



CONFÉRENCE MINISTÉRIELLE
SUR LA FRANCOPHONIE
CANADIENNE | MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON THE CANADIAN
FRANCOPHONIE

newsletter

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE CANADIAN FRANCOPHONIE

Leadership that is producing results

Since 1994, the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, in its role as a catalyst, has been supporting the vitality of Francophone and Acadian communities across the country.

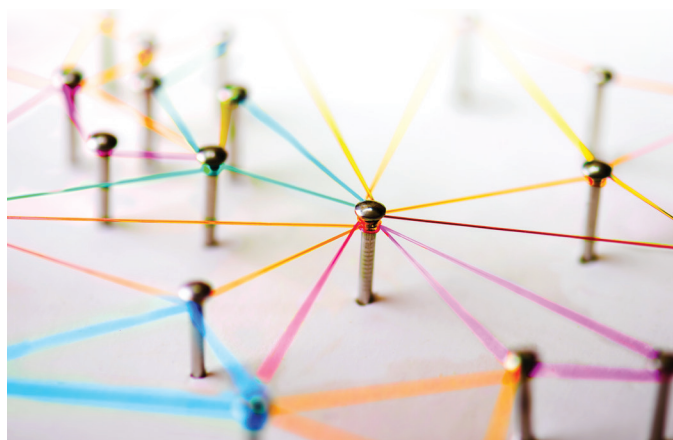
Over the past year, the Conference's activities have focused on Francophone immigration. Through strong collaboration, the ministers responsible for the Canadian Francophonie and those responsible for immigration have added this item to their governments' list of priorities. At a **joint Forum** held in Toronto in March 2018, they adopted a [Federal/Provincial/Territorial Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration](#). The governments are thus equipped to meet the demographic challenges facing their respective Francophone communities.

A few weeks later, in Calgary, the Conference held a **Symposium on Francophone Immigration**, which resulted in fruitful dialogue between community representatives and government partners. The renewed collaboration between these key stakeholders will promote the complementarity of responses to the needs of French-speaking newcomers and their host communities.

The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, created in 1994, is the only intergovernmental forum that brings together the ministers responsible for the Canadian Francophonie. The Conference works for an open, dynamic, and diverse Francophonie that contributes to, and participates fully in, the growth of Canadian society.

Improving **services in French** remains the Conference's top priority. The year 2018 provided the ministers with an opportunity to engage their teams in increasing government information and services in French, in accordance with the commitment made in June 2017. More specifically, the ministers set up a working group to improve access to **family justice** in French.

At the 23rd Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, on July 5 and 6, 2018, the ministers will determine the direction of their work for the coming year. They will meet under the theme "**Keeping in Touch**," which highlights the importance of being responsive to the special needs of Francophone communities located far from large centres. This theme is all the more relevant since the meeting will be held in Whitehorse, in the Yukon Territory.



Ontario

Québec



Manitoba



Alberta
Government

Newfoundland
Labrador



Yukon



Canada

The Action Plan for Official Languages: Listening to the Regions

With its new *Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future*, the Government of Canada seeks to maximize the scope of its actions within official language minority communities across all regions of Canada. The proposed measures are supported by new investments of nearly \$500 million and are designed to:

- Attract and retain French-speaking immigrants across the country to bring the proportion of Francophones in a minority setting to 4% by 2036;
- Improve the availability of child care services in French and support training opportunities for early childhood educators;
- Train and retain Francophone health professionals in minority communities;
- Improve access to justice in both official languages;
- Support strategies to recruit teachers in minority schools;

- Support community radio, newspapers and other media outlets;
- Boost tourism to communities with the Franco-phone Heritage, Culture and Tourism Corridor.



By supporting Francophone communities in key areas also identified by the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, including immigration, early childhood and the offer of services, the Plan will enhance the vitality of communities across Canada, including in remote regions.

ONTARIO

Two Programs to Serve Diverse Franco-Ontarian Communities

Ontario's 622,415 Francophones live in cities and villages across the province. To reach all Francophones and ensure cohesiveness across such a vast territory, the government needs to leverage impactful initiatives that will support communities in the present, as well as in the future.

The Government of Ontario's *Francophone Community Grants Program* (FCGP) is unique in this regard because of its geographic impact. Through an investment of \$3 million over three years, the FCGP is supporting the implementation of cultural and community activities for Francophones and Francophiles across Ontario. In all, 57 community initiatives have received funding for the first two years of the program. The application period for 2019-20 will begin in September 2018.

A second project, *pratiquO*, allows legal professionals to hone their legal skills in French through training that meets the requirements of the Law Society of Ontario. This new professional development program is offered through the University of Ottawa in partnership with the

pratiquO

Government of Ontario. Training and awareness of Ontario legal experts in French helps reduce language barriers, allowing more Francophones to access efficient, high-quality legal services.

An important partner of the *pratiquO* project is *Jurisource.ca*, a virtual library available across Canada offering access to resources such as sample legal instruments, lexicons, thematic files, case summaries, and professional development tools; it also allows searches by fields of law in both official languages.

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Working Together for French!

The *Policy on Québec Affirmation and Canadian Relations*, released in June 2017, reiterates the importance of the Canadian Francophonie in Québec's relations with the other components of Canada. It proposes a dialogue for Quebecers and all Canadians, to improve their knowledge and acknowledgement of each other. The Canadian Francophonie is at the heart of this dialogue.

The tour undertaken by Minister Jean-Marc Fournier to present the Policy over the last year provided an opportunity to continue implementing initiatives to help Québec strengthen its ties of solidarity with Francophone and Acadian communities.

Cooperation agreements and statements focusing on the key role played by the Canadian Francophonie in founding and building the Canada we know today, and the Canada of the future, have been signed with most of the provinces and territories.

Québec also renewed its agreements with the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne*, in 2015, and with the *Société Nationale de l'Acadie*, in 2018.

Last, Québec's offices in Toronto and Moncton have a mandate to maintain close relations with Francophones and Acadians in Canada and to promote initiatives that enhance the dynamism of the French language for the benefit of all Canadians.



NOVA SCOTIA

Enhanced Collaboration with the Community

The Nova Scotia Government recently stepped up its efforts to communicate and connect with its Acadian and Francophone community.

The Minister of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie named an advisory committee of six members from the Acadian and Francophone community whose role is to inform and advise her on the community's priorities and initiatives. The committee has met twice since its creation.

The Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie sought input from Acadian and Francophone community organizations prior to completing a strategic plan for government services in French for 2018-2023 with the collaboration of the French-language Services Coordinating Committee.

Revised government French-language communications guidelines will help Communications Nova Scotia inform provincial departments about their obligations. All Nova Scotia Government websites will be brought together on a



new platform designed to facilitate and optimize citizens' access to government information. The promotion of French-language services offered by the provincial government is being reinforced by the publication of profiles in *Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse*, a weekly French-language newspaper.

The Nova Scotia Government is committed to ensuring that Francophone Nova Scotians' perspective is considered and that they have a pleasant and consistent experience when they access government services or information in French.

Ongoing Consultation Process with New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone Community

The Government of New Brunswick recognizes the contribution made by Acadian and Francophone organizations to the province's development and, as such, has put in place a process of ongoing exchanges and consultation with representatives of the Acadian and Francophone community in the province.

Since 2008, the Premier of New Brunswick has met annually with the representatives of provincial organizations representing the interests of Acadian and Francophone communities in New Brunswick.

In the context of federal-provincial agreements on official languages, the government also holds consultations with these groups to obtain their opinions on various issues related to the delivery of services in both official languages. These discussions, while providing relevant insight to the government in the development of the action plan under the Agreement on the Provision of French-Language Services, enable the various organizations to advance certain priorities set out in their respective plans.

In recent years, the Acadian and Francophone community has been consulted during the development of the implementation plan for the government's official language obligations and in the process for the revision of the *Official Languages Act*.

The Government of New Brunswick is committed to maintaining a positive and effective partnership with its Acadian and Francophone community and will continue to work closely with the community to advance the interests of its citizens.

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MANITOBA

Manitoba's Bilingual Service Centres – Staying in Touch with Rural Francophone Communities

While the majority of Manitoba's Francophones live in Winnipeg, there are also a number of vibrant francophone communities in rural areas. To ensure that French speakers in these regions can access government services in the official language of their choice, the Province established the *Bilingual Service Centres (BSCs)*.

BSCs provide Manitobans with a broad range of government programs and services, in English and French, under one roof. Most of the BSCs also house federal and municipal staff, so that the public can access services from all levels of government. There are currently six BSCs located in regions where there is a high degree of French language vitality.

Each centre has an Information Specialist who provides clients with the information they need to navigate government programs and services. The Specialists also perform outreach activities in the community, strengthening the relationship between Francophones and the government, and improving communication. This proximity to the community is especially important in more remote rural regions like

St. Laurent and Notre Dame de Lourdes, where French-speaking residents know they can always rely on the BSC to facilitate their dealings with government.

The BSCs offer the Province a unique opportunity to play a pivotal role in the vitality of rural francophone communities. The *Bilingual Service Centres Act* recognizes and protects this innovative model.



Francophone Historic Places Project

In May 2017, the Heritage Branch in British Columbia's Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development began a Provincial Heritage Recognition Program project for historic places of significance to the Francophone community of British Columbia.

The recognition project is supported by a Francophone Advisory Committee, which was selected based on input from the Francophone community. As part of this project and during the nomination period from March 13 to June 24, 2018, the Province is seeking nominations from the public for historic places with significance to British Columbia's Francophone community which reflect the development and history of the province.

Places of provincial significance will be selected by an evaluation team, and will be formally recognized under the *Heritage Conservation Act* and added to the BC Register of Historic Places. A Francophone Historic Places online map will include all of the places nominated by the public, and those selected for formal recognition.



Recognition of historic places in all geographic regions acknowledges the province's diverse heritage values and strengthens British Columbia's identity as a multicultural province.

This project was supported by the Canada-British Columbia Official Languages Agreement on French-language Services.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Bringing People Together for the 2019 Congrès mondial acadien

2018 is a year of preparation for Prince Edward Island's Francophonie. In 2019, the province will host the 6th edition of the Congrès mondial acadien (World Acadian Congress), along with Southeast New Brunswick. Celebrations will take place from one end of the Island to the other: Tignish, Abram-Village, Wellington, Miscouche, Summerside, North Rustico, Charlottetown and Souris. In fact, the CMA will kick off in Abram-Village, in the Acadian Evangeline region.

Prince Edward Island is very excited to be hosting for the first time this unifying event that will enable Acadian communities here and around the world to establish linkages and nurture relationships. The CMA will give the Island's "Acadie" a chance to shine globally. It will also allow Francophones, Francophiles and friends of "Acadie" to celebrate an integral part of the Canadian and world Francophonie.

"Acadie" is a large family that brings together people of all ages and horizons, and in 2019, the CMA will emphasize this by displaying two manifestations of Acadian culture, one in Southeast New Brunswick and another in Prince Edward Island.



Keeping our Francophone Citizens Informed

Online services are an important, cost-effective tool that enables us to build relationships with our citizens. The Francophone Affairs Branch (FAB) of the Government of Saskatchewan relies on digital and social media to keep in touch with its Francophone communities located throughout the province.

The saskatchewan.ca/bonjour website is the gateway to Government of Saskatchewan programs and services in French. Content is user-friendly and provides clients with quick and easy access to information. With 218 webpages in French, the Fransaskois community can access a wide range of information in many areas such as Education, Health, Justice, and Employment.

The FAB also administers the [Services en français en Saskatchewan](#) Facebook page. Government stays in touch with the Fransaskois community by posting new and existing French-language programs and services, bilingual job opportunities, Francophone events and weather



alerts. The Facebook page averages 232 publications per year and drives traffic to French-language information that exists online.

The Fransaskois community can also contact the French-language services centre by email at bonjour@gov.sk.ca, or speak to a bilingual Service Delivery Officer in person, 5 days a week, from 9 AM to 4 PM, through a toll free number, 1-888-345-0850.

ALBERTA

A New Chapter for Alberta's Francophonie

Alberta's first-ever comprehensive [French Policy](#), announced in June 2017, marked a turning point for French-speaking Albertans. Built on a meaningful, collaborative, and respectful relationship with the province's Francophonie, the Policy outlines the guiding principles government is using to maintain existing and develop new French-language services in Alberta. The Policy also creates more opportunities to recognize the past and present contributions of Alberta's Francophonie.

In this context, Alberta celebrated many historic firsts this past year, including the proclamation of March as Alberta Francophonie Month and proudly raising the Franco-Albertan flag as a Symbol of Distinction under the *Emblems of Alberta Act*.

As outlined in the policy, the Government of Alberta considers Francophonie stakeholders as valuable partners in the development and delivery of services and other supports in French. This is why the province also established a new Advisory Council. The Council, which will be operational in fall 2018, will advise the Minister of Culture and Tourism, responsible for



Government officials and community members celebrate the announcement of Alberta's new French Policy.

the Francophone Secretariat, on the Policy's ongoing implementation. It will also play a key role to ensure Alberta's Francophonie, in all its geographical, cultural, and demographic diversity, is represented.



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

French Services Growing in Newfoundland and Labrador

To respond to the needs of the rural and urban Francophone clientele, Newfoundland and Labrador has focused its most recent efforts on enhancing web-based information and services as well as carrying out a service-oriented pilot project.

Francophone residents of the province now have access to application forms for birth, marriage and death certificates as well as driver records via Service NL's website. French online content has also been added related to photo identification, driver licensing and vehicle registration. This added material provides access to important life event information. It is the

successful result of a positive, ongoing dialogue between Government and the province's Francophone and Acadian communities.

In January 2018, the Office of French Services (OFS) launched a pilot project to establish French Services "Navigators" in two divisions of Service NL where services in French are frequently requested (Vital Statistics and Motor Registration). A Navigator is a contact person within a department who acts as a direct link with the OFS when a member of the public requests service in French. The OFS intends to expand this concept to other departments over time.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Safety Knows No Language

The Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission (WSCC) has been heavily focused on ensuring stakeholders in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut have effective and equal access to our services – in the official Canadian language of their choice.

Extending Our Reach

In fall 2017, the WSCC launched an Occupational Health and Safety App to give employers and workers mobile access to safety information, legislation, and resources in both French and English. Developed specifically with the North in mind, the application is available offline so that it can be used in remote communities, at mines and at worksites with little to no Internet access. We continue to make a concerted effort to release and update our services on and offline in both official languages simultaneously, be they major or minor.

Practising Cultural Safety

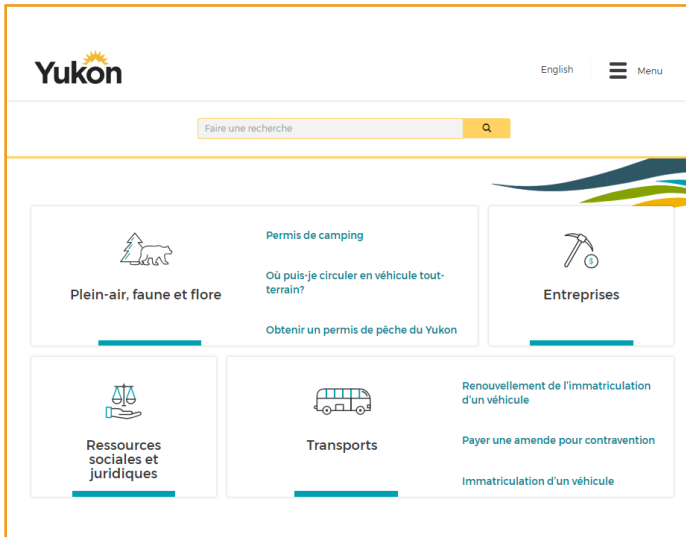
The WSCC is proud to have collaborated with the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) to develop a free WHMIS training course in French, English, and Inuktitut that is tailored to the North and its specific challenges.

We endeavour to be a leader in cultural and linguistic safety as we promote and teach safety across the North. And we are well on our way.



Touching Base with Yukoners

The Government of Yukon has launched a variety of projects over the past year in order to keep in touch with the public and offer a better access to service. Here are some of these projects.



Yukon.ca — The new user-centered website Yukon.ca is 100% bilingual and is designed in a way that highlights what the public searches for most often. It uses icons to help visitors navigate through the pages and better locate what they are looking for. The feedback-friendly nature of this new site ensures user experience will constantly improve.

Engageyukon.ca — The Government of Yukon has made it easier for members of the public to talk with government. The new public engagement website, Engageyukon.ca, is fully bilingual and provides people with opportunities to take part in and find the results from the government engagement projects.

Social Media — The Government of Yukon now has its own French Facebook page and Twitter account.

The Facebook page has a wealth of information as well as invitations specially selected for Franco-Yukoners.

This new platform for dialogue enables users to ask questions and freely express their ideas.

The Twitter account is more oriented to news updates and emergency reports, and relays all other relevant information from the Yukon Government in French.

NUNAVUT

French-Language Training for Public Servants

Nunavut has three official languages: Inuktitut (the Inuit language), English, and French. In order to strengthen and support the use of French in the public service, the Government of Nunavut has offered French-language training to almost 200 employees since 2014. The training includes 30-hour courses targeting skill levels from absolute beginner to advanced, as well as shorter one to two-day introductory courses. Training is focused in Iqaluit (where the majority of Francophone Nunavummiut live), but has

also been offered in Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, Pond Inlet, and Rankin Inlet due to increasing employee interest and demand. Almost 50% of participants in French training have been Inuit whose first language is Inuktitut.

Ongoing French-language training at all levels helps to build awareness of French and increase the French-language capacity of the Government of Nunavut to provide services to Nunavummiut.



From left: Instructor Michel Payette and Participants Francis Ellimimian, Jean Arnaquaq, Allison Barnett, Rutvik Patel and Ooraima Holland.