015-Besoins-de-formation-des-adultes-immigrants-francophones.._.pdf



or their loved ones in a welcoming and inclusive Francophone community. The community must mobilize and actively participate in all stages of the Francophone immigration continuum.

For example, Francophone communities are called upon to participate in the attraction and recruitment of newcomers. It is doing so by promoting the attractions and assets of their communities; ensuring the dissemination of fair and relevant information about their community; ensuring a personalized and warm welcome; providing professional or voluntary services in support of the settlement of newcomers, their families and loved ones, and building positive and productive relationships. Whether the work is done by individuals or by organizations or institutions, the successful integration and inclusion of the Francophone immigrant in Ontario will depend essentially on the community in which he or she chooses to live.

The IRCC's *Welcoming Communities*⁴⁸ Initiative is designed to support communities that would be able to provide the necessary support for the resettlement of government-assisted refugees (GARs) and other newcomers. The characteristics of a welcoming community can be found in the appendix.

To promote and finance the organizations and institutions of Francophone communities in Ontario

MEASURE 11

That IRCC, in cooperation with MIC and AFO, re-establish and adequately fund the “Welcoming communities”⁵⁰ initiative of IRCC in all Francophone communities in Ontario through an intergovernmental, interdepartmental and multisector approach to create the conditions and the climate required to integrate and effectively include refugees, newcomers, their families and loved ones into Francophone communities that are able to meet their needs (health and social services, early childhood services, education, postsecondary institutions, literacy and essential skills, justice, arts, culture, francophone media, sports and recreation, cultural Heritage) to ensure security and build trust in an environment where positive and productive interpersonal relationships develop between immigrants and community members.

48 IRCC. Guide for Submitting the Welcoming Communities: Community Partnership Settlement Plan. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/partner/communities.asp>. Consulted March 16, 2017.

49 **Substantive equality/ égalité réelle:** Substantive equality is achieved when one takes into account, where necessary, the differences in characteristics and circumstances of minority communities and provides services with distinct content or using a different method of delivery to ensure that the minority receives services of the same quality as the majority. **This approach is the norm in Canadian law.** Analytical Grid. Canada Treasury Board. <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/values-ethics/official-languages/public-services/analytical-grid-substantive-equality.html>. Consulted March 15, 2017.

50 IRCC. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/department/partner/communities.asp#foreword>. Consulted March 17, 2017.



Proposed Courses of Action for Successful Sociocultural Integration and Inclusion

- a) Establish a working group comprised of representatives from Canadian Heritage⁵¹, the Office of Francophone Affairs, the three Francophone Immigration Support Networks and the AFO to develop a concerted action plan to enhance the provision of government and community services in each of the major regions of Ontario.
- b) Adequately fund a joint approach by Ontario's municipalities and Francophone communities to achieve the status of "Welcoming Communities" under the IRCC program thus enabling these communities to accommodate refugees as well as Francophone, Allophone and Francophile immigrants in each of the three major regions of Ontario. There is a practical guide to support the development of "Welcoming Communities" launched by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in 2016⁵².
- c) Ensure the establishment of the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program in all Francophone schools in Ontario.
- d) Provide adequate funding for Francophone community awareness initiatives to add value to Francophone immigration for the revitalization of the Francophonie and for the prosperity of Ontario society.
- e) Provide adequate funding for programs to strengthen intercultural skills especially in the education, health and justice sectors of Francophone communities.



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51 Patrimoine canadien. <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage.html>.

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APPENDIX A: REGIONAL PLANS

Differentiated plans to improve francophone settlement services in the three regions of the province

1. Establishment of additional Francophone welcome centres and settlement service providers - a differentiated and coordinated strategy for the three major regions of Ontario

The initial point of contact is often decisive in the immigrant's pathway to integration and it is important that this first contact be made in the official language of his or her choice. In order to complete an effective continuum of Francophone immigration for the benefit of the Francophone, Allophone or Francophile immigrant, Francophone welcome centers and settlement services must be provided in each of the major regions of Ontario, "by and for" Francophone communities.

It is important, therefore, to provide for substantial development of Francophone welcome centres and settlement services in the three major regions of Ontario in order to ensure substantive equality of official-language communities, as well as equality of treatment for Immigrants who want to settle in a Francophone community.

2. Implementation of the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program

The **Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program** is an initiative funded by IRCC and has proven to be a winning formula to facilitate the integration of Francophone immigrants and their families.

SWIS team members are recruited and managed by service providers (typically community organizations). The SWIS team members work in some Francophone elementary and secondary schools in Public and Catholic boards.

They provide referral services and facilitate group sessions for students and families. As part of the ANNA (Welcoming Newcomers) initiative, they are helping young leaders assume their mentoring role with newly arrived students.

Ontario Teams: currently, the SWIS Program serves Francophone schools in the following regions:

- Ottawa
- Windsor-Chatham-Essex
- Hamilton et la région de Niagara
- Greater Toronto Area
- London, Sarnia, Woodstock
- Peel-Halton-Dufferin

Source: <http://etablissement.org/ontario/immigration-et-citoyennete/arrivee-et-etablissement/s-etablir/tee-programme-des-travailleuses-et-des-travailleurs-d-etablissement-dans-les-ecoles/>



The SWIS worker:

- proactively contacts newcomer parents and students to assist them with their settlement needs;
- refers the families to more specialized community resources as needed;
- provides group information sessions for newcomer youth and parents, often in partnership with school staff;
- provides orientation for the settlement needs of newcomers for school staff; and
- coordinates the Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW) and Welcome and Information for Newcomers (WIN) programs, which take place in the last weeks of the summer in most schools.

The SWIS program needs to be extended to all francophone school boards in the three major regions of Ontario.

Regional Development Plan for Francophone Intake and Settlement Services

The following measures take into account regional realities while building on existing and successful services. For example, the following measures could provide immediate improvement:

A. FRANCOPHONE WELCOME CENTERS AND SETTLEMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Francophone Immigrant welcome centers and settlement services providers need to be established in the following 6 cities:

- North Bay
- Sudbury
- Timmins
- Sault Ste. Marie
- Thunder Bay
- Hearst

Collège Boréal is already recognized as a settlement service provider in the Central-Southwest region of the province. The Collège is also recognized and funded by IRCC as a settlement service provider in Sudbury. Collège Boréal has facilities in the above 6 mentioned cities. From its main campus in Sudbury and with the collaboration of its regional campuses as well as Francophone organizations and institutions in Francophone communities, Collège Boréal should be equipped and receive proper funding to:

- provide initial intake services to Francophone, Allophone or Francophile immigrants who want to settle in a Francophone community in Northern Ontario;
- direct newcomers to the Francophone welcome center and settlement services provider in one of the 6 cities; and
- follow up on the settlement process in each city.



In each of its campuses, Collège Boréal can act as a welcome center and settlement services provider for immigrants by providing the following services in partnership with the institutions and organizations of this community:

- Local welcome and hosting;
- Housing search;
- Job search and coaching;
- Support in the process of recognition of prior learning;
- Upgrading skills;
- Referral and coaching for access to government services - driver's license, health card, vehicle registration, etc.;
- Referral and support for access to banking, insurance, investment, etc.;
- Referral and support for access to municipal services;
- Referrals and support for access to community services: justice, health, social services, Francophone early childhood, education, justice, library etc.;
- Upgrading of language skills in French and English; and
- Initiation into the cultural and artistic life of the community.

It is also essential to implement and support the SWIS Program in French schools in the North.

B. FRANCOPHONE WELCOME CENTRES AND SETTLEMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS IN EASTERN ONTARIO

Francophone welcome centres have to be put into place and adequately funded in the following communities:

- Cornwall
- Kingston
- Rockland
- Hawkesbury
- Ottawa

Allocate resources to the Economic and Social Council of Ottawa Carleton (CÉSOC), already recognized as a Francophone settlement service provider for Ottawa, to provide settlement services in each of the cities in collaboration with the designated welcome center. CÉSOC has a wealth of experience and expertise in the provision of settlement services to immigrants in Ottawa. Adequate funding would allow it to expand its services to other Francophone communities in eastern Ontario.

Mobilize elected municipal officials East of Ottawa to promote the intake, settlement and integration of newcomers in their planning process, particularly with regard to public transit services and access to affordable housing.



C. FRANCOPHONE WELCOME CENTRES AND SETTLEMENT SERVICE PROVIDERS IN THE CENTRAL-SOUTHWEST REGION OF ONTARIO

In the Central-Southwest region, existing successful Francophone settlement service providers need to expand their services and outreach into unserved or under-served areas such as Simcoe, York, Peel-Halton, Kitchener / Waterloo.

In order to create vibrant francophone spaces, provision should be made for the establishment of Francophone immigrant welcome centres in the form of one-stop windows or in multidisciplinary community spaces or cultural centres or Francophone school-community centres comprising several community and para-governmental services.

Greater Toronto Region and Surrounding Areas

- Centre francophone de Toronto
- Passerelle I.D.E.
- Oasis Centre de femmes francophones
- Centre de santé communautaire de Hamilton-Niagara
- Conseil des organismes francophones de la région de Durham (COFRD)

Expand the services available to all Central South-West regions and add service providers as needed.

- Windsor-Chatham-Essex
- Hamilton-Niagara
- Durham
- London-Sarnia
- Peel-Halton
- Simcoe

In collaboration and consultation with established Francophone settlement service providers, not all of whom are listed here, and in cooperation with the Central-Southwest Regional Support Network for Francophone Immigration, coordinate the establishment of additional settlement services to cover the entire territory. Enhance the budgets of existing Francophone settlement service providers to enable them to expand their services to unserved or under-served Francophone communities and adequately recognize and fund new Francophone settlement service providers as required.

There is an insufficient number of SWIS workers in schools. The number must be increased to support each French-language school. The duration of the SWIS program must be extended to twelve months a year so that it is equivalent to what exists on the English-speaking side.

In the Central-Southwest region, it is important to build on existing services and favor the concept of a one-stop windows to create public francophone spaces integrating a range of Francophone services for newcomers in the absence of Francophone neighborhoods or districts.



APPENDIX B: KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF A WELCOMING COMMUNITY

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF A WELCOMING COMMUNITY⁵³

1. Employment Opportunities
2. Fostering of Social Capital
3. Affordable and Suitable Housing
4. Positive Attitudes toward Immigrants, Cultural Diversity, and the Presence of Newcomers in the Community
5. Presence of Newcomer-Serving Agencies that Can Successfully Meet the Needs of Newcomers.
6. Links between Main Actors Working toward Welcoming Communities
7. Municipal Features and Services Sensitive to the Presence and Needs of Newcomers
8. Access to Francophone Education
9. Accessible and Suitable Francophone Health Care Services
10. Available and Accessible Public Transit
11. Presence of Diverse Religious Organizations
12. Social Engagement Opportunities in the Francophone Community
13. Political Participation Opportunities
14. Positive Relationships with the Police and the Justice System
15. Safety
16. Opportunities for Use of Public Space and Recreation Facilities in the Francophone Community
17. Favourable French Media Coverage and Representation

⁵³ IRCC. Adapted version for Francophone communities. <http://www.reseausoutien.org/Forum%202016/presentations/Pleniere%202%20Caracteristiques%20d%20une%20collectivite%20accueillante.pdf> et <http://p2pcanada.ca/library/characteristics-of-a-welcoming-community-report/>.



APPENDIX C: LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACUFC	Association des collèges et des universités de la francophonie canadienne
AFET	Education Partners and Adult Education
AFO	Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario
CESOC	Economic and Social Council of Ottawa-Carleton
CFT	Centre francophone de Toronto
CLARS	Coordinated Language Assessment and Reference System
COIA	Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement
CSCHN	Centre de santé communautaire de Hamilton-Niagara
EFT	French Assessment Test
ESL	English as a second language
FMC	Francophone Minority Communities
FSL	French as a second language
MIIO	Municipal Immigration Information Online Program
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Canadian Citizenship (Canada)
IRPA	Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
MIC	Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (Ontario)
NOW	Newcomer Orientation Week Program
OCASI	Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
SWIS	Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS)
WIN	Welcome and Information for Newcomers Program



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