



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

PRESS RELEASE

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**KEY ISSUES FOR THE CANADIAN FRANCOPHONIE
AT THE HEART OF DISCUSSIONS AMONG THE MINISTERS**

June 23, 2016 – St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador – 21st Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie

The federal, provincial and territorial ministers responsible for the Canadian Francophonie today wrapped up a two-day meeting at which they discussed important issues, including French-language services, Francophone immigration, tourism and early childhood development.

The conference began with a presentation by Mr. Michael Clair offering a portrait of the Francophonie in Newfoundland and Labrador, which informed the ministers’ discussions on progress achieved in the Canadian Francophonie and its future. Their discussions revealed that the significant progress made throughout the country is primarily the result of the actions, successes and collaboration among governments and community stakeholders at the local level.

“It is under the slogan *The Wind in Our Sails* that I welcomed to St. John’s my colleagues responsible for the Canadian Francophonie,” said the Honourable Perry Trimper, Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs in Newfoundland and Labrador. “This exemplifies the energy that drives the Francophone and Acadian community in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is also symbolic of the support of our government to contribute to the vitality and growth of the province’s Francophone and Acadian community, in particular through the implementation of its *French Language Services Policy*.”

“Our country is defined by its linguistic duality and the strength of its diversity. As Minister responsible for Official Languages, I am committed to developing a new action plan to support and promote the vitality of linguistic communities and knowledge of our two official languages,” said the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage. “The consultations have begun, and the Conference gives me a unique opportunity to take the pulse of the governments on the challenges facing the Canadian Francophonie. The collaboration and the interest of the provinces and territories in participating in the consultations are valuable assets for Francophones across the country.”

On Francophone immigration, ministers discussed the goals and parameters for the Forum on Francophone Immigration, which will bring together the federal, provincial and territorial ministers of the Canadian Francophonie and immigration ministers. Members of the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie will be invited to attend a preparatory meeting to be held in the fall of 2016. The meeting will be coordinated by New Brunswick Minister Francine Landry. The forum scheduled to take place in the spring of 2017 will be an opportunity for all governments to identify and propose strategies that could increase Francophone immigration across the country and could support governments in their efforts to meet their respective goals for Francophone immigration.

With regard to Francophone tourism, governments reaffirmed their desire to work together to put forward a tourism circuit project, taking into account the specific tourism characteristics of each jurisdiction. In Toronto in 2015, governments pledged to explore opportunities for collaboration on such projects.

The delivery of French-language services is what brings together the federal, provincial and territorial governments under the aegis of the Conference. The ministers discussed ways to enhance the quality of French-language services so that they have a significant, direct impact on citizens’ quality of life. They also discussed best practices that support the implementation of active offer and increased services to French-speaking citizens.

Early childhood development in the Canadian Francophonie is important to the vitality of the culture, language and identity of the Francophone and Acadian communities of the country. A French-language environment, the commitment of governments, and the implementation of programs and policies are all factors that contribute to this development and foster the transmission of the French language. The ministers discussed the possible creation of a forum for federal-provincial-territorial dialogue on early childhood development, and they will continue discussions on this topic over the coming year.

The federal government will host the next Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie on June 22 and 23, 2017 in the National Capital Region on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Confederation. This meeting will be co-chaired by the Yukon government.

The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, created in 1994, is the only intergovernmental forum that brings together all the ministers responsible for the Canadian Francophonie. The Conference works to make the Canadian Francophonie an open, vibrant, diverse community that contributes fully to the development of Canadian society. Visit the website of the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie at <http://www.cmfc-mccf.ca>.

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