



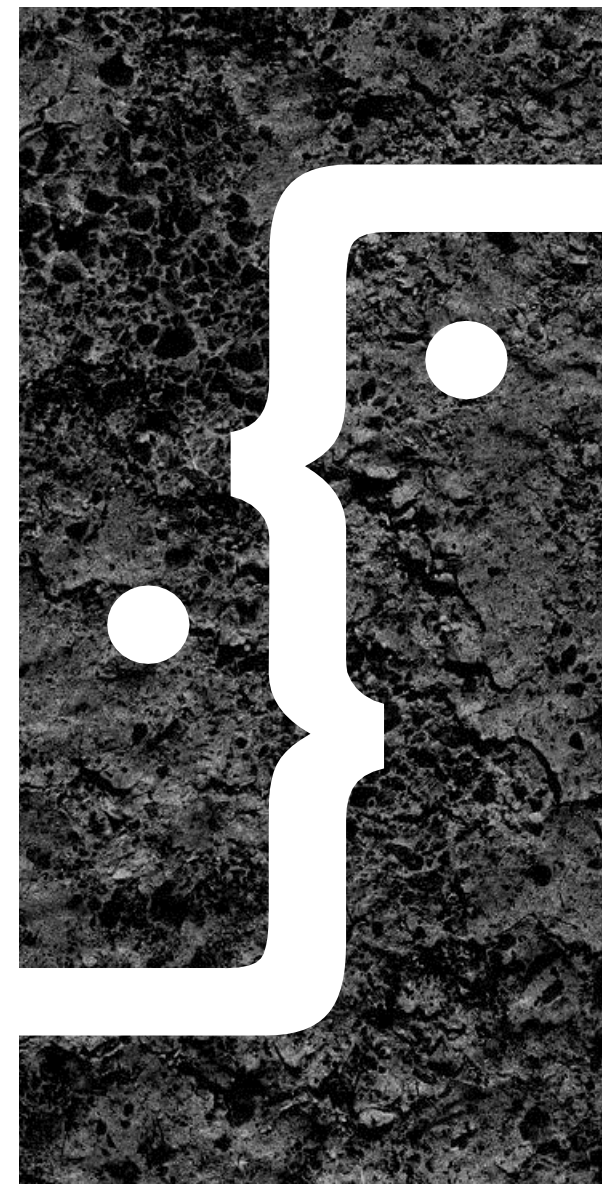
Canadian
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Best Practices Digest

**ENHANCING THE VITALITY OF OFFICIAL
LANGUAGE MINORITY COMMUNITIES AND
SUPPORTING THEIR DEVELOPPEMENT**

March 2023



Canada

Foreword

This best practices digest was designed to support federal institutions (FIs) in taking positive measures that contribute to the vitality and development of official language minority communities (OLMCs).

Under section 41 of the [Official Languages Act](#) (OLA), each FI is required to take positive measures to enhance the vitality of OLMCs. This means that FIs must be sensitive to the situation of these communities and must determine the impact of their decisions and initiatives on them. In their impact analysis, they must also plan how to mitigate the negative effects that their decisions could have on these communities or mitigate them as much as possible. This perspective should be present throughout the entire business cycle of an FI, from planning to reporting. Finally, positive measures vary according to the size and mandate of the organization, and organizations have discretion in the choice of measures taken.*

Section 42 of the OLA gives Canadian Heritage the mandate to coordinate the implementation of section 41. More specifically, it is the Interdepartmental Relations and Accountability Directorate (IRAD) within the Official Languages Branch (OLB) that plays this role, with the support of other directorates and regional offices.

In this collection, you will find examples of good practices or positive measures from various federal institutions, grouped according to the vitality factors found in the [Framework for the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities](#), a tool that aims to provide a common understanding of what community vitality means. This collection provides concrete examples of what can be done in the field and can serve as inspiration for all federal institutions.

See the [Guide to Part VII of the OLA](#) for information on the obligations of the federal institutions.

Vitality is measured by several factors...

Individuals that have...

- A sense of belonging to the linguistic community
- Linguistic aspirations and relevant practices

A community that has...

- Collective leadership
- Mobilizing capacity

An environment that offers...

- Minority language education
- Cultural and leisure activities
- Presence of institutions, and services offered
- Minority language visibility
- Economic and social integration

Relationships with the majority that lead to...

- Support from the majority and dialogue/cooperation between the two linguistic groups
- Recognition of and respect for language rights
- Influence and power within public institutions

The ability to be part of a broader linguistic environment that allows for...

- An alignment with a broader and stronger Francophonie
- The recognition of the needs of the two linguistic groups in Quebec

A community that renews itself...

- Demographically
- Through linguistic practices

Individuals that have a sense of belonging to the linguistic community, have linguistic aspirations and relevant practices.

BEST PRACTICES

- The **Canadian Museum of History** has published the Second World War Discovery Kit on the web. The purpose of this initiative is to present stories and testimonies of people from OLMCs. Specifically, the personal stories of Jean Morin, a soldier from Edmunston, Alta Wilkinson, an English-speaking mother from Gaspé on the home front of the Second World War, and Norma Etta Lee, an English-speaking air traffic controller from Quebec City. Sharing the stories of some of the people from OLMCs can help to strengthen the sense of community by recognizing the contribution and importance of OLMCs in Canadian history.
- The Canada Arts Presentation Fund of **Canadian Heritage** has renewed its commitment to the Zones Théâtrales event. The purpose of this memorandum of understanding between PCH, the Canada Council for the Arts and the National Arts Centre is to support encounters and outreach opportunities for OLMC theatrical expression. This periodic base funding directly fosters the development of artists and the presenting of their work. At the same time, it strengthens the sense of belonging of community members, who can consume cultural products in their own backyard and in their own image.

Individuals that have a sense of belonging to the linguistic community, have linguistic aspirations and relevant practices.

BEST PRACTICES

- The **Canada Science and Technology Museum** collaborated with the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est to offer a summer science camp to young Francophones in the Kingston area with content exclusively in French and training for French-speaking counsellors. This initiative, which directly supports minority language development, also helps to strengthen the youth's sense of belonging to their Francophone minority community. By bringing these youth together and providing them with a camp experience solely in their own language, linguistic behaviours are encouraged that strengthen the identity of Kingston's Francophone community.

A community with mobilizing capacity and collective leadership.

BEST PRACTICES

- The Development of *Official-Language Communities Program* of **Canadian Heritage** has provided financial support for 17 new infrastructure projects in 14 separate OLMCs through the Community Spaces Fund. This funding provides physical spaces for OLMCs to meet, mobilize, discuss and host activities that strengthen their capacity and vitality.
- In the Quebec Region, **Correctional Services Canada's** Joliette Institution continued to encourage volunteers from Quebec's English-speaking communities to work with groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous to improve services to inmates from these communities. This initiative mobilizes Quebec's English-speaking communities around a social issue while helping people in need. It also promotes the future reintegration of participants into their communities.

A community with mobilizing capacity and collective leadership.

BEST PRACTICES

- The **Canada Revenue Agency's** Community Volunteer Income Tax Program has a positive impact on OLMCs because it supports the efforts of community organizations and volunteers to help individuals in these communities understand and file their tax returns. Support for organizations and volunteers helps the collective leadership of OLMCs and their ability to mobilize the public.
- Wherever possible, the **Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency** staff share space with other economic development organizations within OLMCs. This provision of physical space strengthens the mobilization capacity of OLMC economic organizations, and the physical proximity fosters opportunities for dialogue and networking between members of the English-speaking majority and the French-speaking minority community.

A community with mobilizing capacity and collective leadership.

BEST PRACTICES

- **Canada Post's** Official Languages Grant Program supported various OLMC initiatives and contributed to their outreach. These include the 11th Goldbloom Awards Gala organized by the Quebec Community Groups Network, which celebrates individuals who "have contributed to the vitality and understanding of Quebec's English-speaking communities," as well as the 2019 Leaders' Forum, organized by the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, whose theme was the positioning of Francophonie in the public space. By funding unifying initiatives that emerge from the communities themselves, Canada Post has provided significant support to the collective leadership of Quebec's English-speaking communities and Francophone and Acadian communities.

An environment that offers minority language education, cultural and leisure activities, the presence of institutions and a provision of services, minority language visibility, and economic and social integration

BEST PRACTICES

- **Health Canada** ensures the training and retention of health personnel within OLMCs, which supports the provision of services in the minority language. In concrete terms, the 16 member institutions of the Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne have recorded 1,042 additional enrolments and 674 additional graduates from 108 health training programs in 2020-2021. For residents of English-speaking communities in Quebec, McGill University has accepted more than 1,118 health and social services professionals into its language training program to improve their English language skills and better serve patients in their language.
- In collaboration with CBC/Radio-Canada, the **Canadian Museum of Nature** was able to provide educational, scientific and cultural content in both official languages online on the Curio platform, thereby increasing the content available in OLMCs. This initiative allows OLMC members across the country to access educational content as well as cultural and recreational activities in the language of their choice.

An environment that offers minority language education, cultural and leisure activities, the presence of institutions and a provision of services, minority language visibility, and economic and social integration

BEST PRACTICES

- The **Canada Revenue Agency** has supported the development of the Francophone minority community in Newfoundland and Labrador. New partnerships with the Association communautaire francophone de Saint-Jean and the Association francophone du Labrador have resulted not only in increased access to benefits, but also in increased employment opportunities for members of these communities, thereby promoting their economic and social integration.
- The **Canadian Dairy Commission** has provided funding to Ontario's Francophone colleges, La Cité and Conestoga, to develop educational materials in both official languages. These materials are intended for high school students to develop an interest in careers in the dairy industry. This initiative supports an education program and then allows for the integration of interested students into the dairy sector. Both the education sector and the economic integration of Ontario's Francophone minority community are supported.

An environment that offers minority language education, cultural and leisure activities, the presence of institutions and a provision of services, minority language visibility, and economic and social integration

BEST PRACTICES

- Youth from a Francophone minority community organization (Franco-Jeunes) visited **Fisheries and Oceans Canada** science laboratories in Newfoundland. In Winnipeg and Burlington, awareness activities were held in Francophone schools as part of the *Take Our Kids to Work Day*. These initiatives demonstrate Fisheries and Oceans Canada's involvement with youth through the organization of educational activities. They also demonstrate the Department's presence within OLMCs, as well as establishing dialogue between the federal institution and the Francophone minority community.
- **Marine Atlantic** financially supports the Francophone Pavilion at the Newfoundland and Labrador Folk Festival. The francophone presence at the festival highlights the cultural importance of the francophone community in Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as bringing the two linguistic communities closer together and fostering an appreciation of both official languages. In addition, this initiative helps to solidify Francophonie on the cultural scene and, by extension, the Francophone minority community.

Relationships with the majority that lead to recognition of and respect for language rights, support from the majority and dialogue/cooperation between the two linguistic groups, as well as influence and power within public institutions

BEST PRACTICES

- The Public Affairs and Stakeholder Relations Branch of **Employment and Social Development Canada** goes beyond publishing communications products in both official languages and ensures that their advertising products take into account the needs and interests of OLMCs. For example, in developing an advertising strategy to promote the Government of Canada's programs and services to seniors, the department has been able to direct its marketing strategy towards buying ads that better reach OLMC members. A better understanding of its target audience contributed to the campaign's success. This is a good example of the recognition and respect of language rights.
- **Parks Canada** field units provide bilingual services to the public and OLMCs are contacted for employment opportunities. Units such as Mauricie and Western Quebec send student job offers to English-speaking universities in order to promote these opportunities to young people from English-speaking communities in the region. By welcoming members of OLMCs to their teams, they have the opportunity to exert influence within public institutions and to interact with colleagues and citizens from Quebec's Francophone majority.

Relationships with the majority that lead to recognition of and respect for language rights, support from the majority and dialogue/cooperation between the two linguistic groups, as well as influence and power within public institutions

BEST PRACTICES

Through CORCAN's construction program at **Correctional Service Canada's** Stony Mountain Institution, inmates built and delivered a parking kiosk to support the Festival du Voyageur, which celebrates Franco-Manitoban and Métis culture in Winnipeg. This event received positive media attention locally and on social media. Through this non-traditional initiative, the institution supported a Francophone OLMC cultural activity while helping to foster a dialogue between individuals from various linguistic groups, including First Nations.

Relationships with the majority that lead to recognition of and respect for language rights, support from the majority and dialogue/cooperation between the two linguistic groups, as well as influence and power within public institutions

BEST PRACTICES

- **Natural Resources Canada's** Atlantic Forestry Centre in New Brunswick participated in a series of community-oriented events, including the annual River Valley Regional Science Fair, which brings together French and English high school and college students. French immersion student projects have been presented at the fair. This has promoted both official languages and provided exposure to both language groups, creating an opportunity for dialogue between them.
- The **Office of the Secretary to the Governor General** sought data to identify groups that are statistically under-represented in nominations for national honours. This is an excellent initiative to get to know Canadians from across the country, including those from OLMCs, in order to publicize their commitment and accomplishments, and thus promote recognition of their contribution and give them visibility among the general public.

The ability to be part of a broader linguistic environment that allows for an alignment with a broader and stronger Francophone community and recognition of the needs of the two linguistic groups in Quebec

BEST PRACTICES

- **Telefilm Canada** financially supports the Front des réalisateurs indépendants du Canada (FRIC). The organization has significantly increased its support by providing numerous opportunities for new work development, professional development, networking and outreach. The FRIC's initiatives bridge the gap between Francophone OLMCs, while acting as a catalyst to strengthen their vitality and identity. As a cross-Canada organization, the FRIC enables Francophones from across Canada to shine in a broader Francophonie.
- The **Public Health Agency of Canada** has launched the *Doing Science in French* initiative. This initiative optimizes the organizational capacity to mobilize science produced in French. The initiative is supported by the Quebec regional office and strengthens collaborations between Quebec and the various Francophone minority communities. This initiative has succeeded in forging links throughout Canada's Francophone scientific community.

The ability to be part of a broader linguistic environment that allows for an alignment with a broader and stronger Francophone community and recognition of the needs of the two linguistic groups in Quebec

BEST PRACTICES

- In order to promote the use of both official languages in science, **Fisheries and Oceans Canada** has taken a proactive approach with the French-language media in the Northwest Territories by offering to interview French-speaking scientists working on marine mammal monitoring in the region. This initiative allows Francophones who have access to these media to become part of a larger linguistic environment.
- The **National Battlefields Commission** has included artists from Quebec's English-speaking communities in its programming at the Edwin-Bélanger Bandstand in Quebec City. Presenting artists from both linguistic groups in the same programming meets their linguistic and cultural needs.

A community that renews itself demographically and through linguistic practices

BEST PRACTICES

- **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's** Northern and Rural Immigration Pilot Program is a program for foreign workers in various occupations who wish to live and work in rural and remote northern communities. Several OLMCs, with a strong Francophone presence and who have made Francophone immigration one of their priorities, were invited to participate in the program. The arrival and integration of Francophone immigrants in OLMCs is one of the key measures to contribute to the demographic vitality of the Francophone population in Canada.

A community that renews itself demographically and through linguistic practices

BEST PRACTICES

- A five-year agreement has been signed between the **Canada Science and Technology Museum** and the Ontario Public School Board. It establishes a collaboration to support learners' academic success, provide experiences outside the classroom, and establish an offer of service that responds to Francophone school clientele. This initiative allows young people to go beyond learning in their language in a school setting; it allows them to use their language outside of school, which contributes to the vitality of language practices.
- The **Canada Post** Community Foundation offered grants to support youth initiatives to various OLMC organizations. Schools and daycares in Quebec's English-speaking and Francophone minority communities received assistance from Canada Post for the purchase of materials, equipment, toys and training workshops. Having well-equipped schools and daycares encourages families to use these services, which can have an impact on the demographic renewal of these communities.

A community that renews itself demographically and through linguistic practices

BEST PRACTICES

- In the Quebec region, through the Aboriginal Early Learning and Child Care Program and the First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative, **Employment and Social Development Canada** has contributed to the funding of childcare services for all English-speaking Aboriginal communities in Quebec through six funding agreements with their partners. This contributes directly to the maintenance of the official language among these Aboriginal populations and to the renewal of the English-speaking community in Quebec.
- Mauril is a new online platform promoting Canada's official languages. Funded by **Canadian Heritage** and developed by **CBC / Radio-Canada**, Mauril was launched in April 2021. This tool supports the learning and retention of English and French for all Canadians and residents of Canada and can also be used by newcomers to learn our two official languages. This helps to strengthen the language skills and practices of individuals in their second official language and thus enables them to communicate more easily with the other language group. Mauril also provides an opportunity to become familiar with the different accents and OLMCs from coast to coast and offers interesting language risk-taking activities.

Additional resources

- [Reflection tool for the implementation of section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*](#) (Canadian Heritage)
- [Key questions to facilitate decision-making that may impact on the implementation of section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*](#) (Canadian Heritage)
- [Best Practices Digest. Fostering the Full Recognition and Use of both English and French in Canadian Society](#) (Canadian Heritage)
- [Infographics on Canada's official languages](#) (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages)
- [Official Languages Research Dissemination Platform](#) (GCpedia) (accessible only on the Government of Canada internal network)
- [Interactive map of Canada's Francophone communities](#) (Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada) (available in French only)
- [Mauril](#) (CBC/Radio-Canada)

For more information...

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