



Seizing the Opportunity:

The role of communities in a constantly changing immigration system

Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages

The Honourable Claudette Tardif, Chair
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Excerpt from the Journals of the Senate of Thursday 21 November 2013:

The Honourable Senator Tardif moved, seconded by the Honourable Senator Ringuette:

That the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages be authorized to study and to report on the impacts of recent changes to the immigration system on official language minority communities; and

That the documents received, evidence heard and business accomplished on this subject by the committee since the beginning of the First Session of the Forty-First Parliament be referred to the committee; and

That the committee report from time to time to the Senate but no later than June 30, 2015, and that the committee retain all powers necessary to publicize its findings for 90 days after the tabling of the final report.

The question being put on the motion, it was adopted.

Gary W. O'Brien

Clerk of the Senate

Acronyms

ACFA Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta

AFO Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario

AUFC Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne

CFSOO Carrefour des Femmes du Sud-Ouest de l'Ontario

CIC Citizenship and Immigration Canada

CLIC Cours de langue pour les immigrants

CNFS Consortium national de formation en santé

EOI Expression of Interest

FCFA Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada

FFTNL Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador

FINs Francophone immigration networks

FMCs Francophone minority communities

INRS Institut national de recherche scientifique

LANG House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages

LINC Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada

MCCF Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie

OCOL Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

OLLO Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages

QCGN Quebec Community Groups Network

RDÉE Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité

SANB Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick

SFM Société franco-manitobaine

VEQ Voice of English-speaking Québec

In April 2013, members of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages undertook a study of the impacts of recent changes to the immigration system on official language minority communities. Our committee dedicated 15 meetings to the study of this issue. A total of 44 witnesses presented their perspectives.

Demographic and sociological changes make immigration a key factor for the future and for the vitality of these communities, which have made it a focus of activity for their long-term development. While issues related to immigrant recruitment, reception and integration have already attracted the attention of various officials, our members were interested in focusing more specifically on the most recent reforms. The main goal of the study was to determine the impacts of these reforms on anglophone and francophone minority communities.

We focused mainly on the changes that have occurred since the start of the 41st Parliament and those that will be implemented by the end of 2014. These changes were in the form of legislative or regulatory amendments, orders in council, reallocation of expenditures and ministerial instructions. In some cases, the changes had a direct impact on the language component of existing immigration policies. In other cases, broader transformations may have affected official language minority communities or may affect them in the future. Our report focuses on the initiatives most likely to have an impact on these communities.

The key idea that came out of the public hearings can be summarized as follows: communities must seize the opportunities that arise in a constantly changing immigration system. For its part, the federal government must fully implement Part VII of the <u>Official Languages Act</u> and section 3 of the <u>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</u>. It is with this in mind that we have presented a series of recommendations to urge the government to take positive measures to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities and to support and assist their development. We hope that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, who in fact has been quite supportive of our work, will be open to our recommendations.

The Committee members would also like to thank the former Deputy Chair, the Honourable Andrée Champagne, for her active involvement in this study and in previous studies.

Claudette Tardif
Chair

Suzanne Fortin-Duplessis Deputy Chair

In recent years, the federal government has taken a range of measures to make the immigration system more effective and efficient. The study by the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages (the "Senate Committee") focused on the economic, linguistic and financial changes that have occurred since the start of the 41st Parliament and on those that will be implemented by the end of 2014, with the anticipated launch of the Express Entry system. The purpose of the study was to measure the impact of these changes on official language minority communities. The Senate Committee dedicated 15 meetings to studying the issue and heard from 44 witnesses. Four key themes came out of the public hearings.

First, economic immigration and the major role of employers. The federal government is keenly interested in the economic integration of immigrants. There are many challenges involved in recognizing foreign credentials and integrating immigrants into the job market. The public hearings highlighted the importance of working with immigrants before they arrive. The more they are aware of Canada's economic and linguistic realities prior to their departure, the greater their chances of success once they arrive. With the launch of the Express Entry system, employers will be urged to play a key role in recruiting newcomers. Employer awareness and a coordinated approach with all immigration system stakeholders will be needed to ensure that the federal government achieves its objectives.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada must develop a coordinated national strategy to support the growth of official language minority communities through immigration. It must also ensure that French-speaking immigrants will be able to register in the pool of qualified candidates in the new Express Entry system without hindering the recognition of their foreign qualifications. It is essential that the department work together with all of its partners and in consultation with the communities, taking into account each region's characteristics and taking positive measures to support immigration in these communities. As part of the consultations to be held this fall with francophone and Acadian communities, it is recommended that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration pay special attention to recruitment measures targeting francophone countries.

Second, the communities' move from a reactive to a proactive role. For several years now, francophone and Acadian communities have been hard at work developing services for French-speaking immigrants. They have created francophone immigration networks, taken part in international recruitment campaigns and organized liaison tours within Canada. They are now more certain than ever of the potential that immigration represents for their vitality. In light of the recent changes to the immigration system, they need to mount a charm offensive to persuade newcomers to settle in minority communities. The communities want to (and must) engage in a "grand seduction" of this kind. The only way they will achieve the desired results is to have the necessary resources at their disposal. As for anglophone communities, they depend on research to build their capacity to ensure that English-speaking newcomers are economically, socially and culturally integrated into Quebec.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada must maintain an approach designed by and for the communities when it comes to current and future changes. As part of the consultations to be held this fall with francophone and Acadian communities, it is recommended that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration pay special attention to four types of positive measures: providing ongoing and enhanced support for francophone immigration networks; providing support for French-language pre-departure services; promoting the communities abroad; and considering the special needs of refugees, temporary workers and international students. Citizenship and Immigration Canada must also provide anglophone and francophone communities with solid data to enable them to capitalize on the changes. It must also consider the priorities identified by Quebec's anglophone communities to carry out research on immigration that is aligned with their needs.

Third, official language learning. The federal government took measures to tighten the selection criteria concerning immigrants' language skills. Several recent studies have found that proficiency in official languages, especially English, is a key determinant in the integration of immigrants and that it clearly strengthens their active engagement in Canadian social life. The public hearings highlighted how important it is for newcomers in minority communities to be proficient in the majority language. However, access to language training is not guaranteed everywhere, nor is it available to all classes of economic immigrants. Most of the witnesses acknowledged that French-language postsecondary institutions must play a pivotal role in the new immigration system.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada must support postsecondary institutions in the Canadian francophonie through targeted positive measures. It must also expand access to language training programs in all regions and open these programs to temporary foreign workers and international students.

Fourth, federal government targets. In 2003, the federal government agreed on targets for increasing the number of francophone immigrants settling in minority communities. A target of 4.4% by 2008 was initially set and subsequently lowered, allowing the government until 2013 to achieve a proportion of 1.8% for French-speaking immigrants settling outside Quebec, and until 2023 to achieve the initial target of 4.4%. In 2013, in the wake of changes to foster economic immigration, the government set a new target of 4% for French-speaking economic immigrants by 2018. The Senate Committee's public hearings sought to find out what action the federal government intends to take in order to achieve these targets.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada must recognize that the Provincial Nominee Program and the Canada Experience Class must attract a sufficient number of francophone immigrants. It must also include a francophone lens in the Express Entry system so that francophone and Acadian communities can capitalize on targeted positive measures and participate in developing the tools to promote immigration to their communities.

The nine recommendations presented by the Senate Committee to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration are intended to ensure the implementation of Part VII of the <u>Official Languages</u> <u>Act</u> and section 3 of the <u>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</u>.

Recommendation 1

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in cooperation with all of its partners and in consultation with official language minority communities, quickly develop a coordinated national strategy to support the development of these communities through immigration. This strategy must identify the roles and responsibilities of the various partners and be flexible enough to take into account the unique characteristics of each region.

Recommendation 2

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in cooperation with all of its partners and in consultation with francophone and Acadian communities, ensure that francophone immigrants will be able to register in the pool of qualified candidates in the Express Entry system without hindering the recognition of their foreign credentials.

Recommendation 3

That the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration take advantage of the consultations to be held this fall with francophone and Acadian communities to identify, in cooperation with them, positive measures to support immigration to their communities. That the Minister pay special attention to the following positive measure:

(a) recruitment initiatives targeting francophone countries.

Recommendation 4

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada must, in consultation with francophone and Acadian communities, maintain an approach designed by and for the communities when it comes to current and future changes. That, as part of the consultations to be held this fall with francophone and Acadian communities, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration pay special attention to the following positive measures:

- (a) providing ongoing and enhanced support for francophone immigration networks;
- (b) providing support for French-language pre-departure services;
- (c) promoting official language minority communities abroad; and
- (d) considering the special needs of refugees, temporary workers and international students who settle in francophone minority communities.

Recommendation 5

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada fund a Statistics Canada survey on French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec and on English-speaking immigrants in Quebec so that official language minority communities can be better equipped to deal with the immigration challenges they will be facing over the coming years.

Recommendation 6

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada take into consideration the priorities identified by Quebec's anglophone communities in order to conduct immigration research projects that will provide a concrete and direct benefit to these communities and will build their capacity to economically, socially and culturally integrate English-speaking newcomers.

Recommendation 7

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada provide targeted support to postsecondary institutions in the Canadian francophonie for language training, language testing, foreign credential recognition and skills upgrading.

Recommendation 8

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada allow temporary foreign workers and international students to register for its language training programs and that it expand access to these programs in either official language in all regions of Canada.

Recommendation 9

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada recognize the following:

- (a) the Provincial Nominee Program and the Canadian Experience Class must attract a sufficient number of francophone immigrants;
- (b) the Express Entry system must include a francophone lens so that francophone and Acadian communities can capitalize on targeted positive measures; and
- (c) these communities must participate in developing the tools to promote immigration to their communities.

Seizing the Opportunity

The role of communities in a constantly changing immigration system

Introduction

In April 2013, the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages (the "Senate Committee") heard the first witnesses as part of its study of the impacts of recent changes to the immigration system on official language minority communities. The study lasted a little over a year, with the final witnesses being heard in June 2014.

In recent years, the federal government has taken a range of measures to make the immigration system more effective and efficient. The Senate Committee's study focused on the economic, linguistic and financial changes that have occurred since the start of the 41st Parliament and those that will be implemented by the end of 2014, with the anticipated launch of the Express Entry system. These changes took various forms: legislative or regulatory amendments, orders in council, reallocation of expenditures and ministerial instructions.

The issue of immigration to official language minority communities is not new and has been studied by various levels of government as well as parliamentary committees, community stakeholders and many researchers. The Senate Committee began its study by reviewing the reports prepared by its House of Commons colleagues. The Commissioner of Official Languages made this issue a strategic priority for the final three years of his term. The government made it one of its three priority areas for action in the <u>Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013–2018</u>.

Given the number, form and variety of reforms undertaken in recent years, the Senate Committee sought to achieve the following objectives in its study:

- Examine recent changes to the immigration system.
- Identify the impacts on anglophone and francophone minority communities.
- Make recommendations to the federal government to promote the vitality and support the development of official language minority communities, and encourage the full recognition of English and French in Canadian society.

To this end, it held 15 meetings during which 44 witnesses presented their perspectives. They included the Commissioner of Official Languages; the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration; the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages; representatives from Statistics Canada, anglophone and francophone minority communities, and postsecondary institutions; researchers; and newcomers who chose to settle in one of Canada's francophone minority communities.

During its public hearings, the Senate Committee heard about the many challenges surrounding recent immigration reforms. In its report, it wanted to focus on those initiatives most likely to have an impact on official language minority communities. Consequently, its report is divided into four themes.

First, economic immigration and the major role of employers. The federal government is keenly interested in the economic integration of immigrants. There are many challenges involved in recognizing foreign credentials and integrating immigrants into the job market. The public hearings highlighted the importance of working with immigrants before they arrive. The more they are aware of Canada's economic and linguistic realities prior to their departure, the greater their chances of success once they get here. With the launch of the Express Entry system, employers will be urged to play a key role in recruiting newcomers. Employer awareness and a coordinated approach with all immigration system stakeholders will be needed to ensure that the federal government achieves its objectives.

Second, the communities' move from a reactive to a proactive role. For several years now, francophone and Acadian communities have been hard at work developing services for French-speaking immigrants. They have created francophone immigration networks, taken part in international recruitment campaigns and organized liaison tours within Canada. They are now more certain than ever of the potential that immigration represents for their vitality. In light of the recent changes to the immigration system, they need to mount a charm offensive to persuade newcomers to settle in minority communities. The communities want to (and must) engage in a "grand seduction" of this kind. The only way they will achieve the desired results is to have the necessary resources at their disposal. As for anglophone communities, they depend on research to build their capacity to ensure that English-speaking newcomers are economically, socially and culturally integrated into Quebec.

Third, official language learning. The federal government took measures to tighten the selection criteria concerning immigrants' language skills. Several recent studies have found that proficiency in official languages, especially English, is a key determinant in the integration of immigrants and that it clearly strengthens their active engagement in Canadian social life. The public hearings highlighted how important it is for newcomers in minority communities to be proficient in the majority language. However, access to language training is not guaranteed everywhere, nor is it available to all classes of economic immigrants. Most of the witnesses acknowledged that French-language postsecondary institutions must play a pivotal role in the new immigration system.

Fourth, federal government targets. In 2003, the federal government agreed on targets for increasing the number of francophone immigrants settling in minority communities. A target of 4.4% by 2008 was initially set and subsequently lowered, allowing the government until 2013 to achieve a proportion of 1.8% for French-speaking immigrants settling outside Quebec, and until 2023 to achieve the initial target of 4.4%. In 2013, in the wake of changes to foster economic immigration, the government set a new target of 4% for French-speaking economic immigrants by 2018. The Senate Committee's public hearings sought to find out what action the federal government intends to take in order to achieve these targets.

The Senate Committee's report is divided into two chapters. **Chapter 1** provides an overview of the recent changes to the immigration system. **Chapter 2** deals with the impact of these changes on official language minority communities based on the four themes outlined above. At the end of each theme, the Senate Committee makes recommendations to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to ensure the implementation of Part VII of the <u>Official Languages</u> <u>Act</u> and section 3 of the <u>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</u>. The intent behind these recommendations is to enable Canada's anglophone and francophone communities to seize the opportunities that arise in a constantly changing immigration system.

"[Immigration] continues to play a decisive role in fostering the development of official language minority communities ... [A]n important focus of our efforts in this area is in promoting the benefits of fluency in Canada's official languages and investing in language training for newcomers who are settling in official language minority communities ... The lack of skills in either official language may be the greatest hurdle they face in furthering their education or obtaining employment."

The Hon. Chris Alexander, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, *Evidence*, 12 May 2014.

Chapter 1 – Recent Changes to the Immigration System

Chapter 1 presents an overview of the recent changes to the immigration system. It begins with a background summary of the shared jurisdiction over immigration and the role of official language minority communities. It then presents the recent reforms and the key areas likely to affect these communities.

1.1 Background summary

Understanding the responsibilities of each stakeholder is essential to appreciating the context in which the current immigration system is being modernized.

1.1.1 A shared jurisdiction and many partners

Under the Canadian Constitution, responsibility for immigration is shared by the federal government and the provinces and territories. As well, there are a growing number of other partners involved at various stages of the immigration process, from recruitment through to the integration of newcomers.

1.1.1.1 The federal government

The federal government sets the annual immigration targets and establishes criteria regarding health, security and criminality. It defines immigration classes, such as the economic class and family class. It handles refugee selection cases and permanent residence applications on humanitarian and compassionate grounds. The federal government also sets eligibility criteria for provincial and territorial settlement programs. It is involved in recruitment and funds counselling and settlement services in Canada and abroad. It supports language training under certain conditions. Lastly, it grants Canadian citizenship.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is the lead department in this area. It oversees implementation of the <u>Citizenship Act</u> and the <u>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</u>, section 3 of which pertains to the development of official language minority communities. Decisions by other federal institutions may also have an impact on the immigration system:

 Employment and Social Development Canada is involved in foreign credential recognition and shares responsibility for the Temporary Foreign Worker Program;

- the Canada Border Services Agency receives immigrants at the border and handles security screening, detention and removal from Canada;
- Health Canada forges partnerships with postsecondary institutions to train foreign healthcare workers:
- Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada is involved in recruitment abroad; and
- Canadian Heritage provides grants and contributions to community organizations involved in promoting immigration to minority communities and supports federal departments and agencies in implementing Part VII of the <u>Official Languages Act</u>.

1.1.1.2 Provincial and territorial governments

The provinces and territories may pass laws related to immigration as long as they are consistent with federal legislation. Under the Provincial Nominee Program, the provinces and territories may nominate for immigration those individuals who meet specific local labour market needs. This program is increasingly used to facilitate economic immigration to Canada. When setting annual targets and selecting immigrants, the federal government is obligated to consult with the provincial and territorial governments, who provide newcomers with referrals, language training and employment services. Some of them have even agreed to a francophone immigration target.

- Almost ten years ago, Manitoba adopted a strategy to attract, integrate and retain immigrants. At that time, the provincial government set a target of 7% for French-language immigration. This target, which exceeds francophone representation in the province, is designed to limit the impact of assimilation.
- In 2012, Ontario came up with its provincial strategy to promote francophone immigration, setting a target of 5%. In winter 2014, the Legislative Assembly considered a bill that, had it not died on the Order Paper, would have protected the immigration interests of the Franco-Ontarian community.
- In June, New Brunswick launched an action plan to promote francophone immigration. The Commissioner of Official Languages for New Brunswick and representatives from the Acadian community lobbied the provincial government to take concrete steps to increase the demographic weight of the Acadian community. According to the action plan, the province will attract 3% more francophones per year, reaching 23% in 2017. It set a target of 33% by the end of 2020.
- The other provincial and territorial governments have not set any targets of this kind.

Quebec is a separate case. Responsibility for selecting immigrants and for receiving and settling permanent residents was transferred to the provincial government under the 1991 <u>Canada–Québec Accord relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens</u>. The Canada-Québec Accord ensures that immigrant integration respects the province's distinct identity. In addition, current provincial legislation regarding education does not allow immigrants to attend English-language schools.

Recent amendments include the repatriation of certain settlement programs previously under provincial responsibility. These agreements had specific provisions regarding minority francophone communities. In April 2012, the federal government decided to end that approach and instead harmonize its programs across the country. Consequently, it announced plans to

resume management of settlement programs in Manitoba and British Columbia.² The Canada–Ontario agreement was not renewed.

The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie (MCCF), made up of the provincial and territorial ministers of francophone affairs as well as the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, has addressed francophone immigration on several occasions in recent years. During its June 2013 meeting, the ministers heard a presentation on an <u>Analysis of Reforms to Canada's Immigration System and its Implications on Communities of the Canadian Francophonie</u>. It is expected that over the next few years, federal-provincial/territorial tables and the provincial/territorial ministers responsible for immigration will focus more closely on issues surrounding francophone immigration.

1.1.1.3 Municipalities

Some municipalities are quite actively involved in immigration reception and integration. They essentially see this process as having economic development potential. They provide a wide range of direct services, such as transit, housing, recreation and access to hospitals and schools. Some municipalities are more sensitive than others to the issues surrounding an increasingly diverse population. For instance, Québec City was proactive in supporting a newcomer integration and retention program in cooperation with the organization Voice of English-speaking Québec (VEQ).

1.1.1.4 Schools and postsecondary institutions

Encouraging immigration also means encouraging workers to bring their families with them. Children who have just arrived in Canada face all kinds of challenges at school. Some have limited education while others must cope with difficulties at home. Some learn in a language not spoken by their parents. This is why schools across the country are striving to promote the acceptance of diversity in the classroom.

As for postsecondary institutions, they are one of the drivers of the newly reformed immigration system. In January 2014, as part of its international education strategy, the federal government announced that by 2022 it would double the number of individuals who choose Canada as a study destination from 239,000 to 450,000 students.³ A regulatory amendment made around the same time set rules for issuing study permits and designating educational institutions that can admit international students and provide immigrant services. Postsecondary institutions are increasingly having to provide services to a growing number of international students and are increasingly dealing with economic immigrants. These services include language training, mentoring for immigrants, skills upgrading for foreign-trained professionals, and counselling and employment services.

1.1.1.5 Employers

Jobs are the key to immigrant integration. This means that employers are another driver of the new immigration system. By the end of the year, under the new Express Entry system for processing Economic Class immigration applications, employers will have direct access to potential immigrants and be able to offer them jobs that match their skills. Employers are increasingly taking part in recruitment missions abroad to look for skilled labour. More and more, they are establishing direct ties between foreign countries and Canada. They actively participate in the process for recognizing foreign credentials and work experience. Over the last few years, a growing number of employers have been hiring temporary workers through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program.

1.1.1.6 Professional associations

One of the goals of economic immigration is to attract foreign professionals who will help support Canada's economic growth. However, there are still many foreign-trained professionals unable to work in their fields once they arrive. Immigrants must have qualifications and experience that are deemed comparable to Canadian standards before they can enter the labour market. This is a complex issue that has posed many challenges for a number of years now. Professional associations have a key role to play in this process, as they are the ones who regulate the admission criteria for certain skilled professions.

1.1.1.7 Service providers

Following recent reforms, service providers are now required to obtain CIC authorization and accreditation in order to provide services in Canada and abroad. Their activities include information and counselling services, language training, initiatives to facilitate community connections and labour market participation, and support services to access settlement services delivered by the department. Language evaluation and services are consequently provided by organizations selected through competitive bidding. By taking this approach, the government is looking to reduce the number of players and more closely control the supply of services. A 2013 study predicts an increase in the specialization and professionalization of these organizations.⁴

1.1.1.8 Community organizations

Various community organizations are interested in immigration issues and are involved in various stages of the process. A significant number of minority-language community organizations are involved in activities ranging from reception to integration. These organizations include national, provincial and territorial agencies, francophone immigration networks, employability networks and healthcare organizations. A 2013 study predicts the establishment of other organizations authorized to provide immigrants with advice, recruit skilled and temporary workers, and offer settlement services to refugees.⁵

1.1.2 The role of official language minority communities in the immigration system

In recent years, the anglophone and francophone minority communities have taken steps to make immigration a key area of development. Their role has had to adapt over the years in response to reforms.

1.1.2.1 Francophone communities

The federal government has recognized immigration as being essential to the future and to the vitality of francophone and Acadian communities for about a decade. These communities have worked hard to develop services for French-speaking immigrants and have created a total of 13 francophone immigration networks across Canada. Francophone and Acadian communities also recently established the National Table for Community Cooperation on Francophone Immigration. For close to 12 years, they have supported the work of a committee composed of government and community representatives. They have taken part in international recruitment campaigns and organized liaison tours within Canada. They are now more certain than ever that immigration is the key to their future vitality. During his appearance before the Senate Committee, the Commissioner of Official Languages highlighted the importance of considering the unique character of these communities as part of the current reforms:

Indeed, I see many francophone communities asking themselves whether the work they have already done has even been taken into consideration in relation to the Government of Canada's new approach to business immigration and labour market integration.⁶

Year after year, Ontario attracts the greatest share of francophone immigrants. A Statistics Canada official told the Senate Committee that in 2011, of the 114,000 French-language immigrants living outside Quebec, 68% lived in Ontario, mainly in Toronto and Ottawa, 13.5% in British Columbia and 10.4% in Alberta.⁷ He also discussed the significant phenomenon of interprovincial migration, where a large proportion of francophone immigrants who arrive in majority anglophone provinces eventually migrate to Quebec or the West, essentially for economic reasons.⁸ This was the case for several francophone newcomers who settled in Alberta.⁹ It is also common for immigrants who arrive in Quebec to head to another province to learn English.

One of the main challenges facing francophone and Acadian communities is recruitment. The other is the retention of French-speaking immigrants. While understanding the attractiveness of English in the world of work and in everyday life, these communities need to find ways to attract these immigrants, and encourage them to make use of their services and schools and take part in social activities in French.

1.1.2.2 Anglophone communities

Programs transferring responsibilities from the federal government to the provincial government, as is the case for immigration, are an important issue for Quebec's anglophone communities. When the Senate Committee conducted its study of these communities from 2009 to 2011, it looked at the challenges surrounding immigration. The anglophone communities in certain regions, such as the Gaspé, Québec City, the Eastern Townships and the Outaouais, expressed their desire to be able to count on immigration to renew their populations. Some, such as the Québec City region, are better equipped than others. Elsewhere, while there is a willingness to receive immigrants, the local community leadership is still in the very early stages of development. The anglophone community in the greater Montréal area is already highly diverse.

While anglophone communities are recognized as having an essential role to play, current legislation and policies limit their ability to attract and retain newcomers. This is due to the fact that immigrant selection and reception is the responsibility of the provincial government, which has instituted policies designed to promote French. The integration of immigrants into the majority francophone population is an ongoing concern for these communities.

For English-speaking Quebeckers, this means coming up with ways to attract newcomers to their communities without adversely affecting the aspirations of the francophone majority. Their aim is to secure federal support for their efforts to recruit and retain English-speaking immigrants while focusing on French-language instruction. They also acknowledge the need to work in partnership with the provincial government, municipalities and the educational and cultural structures. Like francophone communities outside Quebec, Anglo Quebeckers see immigration as a way to ensure the sustainability of their communities and institutions, maintain their services and ensure their vitality. The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) told the Senate Committee about its interest in playing a more active role in this respect and stressed the importance of supporting not just the workers who settle in Quebec but also their families. 12

The Commissioner of Official Languages and community representatives have continued to call for more support for networking, labour market integration and language training for immigrants. In his annual report, the Commissioner pointed out that the <u>Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013–2018</u> is silent regarding immigration to anglophone communities. In his view,

... [T]he Department should examine how it could help Quebec's Anglophone communities access the resources they need to help English-speaking newcomers integrate into Quebec society. 13

During its public hearings, the Senate Committee heard that part of the funding for immigration research will be set aside for Quebec's anglophone communities. This commitment will total \$0.5 million over five years, according to the minister responsible. These communities see this as a step in the right direction, as stated by the Director General of the QCGN:

Our strategic goal is simple: build an evidence base that demonstrates the value of English-speaking newcomers to Quebec and the vital role community groups ... play in their settlement and integration into Quebec society. ¹⁵

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration said he was open to other ideas, such as encouraging departments to make greater use of the Internet.¹⁶

1.2 Recent changes

Demographic and sociological changes make immigration a key factor for the future and the vitality of official language minority communities. Canada's anglophone and francophone communities have made immigration a focus of activity for their long-term development. The federal government has also made it a priority. In recent years, it has taken a range of measures to make the immigration system more effective and efficient.

1.2.1 Types of changes

Recent reforms were made through legislative and regulatory changes, orders in council, changes to current policies, reallocation of expenditures and ministerial instructions. By making changes in these ways, the government believes it is in a better position to respond quickly to Canada's needs and its changing economic conditions. However, this leaves less room for consultations beforehand, as required for example by the spirit of Part VII of the Official Languages Act. This puts official language minority communities in a position where they need to react promptly and effectively to reforms.

1.2.2 Targeted sectors

While there are multiple facets to the modernization of the immigration system, those most likely to have an impact on official language minority communities are economic immigration, language skills and funding changes.

1.2.2.1 Economic immigration

The immigration system has decisively shifted toward economic immigration. One of the key goals of the recent reforms is to ensure that immigration provides good value for Canada. This means focusing on bringing in skilled immigrants and temporary workers. To streamline selection and integration, the criteria for assessing immigration candidates were reviewed in order to respond more quickly and easily to the economic conditions in different regions across Canada. Similarly, the various levels of government see the major economic potential of

immigration. Witnesses pointed to the responsiveness of the current changes, given that labour market needs change quickly and the various stakeholders in the immigration system must constantly adapt.

Currently most of Canada's economic immigrants come from the Provincial Nominee Program, the Federal Skilled Worker Program and the Canadian Experience Class. The Temporary Foreign Worker Program is also used to meet the short-term needs of Canada's economy. A new electronic application management system will soon be used to select immigrants based on the skills needed by employers. Initially referred to as an "Expression of Interest" (EOI), the Express Entry system will be rolled out by the end of 2014. Candidates who have a valid offer of employment or have been designated through the Provincial Nominee Program may have their applications fast-tracked.

1.2.2.2 Language skills

Development of language skills for immigrants, as a critical factor for their economic integration, appears to be the number one issue. Data from the 2011 Census show that 20.6% of Canada's population was born abroad, and among immigrants who arrived between 2006 and 2011, 79% had neither English nor French as their mother tongue. Several recent studies have shown that proficiency in the official languages, especially English, is a key determinant in the integration of immigrants and their active engagement in Canadian social life. A 2011 evaluation shows that setting minimum language standards could help with the successful economic establishment of newcomers.¹⁷

Consequently, the federal government has taken steps to strengthen the selection criteria for the language skills of immigrants. Skilled workers, permanent residents and citizenship applicants are now required to prove that they have an adequate knowledge of either official language. The federal government revised its point grid to give greater weight to proficiency in at least one official language. This grid is assessed by CIC-authorized service providers, who use standardized language tests.

While the Senate Committee was holding its public hearings, Parliament was considering Bill C-24: An Act to amend the Citizenship Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. Enacted on 19 June 2014, these amendments to the Citizenship Act require applicants for citizenship to demonstrate, in one of Canada's official languages, their knowledge of Canada and of the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. It extends the requirement to have sufficient knowledge of one of Canada's official languages, currently applicable to permanent residents between 18 and 54 years of age applying for citizenship, to those between 14 and 64.

1.2.2.3 **Funding**

Several CIC services are now provided by organizations selected through competitive bidding. In addition to these changes, three 5-year federal initiatives launched in 2003, 2008 and 2013 provided additional funding to support immigration to minority communities. Financial commitments totalled \$9 million in the *Action Plan for Official Languages 2003–2008*, \$30 million in the *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008–2013* and \$149.5 million in the *Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013–2018*.

In the first two initiatives, funding for immigrant recruitment and integration was provided mainly to francophone and Acadian communities. Quebec's anglophones saw very few benefits apart from a few ad hoc research projects. The latest initiative provided \$120 million over five years to support language training for economic immigrants. During her appearance before the Senate

Seizing the Opportunity

Committee, the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages emphasized that this funding was intended to promote both official languages:

It is in fact Citizenship and Immigration Canada that does the research with regard to impacts in minority communities, but you're absolutely right. English-speaking minority communities in Quebec are as important as the francophone communities outside of Quebec, the minority communities. That's why in the roadmap I am so proud that we actually make sure that ... we target economic immigrants. There's \$120 million in the roadmap, and they don't specify whether it's an anglophone minority community or francophone minority community. They're equally important. When people ask me the question about why I say "economic immigrants" and shouldn't we just be targeting for francophones, I say we have two national languages, equally important, and so I'm proud that our government continues to support both.¹⁸

During his first appearance before the Senate Committee in April 2013, the Commissioner of Official Languages said that he had little information on the new Roadmap funding for immigration.¹⁹ When he appeared again in November 2013, the Commissioner said that this funding would be used to provide immigrants with language training in French in Quebec and in English in the rest of the country.²⁰ Note that since 2008, specific funding has been provided for francophone immigration to New Brunswick.

"Looking now at recent changes to the immigration system, and consistent with our focus on economic immigration that meets Canada's labour market needs, we have set a revised recruitment target of 4% out of the total number of [francophone] economic immigrants settling outside Quebec to be reached by 2018. We aim to achieve this target with the help of our federal partners, other levels of government and various stakeholders."

The Hon. Chris Alexander, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, *Evidence*, 12 May 2014.

Chapter 2 – Impact on Official Language Minority Communities: Observations and Recommendations

Chapter 2 addresses the impact of the recent changes to the immigration system on official language minority communities. Based on the evidence heard, the chapter is divided into four themes: first, economic immigration and the major role of employers; second, the communities' move from a reactive to a proactive role; third, official language learning; and fourth, targets identified by the federal government. At the end of each theme, the Senate Committee presents its recommendations for the federal government.

2.1 Economic immigration and the major role of employers

In recent years, the federal government has greatly ramped up its promotion of economic immigration. Employers have been given a major role in the new system. Two recurring themes in the public hearings were meeting the employment expectations of immigrants and meeting labour market needs. Raising employer awareness and the need for a coordinated approach among all system stakeholders also came up during discussions.

2.1.1 Jobs: The key to successful settlement

Employment is a top concern for newcomers. For most, economic prosperity is crucial to their success. The issue of employment is at the forefront of any initiative to regionalize immigration. Without employment, the chances of integration are vastly reduced. Official language minority communities are aware of this, which is why they go to such lengths to support the economic integration of newcomers.

2.1.1.1 Economic conditions as seen from abroad

Several witnesses who appeared before the Senate Committee over the last year spoke about the importance of working with immigrants prior to their arrival. A 2011 study states that they "need accurate and relevant information about what awaits them in Canada." This means that, right from the selection phase, they understand the characteristics of the labour market they want to settle in. Therefore, it is important that immigrants be well informed even before they arrive in Canada.

It is not difficult to find immigrants who are disappointed about not being able to secure work that matches their skills and experience. For some, it is only once they have arrived that they understand the dynamics of Canada's labour market. Immigrants told the Senate Committee about the various challenges they faced since their arrival, including the need to learn both

official languages, and the difficulty involved in getting their foreign credentials recognized and accessing employment. Employers often require Canadian experience, something these immigrants do not have. One researcher spoke about awareness-raising with employers themselves in an effort to foster greater openness to diversity and maintain harmony within workplaces.²²

2.1.1.2 Recognizing foreign credentials

With respect to immigration, there are many challenges surrounding the recognition of foreign credentials. Witnesses described the criteria required by some professional associations as strict. This was the case for one permanent resident of Ontario who earned a doctorate in private law from French universities but has been unable to find employment in his field since arriving in Canada four years ago.²³ A refugee from Colombia also had to forget about practising his chosen profession.²⁴ A permanent resident of Saskatchewan aptly summed up the current contradiction between greater economic immigration and the inadequate recognition of credentials in the job market:

Selective immigration is very good for Canada, but I cannot understand how a doctor who has done his studies in France, who has 15 years of experience, comes here and is told he cannot practise, even though Canada needs doctors. He has even been educated in a so-called developed country and has experience. I have the impression that the immigration policy and selective immigration are not fitting together properly.²⁵

One francophone representative called the challenges surrounding employment outcomes for immigrants "tragic." While some progress has been made, there is still a way to go. The Director General of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne (FCFA) referred to an ad hoc approach:

Professional associations are just as hard to access in our communities as in Quebec. That is always a huge challenge. To be sure, our interventions are directed more at Employment and Social Development Canada so that the targeted professions can also respond to the needs in our communities, particularly, in education and health care, for example. That is very important. Other programs can also contribute to this, such as Industry Canada programs in the regional economic development agencies, which can support groups of women immigrants, for example, that are joining forces and creating a cooperative in Nova Scotia. That is one example. As another example, Manitoba has a huge need for francophone professional daycare centres. Recognizing that need, some organizations joined forces at the University of Manitoba to create a training program directed at professionals who work in daycare centres. In other words, it is more on an ad hoc basis, rather than anything systematic, depending on the needs recognized in each province and territory.²⁷

Along with the challenge of recognizing foreign credentials is the issue of skills upgrading for newcomers. For some, it is crucial that newcomers be provided with employability services. One researcher explained her view this way:

Immigrants are more than willing to take additional training courses. They know that things might be somewhat different here in the way we do things. They're willing to do that, but they need the opportunity.²⁸

French-language postsecondary institutions in Canada are working with the Consortium national de formation en santé (CNFS) on a range of projects to support foreign-trained healthcare professionals and help internationally educated immigrants find work in francophone

minority communities. For instance, Collège Boréal provides skills upgrading to foreign-trained francophone nurses. As stated by an official from Collège Éducacentre,

... [W]hen we welcome immigrants into a situation where we can give them technical and professional training, as well as training and information on working in Canada, such as when they enter the economic system, the labour market, they will have a better chance of succeeding.²⁹

The public hearings highlighted the importance of finding practical, concrete solutions to the problems surrounding the recognition of foreign credentials. Some witnesses recommended that the government work with other francophone countries³⁰ or with Quebec³¹ to harmonize practices. Others recommended a comparative study of education standards in the French and Anglo-Saxon systems.³² A CIC official acknowledged that the federal government has a facilitation role to play by working with the provinces, territories and professional associations.³³ He added that there are partnerships in place to support immigrants, such as by helping them identify what training is required and where to obtain it.³⁴ In March 2014, the federal and provincial/territorial ministers of immigration endorsed a settlement plan that includes measures for recognizing foreign qualifications.³⁵

2.1.1.3 Destination Canada

Destination Canada is a job fair that encourages francophone foreign workers to immigrate to Canada. An annual event is organized by the Embassy of Canada in France, with support from CIC and other partners, to facilitate recruitment of these immigrants. The next event will take place in November 2014. The countries currently targeted by Destination Canada are France, Belgium and Tunisia. A CIC evaluation in July 2012 said there is interest in expanding the program to other francophone countries.³⁶ The evaluators presented the following finding:

... [O]f all French-speaking newcomers who settled in FMCs between 2003 and 2011, approximately 40% came from the sub-Saharan African region, which is not targeted by Destination Canada's activities.³⁷

Permanent positions were created in Dakar with funding from the <u>Roadmap for Canada's</u> <u>Official Languages 2013–2018</u> to coordinate CIC's efforts in nearly 20 African countries.³⁸ CIC is also looking at expanding recruitment efforts to other francophone countries using web conferences or social media.³⁹ As well, the government made the following commitment with respect to Destination Canada:

Spending on overseas activities will be increased to allow for an expansion of Destination Canada to include more job fairs and targeted promotion and recruitment events with employers to reach a broader pool of potential French-speaking immigrants. Promotion and recruitment activities abroad will be focused on the needs of employers with operations in French-speaking minority communities.⁴⁰

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration recognized the benefits of Destination Canada in connection with the current reforms:

Through these job fairs, we help connect French-speaking or bilingual skilled workers with employers across Canada. Not only will this help ensure that our immigration system is supporting Canada's economic growth, it will also help sustain and strengthen minority francophone communities all across the country.⁴¹

Most of the witnesses spoke positively about this initiative for recruiting francophone skilled immigrants. Over ten years, attendance grew from 300 to 3,700 candidates and all provinces and territories were involved, except for Nunavut. One immigrant living in Saskatchewan praised the federal government for taking part in the initiative and spoke about its cascade effect on other stakeholders: the provinces, employers and communities. Francophone colleges see it as a way to recruit a greater number of international students. Nevertheless, the July 2012 evaluation on behalf of CIC recommended that steps be taken to promote the permanent settlement of francophone newcomers to Canada by more closely linking recruitment activities to the selection process. Exploratory trips may be one measure to consider.

Candidates and employers incur minimal costs to take part in Destination Canada.⁴⁷ There used to be memoranda of understanding with the provinces, territories and community organizations to financially support their participation. In April 2012, as part of the Strategic and Operating Review, CIC announced that it was ending this support. Francophone organizations condemned these cuts, which prevented delegates from Newfoundland⁴⁸ and Manitoba⁴⁹ from participating because of a lack of funding. A representative from Alberta saw a contradiction between these cuts and the commitments to Destination Canada taken in the *Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018*.⁵⁰ In his annual report, the Commissioner of Official Languages said that he was investigating complaints received about these cuts.⁵¹

2.1.1.4 Provincial Nominee Program

The increasingly popular Provincial Nominee Program has a proven track record in several provinces and territories. The program's potential for supporting the growth of official language minority communities was unforeseen. For example, one immigrant who appeared before the Senate Committee was recruited as a Manitoba nominee and received orientation services from the francophone community; she volunteered with the community and is now working in a field similar to the one she was trained for abroad.⁵²

This program is supposed to include provisions to foster the development of official language minority communities. According to a 2011 evaluation, these provisions have had a limited impact so far.⁵³ The President of the FCFA said that in many provinces where this program is in place, the promotion of francophone and Acadian communities is not guaranteed.⁵⁴ There is a simple reason for this: not all provincial/territorial governments see it as a priority. Based on 2011 data, only three provinces and territories have identified it as such.⁵⁵

By the end of the year, part of the Provincial Nominee Program will be managed by the new Express Entry system. It is therefore expected that applications to attract skilled immigrants in the regions will be processed more quickly. However, some witnesses did point out that the francophone immigrant quotas identified through the program are not large enough to meet the need.⁵⁶

2.1.1.5 Francophone Significant Benefit

Another program more directly affecting francophone and Acadian communities, the Francophone Significant Benefit Program, was created to attract more francophone workers outside Quebec. It provided temporary work permits in specialized fields and waived requirements for a Labour Market Opinion, thereby speeding up the immigration process. The program fast-tracked applications under certain economic class programs outside Quebec.

Many witnesses appearing before the Senate Committee praised the Francophone Significant Benefit program, and the President of the FCFA had this to say about it:

It is definitely positive, and it speeds up the process for employers who want to hire francophone immigrants in the provinces and territories outside Quebec.⁵⁷

According to a CIC foreign recruitment official, work permits under this program are valid for up to two years and are renewable and allow candidates to transition to permanent residence.⁵⁸ One official from the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité (RDÉE) said that this program has been used to encourage employers to recruit in francophone countries, although she did acknowledge that they need assistance with the process and that there needs to be the resources to do this.⁵⁹ According to one representative from Alberta, it would be worthwhile extending this exemption to other occupational categories.⁶⁰

It was not until its public hearings had concluded that the Senate Committee learned the Francophone Significant Benefit Program had come to an end on September 30, 2014.

2.1.2 The Express Entry system

By the end of this year, immigrants will be able to enter Canada through the Express Entry system, which is based on systems already in place in New Zealand and Australia. It will allow immigrants to express an interest in coming to Canada. Candidates with attributes that meet employers' needs will then be invited to apply for permanent residence. Applications will be made online and include information on the language skills of immigrants interested in settling in Canada. According to preliminary analyses, it appears that this new system will help cut processing times for applications from skilled workers and better respond to the labour market needs in various regions across the country.

The Express Entry system is one of the changes to the immigration system that has attracted the most attention from researchers and community stakeholders. Once the system is implemented, employers will be urged to play a key role in recruiting newcomers. There is some concern that there will be too much focus on selecting anglophone candidates. The message was clear: it will take work to raise employer awareness of francophone and bilingual candidates. As stated in a 2013 study:

It will be necessary to approach Anglophone employers to select French-speaking immigrants. The Francophone market alone will not be able to absorb all French-speaking immigrants. ⁶¹

A francophone representative from Newfoundland added that anglophone employers are reluctant to recruit francophone immigrants unless they receive support from provincial and community partners.⁶²

The FCFA said that persuasion is needed on two levels. First, employers need to be assured that immigrants who settle in minority communities are generally bilingual, and that language training is available for those who are not; and second, they need to be made aware that there are francophone immigration networks to provide support to families. One researcher said that further research would be useful to assess the impact of such a measure on communities and to allow them to benefit from it. Another researcher has already predicted that there will be changes in immigration source countries. He called the Express Entry system a powerful tool for francophone and Acadian communities that will allow them to play a proactive role.

also highlighted the work companies are doing to fulfill a social responsibility to these communities by targeting countries where there are francophone and bilingual workers.⁶⁷

While the FCFA acknowledged the potential of such a measure, it had two comments to make: first, it highlighted the importance of including a component to ensure that communities' needs are recognized; and second, it expressed the communities' desire to help develop the tool. Other witnesses also came out in favour of including a francophone component. A brief submitted to the Senate Committee expressed technical concerns about the new system:

... [T]he FCFA and other FMC stakeholders have expressed concerns about whether Francophone candidates will be able to get into the pool of candidates. This concern is primarily based on the difficulties associated with getting foreign credentials recognized ... Therefore, it is likely that the requirement to provide proof that credentials have been assessed at the first stage of the process prevents a large number of potential French-speaking immigrants from submitting an EOI form and joining the pool of qualified candidates. ⁷⁰

A francophone representative from Alberta was rather pessimistic:

We feel that the important role employers are offered to play in the selection of immigrants, coupled with the major involvement provinces and territories [will] have in this file — and none of this is subject to language obligations — could dilute the federal government's commitments toward official language minority communities.⁷¹

The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration offered reassurances:

... [I]t is our hope that this flexible system will also benefit our francophone minority communities.⁷²

In March 2014, the federal and provincial/territorial immigration ministers agreed to collaborate on building the system.⁷³ A CIC foreign recruitment official said that Destination Canada will help make Express Entry successful by attracting economic immigrants who meet the needs of the Canadian labour market.⁷⁴ He mentioned that this was a responsibility shared by the government, employers and francophone communities.⁷⁵ Another CIC official said that the system's launch will make it easier to recognize the minimum requirements for a given profession.⁷⁶ However, one researcher expressed concerns that employers will have too much influence over the new system and recommended that CIC carefully monitor its implementation.⁷⁷

2.1.3 Achieving a coordinated approach

In general, witnesses believed that sharing best practices and coordinating stakeholder participation were crucial for successfully recruiting, receiving, integrating and retaining immigrants. The need for the national coordination of francophone immigration was also highlighted in a CIC evaluation in July 2012.⁷⁸ For some, such as one francophone representative from Ontario, this approach must be part of a more comprehensive action plan covering not only immigration, but also such areas as health and language training.⁷⁹

The 2006 <u>Strategic Plan To Foster Immigration To Francophone Minority Communities</u> was prepared in collaboration with federal, provincial/territorial and community partners. Several of the objectives identified in the plan were partly or wholly the responsibility of partners outside CIC. This would appear to make it crucial to take a coordinated approach. This was

acknowledged by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.⁸⁰ However, witnesses stressed that such a strategy must consider the specific needs of the regions.⁸¹

In November 2013, the federal Commissioner of Official Languages indicated that he planned to look into the issue of immigration in francophone communities together with his provincial counterparts from New Brunswick and Ontario. In spring 2014, the Commissioner of Official Languages for New Brunswick subsequently recommended that a framework agreement be adopted by the federal and New Brunswick governments to promote francophone immigration to the province. The testimony heard by the Senate Committee indicates that there is a need for more federal-provincial cooperation to support immigration to minority communities.

2.1.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Given that immigration is a shared jurisdiction, most of the witnesses stressed the importance of coordination. Governments are increasingly looking to economic immigration as a way to fill labour needs and support population growth. The federal government has a role to play in impressing on stakeholders the importance of **supporting the growth of official language minority communities through immigration**. This objective offers both economic and demographic benefits by promoting the arrival of a skilled workforce that meets labour market needs, is proficient in either official language and helps to renew the populations of certain regions. This calls for a **coordinated national strategy** that includes all stakeholders and is flexible enough to **take into account the unique characteristics of each region**. In order for the federal government to achieve its objectives, it must first **identify the roles and responsibilities of the various partners**: federal departments, the provinces and territories, municipalities, professional associations, schools and postsecondary institutions, service providers, employers and community organizations. It must then act in **consultation** with official language minority communities.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 1

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in cooperation with all of its partners and in consultation with official language minority communities, quickly develop a coordinated national strategy to support the development of these communities through immigration. This strategy must identify the roles and responsibilities of the various partners and be flexible enough to take into account the unique characteristics of each region.

Foreign credential recognition is a long-standing immigration problem and still requires considerable attention. Francophone and Acadian communities have expressed concerns about the ability of francophone immigrants to be included in the pool of candidates in the Express Entry system. It is important that the federal government take action to prevent francophone skilled workers from being excluded from the new system. In light of the system's imminent launch, the government must act quickly in cooperation with its partners and in consultation with the communities.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 2

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in cooperation with all of its partners and in consultation with francophone and Acadian communities, ensure that francophone immigrants will be able to register in the pool of qualified candidates in the Express Entry system without hindering the recognition of their foreign credentials.

Based on the evidence received, the federal government must take **positive measures to support francophone immigration**. These measures could take the form of targeted recruitment in francophone countries. In addition, the Minister stated that he will hold consultations later this fall with francophone and Acadian communities. One of the goals of these meetings will be to discuss measures to encourage immigration to minority communities. It is essential for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration to take advantage of these consultations to work with francophone and Acadian communities and identify positive measures to support immigration to these communities.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 3

That the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration take advantage of the consultations to be held this fall with francophone and Acadian communities to identify, in cooperation with them, positive measures to support immigration to their communities. That the Minister pay special attention to the following positive measure:

(a) recruitment initiatives targeting francophone countries.

2.2 Moving from a reactive to a proactive role

In light of the recent changes to the immigration system, official language minority communities need to mount a charm offensive to persuade newcomers to settle there. To achieve the desired results, communities will have to invest directly in recruitment, implement a proactive strategy, and be able to access the resources required.

2.2.1 Communities and immigrant recruitment

Witnesses informed the Senate Committee that francophone and Acadian communities will need to be proactive so as not to miss the opportunity to recruit more French-speaking immigrants. According to a 2013 study, the changes to the immigration system generally represent a positive transformation for these communities. ⁸⁴ It is expected that they will adapt to the changes and take part in recruitment. As well, the government is expected to come up with strategies to promote life in minority communities abroad and to consult them on their needs.

2.2.1.1 Consultation

When discussing the development of official language minority communities, the issue of consultation is crucial. Support for immigration has a direct influence on community vitality. According to the Commissioner of Official Languages, the communities need to be consulted in order to identify their needs with respect to recruiting, receiving and settling newcomers. Some of them are concerned about the recent changes and would like to see greater emphasis on community vitality. During her appearance before the Senate Committee, the President of the FCFA discussed the new Express Entry system, indicating that she wanted input into developing the tool. The felt the same way about all new immigration initiatives, which must include positive measures targeting francophone immigration.

... that francophone minority communities be consulted regarding the changes to the immigration system, including those already in place and those that are still to come, with a view to maintaining an approach designed by and for the communities.⁸⁹

The idea of "by and for francophones" was mentioned a number of times by several witnesses. In order to seize the opportunities available and ensure that the measures in place address their needs, the communities really do have to take part in the process. In a brief submitted to the Senate Committee, the FCFA wrote that there have not been any studies of how the recent changes affect the communities. ⁹⁰

2.2.1.2 Outreach tours

The President of the FCFA said that few employers are aware of the help and support available from communities through francophone immigration networks. For this reason, in 2013 and 2014, the FCFA and its partners organized outreach tours to make employers aware of the benefits of recruiting bilingual skilled foreign workers. Various issues were raised during these tours, and initiatives such as the Francophone Significant Benefit Program were emphasized. Francophone and Acadian communities know that they need to work with the provinces and territories, employers and municipalities in order to promote francophone immigration and engage these stakeholders in the issue. 92

The RDÉE has also been working with employers to encourage them to hire immigrants. It supports them at every stage of the recruitment process, from posting the job offer to actively searching for candidates, gives them access to its network of international partners and assists with professional integration in francophone and Acadian communities. It developed an employers' guide to promote the recruitment of francophone international candidates. It also took part in Destination Canada activities to help with succession planning for small businesses in francophone communities. ⁹³ The upcoming launch of the Express Entry system prompted one RDÉE official to express interest in supporting employers to encourage them to hire from other francophone immigration pools, such as Africa. ⁹⁴

Other initiatives have also been developed locally. In Saskatoon, various partners are involved in the annual newcomers appreciation day:

The mayor of the City of Saskatoon attends every year, as does the provincial immigration minister. Workshops are held on that appreciation day, and employers are invited to attend. We work with the Conseil de la coopération de la Saskatchewan, which is a francophone organization. The idea is for employers to network, because we know that is not where newcomers will find a job. We must make employers aware that they do not have to be afraid of hiring someone who is francophone and does not have Canadian experience yet. ⁹⁵

These initiatives tend to show that networking, cooperation and awareness raising are essential for successful integration.

2.2.2 Available resources

During his appearance before the Senate Committee, the Commissioner of Official Languages said that minority communities often lack the resources to do an adequate job. ⁹⁶ A representative of an Ontario francophone organization criticized the red tape involved in CIC-managed programs, and eligibility criteria that are not suited to the needs of francophone women who immigrated to her region. ⁹⁷ One francophone representative from Alberta raised another issue surrounding the intake of bilingual immigrants whose first language is not French:

... [I]mmigrants who speak both official languages, French and English, are considered anglophone when they arrive in Canada and are treated as such. So our community has difficulty getting to people like that because they are steered towards services in English rather than those offered by our communities. For me, that poses a problem. ... I think that we should treat the citizen who arrives knowing both languages with respect. He should be given, at a minimum, the choice of receiving services in French. 98

In order to work with immigrants effectively, francophone and Acadian communities are making use of their francophone immigration networks and increasingly becoming directly involved in immigrant recruitment. As for Quebec's anglophone communities, they have very few resources to work with. They operate in an environment where they constantly have to persuade the government that their work is worthwhile.

2.2.2.1 Francophone immigration networks

Currently there are 13 francophone immigration networks (FINs) located across the country, except in Nunavut. In November 2013, the FCFA and the FINs organized the first National Francophone Immigration Week, which was attended by the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration. The FINs provide support to immigrants and their families, as well as their host communities. Community stakeholders consider them quite successful. The federal government recognizes the value of these networks and pledged continued support for them in its *Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages* 2013–2018.

A CIC evaluation states that the financial stability of the FINs is uncertain and that occasionally their activities are poorly aligned with national objectives. ¹⁰¹ According to a brief submitted by the FCFA to the Senate Committee,

Recent changes to the immigration system mean that the FINs are more important than ever in ensuring the effectiveness and cohesion of community initiatives to support French-speaking immigrants. ¹⁰²

The resources available to FINs help them build their capacity to deliver services in the minority language. However, delivering services of equal quality in English and French is compromised when the resources are inadequate. Some witnesses felt that cooperation with anglophone organizations needs to be encouraged. Others recommended that the services be better grouped to make them more effective. Still others claimed that only those organizations attuned to the realities of francophone communities should be involved, and that a separate funding model needs to be devised to foster better integration into the local community.

In order to maintain the results achieved to date, it is important to focus on sharing best practices and to facilitate coordination among established networks. In other words, it is worth ensuring that departmental priorities, the means to implement them and the needs on the ground are more closely aligned. This is what led to the creation of the National Community Table on Francophone Immigration, which coordinates immigration on a national level. According to the FCFA:

The Table has a mandate to, among other things, identify the challenges and priorities related to Francophone immigration, ensure that work across the country is interconnected and create a link between communities and the governments at the national level. 106

The President of the National Community Table discussed the FINs' critical role and pleaded to have them strengthened:

If francophone immigration networks are to continue fulfilling their mandate and tackling the challenges under the new immigration system, communities and governments must work together to strengthen the networks by investing in supporting tools and mechanisms, and in reception and settlement capacity.¹⁰⁷

The collaborative structure made up of the federal government and francophone communities was recently simplified. The Citizenship and Immigration Canada – Francophone Minority Communities Committee (the "CIC – FMCs Committee"), which used to have about 60 members, now has 15. This has streamlined the structure. The CIC – FMCs Committee met for the first time on 2 December 2013. The government established an official languages secretariat. That said, in its brief, the FCFA issued a few caveats:

As the department responsible for Francophone immigration, CIC will have a role to play in ensuring that departments and governments work together closely and that there is a sustained commitment from the federal departments involved as well as all of the provincial and territorial governments. [Canadian Heritage] is responsible for coordinating official languages overall, so it will have to continue to support CIC as it works with other governments and departments. ¹⁰⁸

In short, the new governance model will be aimed at promoting the work already done and finding innovative ways to attract immigrants to minority communities. Some witnesses told the Senate Committee that these platforms are ideal for building research capacity and fostering greater, more transparent information sharing that enhances accountability to communities.¹⁰⁹

2.2.2.2 Focusing on recruitment

For best results, communities should invest directly in recruiting and taking in immigrants. This is consistent with the findings of a 2013 study that argues for a proactive strategy to be implemented abroad and in Canada. 110

Many witnesses gave the example of Manitoba, whose success was explained by the fact there is both political and community will. The province has an excellent immigration retention rate, particularly when it comes to its Nominee Program. It works closely with francophone organizations, such as the Société franco-manitobaine, to engage in targeted recruitment and retain francophone immigrants. The organization developed <u>L'Accueil francophone</u> [IN FRENCH ONLY], a settlement support initiative for francophone newcomers that welcomes them at the airport and helps them find housing, register their children in francophone schools, take language training and find work.

In April 2012, the federal government announced plans to resume control over settlement support programs in Manitoba, without notifying the provincial government beforehand. During his appearance before the Senate Committee, the Commissioner of Official Languages discussed Manitoba's efforts surrounding the immigration programs:

Premier Selinger of Manitoba, in particular, has complained about that decision because Manitoba has been working hand in hand with Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Société franco-manitobaine for many years to increase francophone immigration. Since the decision, however, there has been a decline in immigration to Manitoba for the first time in many years. ¹¹²

In fact, a new quota was set at 5,000 immigrants, whereas Manitoba was banking on 15,000 to 20,000 newcomers by 2020. This will undoubtedly weaken the Franco-Manitoban community's capacity to attract francophone candidates. Furthermore, under new CIC rules for certifying service providers, <u>L'Accueil francophone</u> [IN FRENCH ONLY] is no longer able to deliver services to international students. These examples illustrate how decisions must include other stakeholders; otherwise, this increases the risk that communities will be affected.

In order to invest their efforts, not only do communities need access to the necessary human and financial resources, but they also need access to up-to-date research so they can better target their activities. A Statistics Canada official said the following during his appearance before the Senate Committee in May 2013:

... [C]ommunity stakeholders recently expressed significant interest in Statistics Canada conducting a survey of French-language immigrants outside Quebec to enhance their capacity to meet the challenges they will face in the coming decades.¹¹⁵

As well, an RDÉE official recognized the need to enlist the industry sectors with strong labour recruitment potential.¹¹⁶

Witnesses also spoke about the lack of French-language pre-departure programs in certain countries. They recommended creating these kinds of programs, run by the federal government, to more effectively help French-speaking immigrants interested in settling in Canada. ¹¹⁷ In its brief, the FCFA discussed a pilot project carried out in summer 2013 to inform immigrants of French-language services and the existence of FINs prior to their arrival in Canada. The FCFA stressed that there were not any permanent measures in place to ensure that newcomers are connected with these services. ¹¹⁸ A francophone representative from Ontario stressed the need for francophone or bilingual agents who are aware of the French-speaking communities to be present at Canadian ports of entry, and made the point that francophone community organizations and CIC need to work together once these immigrants arrive. ¹¹⁹

2.2.2.3 Anglophone communities: A special case

Quebec's anglophone communities have limited resources when it comes to immigration. CIC support is restricted to research, and the provincial government funds only services in French. A few municipalities, including Québec City, have supported the work of anglophone organizations in recent years. However, as stated by the Executive Director of VEQ, this support remains tenuous:

If we can't renew the partnership with the City of Quebec, many of our actual services will have to be abandoned or will be reduced so dramatically that we will be back to where we

were 10 or 15 years ago when we were stuck in a passive approach as opposed to a really proactive approach where we can do services for people even before they arrive and obviously multiply the number of services that we are able to offer to immigrants and migrants. 120

Anglophone communities also recognize the importance of being proactive. However, they have much less access to funding than francophone minority communities. The few resources available make it all the more important for anglophone communities to work directly with employers. Support for research continues to be invaluable in order to help these communities identify their needs. Anglophone communities would like to see a study done of VEQ's current practices to identify successes and support their work with various levels of government.¹²¹

In December 2013, the QCGN Board of Directors passed a resolution regarding the research priorities of Quebec's anglophone communities related to immigration. The resolution identified six research priorities and three principles for conducting them:

- Tie research to objectives that provide a concrete and direct benefit to Quebec's anglophone communities.
- Support research that strengthens the communities by fostering collaboration, networking, the sharing of best practices and resource leveraging.
- Focus on research into economic improvement, family support and the integration of English-speaking newcomers to Quebec through anglophone community institutions.¹²³

The anglophone communities want to encourage the Quebec government, with federal support, to work with anglophone organizations in order to identify the resources available in the regions and help Quebec achieve its immigration objectives. At this time, neither the federal nor provincial government shows any sign of openness in this respect. An integrated approach is desirable, according to anglophone representatives.¹²⁴

2.2.3 Charm offensive: Settling in minority communities

While immigration to minority-language communities involves small numbers, its impact on official language minority communities can be very large. This is why these communities are forging various partnerships and honing strategies to attract candidates who could help enhance their vitality. One researcher so aptly illustrated this point for the Senate Committee:

When we put the economic argument to employers, describing multiplier effects and the impact of immigration in general and of francophone immigration in particular, we are able to develop arguments that get through to employers because that family of three or four that arrives in the community generates economic activity. The family buys a house, the children go to school, and they all use public and private services and generate a broader economic activity. ¹²⁵

The Commissioner of Official Languages drew the Senate Committee's attention to the dual challenge facing francophone minority communities:

I believe that, on the one hand, the consensus among the minority communities is that their future depends on their ability to become immigrant host communities, but one of the challenges is also that not all francophone immigrants want to become members of a minority community and join in the demands, struggles and history of the province's minority community. 126

This dual challenge of regionalizing immigration and integrating immigrants into minority communities was also highlighted by two researchers in a 2013 study. ¹²⁷ According to one of the researchers,

... [I]t is becoming clear that immigration is a community affair. All the higher-level governments can do is establish the general frameworks and selection mechanism, but immigrant recruitment, reception and retention are done at the local level. 128

This is why some witnesses spoke about a charm offensive, "grand seduction", to attract immigrants to their communities. This calls for more direct collaboration with municipalities and employers in the regions. In order to successfully encourage newcomers to come and stay, they first need to find employment.¹²⁹ There also have to be services in French in the host community.¹³⁰ The FCFA referred to an unexpected impact of the new approach to immigration:

More and more French-speaking immigrants are moving to emerging cities or regions where there are considerable labour needs, but where there are few or no reception services or other [f]rancophone institutions. That is the case in Humboldt, Saskatchewan, or in Brooks, Alberta ... [A] request may be made for a French-language school in a given community because [f]rancophone immigration generated a population of school-age [f]rancophones. 131

Immigrants believe that francophone communities have an obligation to be honest with them: the communities need to tell them about the challenges of living in a minority-language community, 132 something representatives of francophone organizations are aware of. 133 Lastly, the evidence revealed that in addition to employment, social networks help keep immigrants in minority communities.

2.2.3.1 Linguistic conditions as seen from abroad

According to the evidence heard, which is consistent with recent research, language is one of the most important issues for immigrants who are looking for work. How immigrants perceive Canada's linguistic realities prior to their arrival influences the extent to which they integrate and how successful they are once they arrive. If newcomers are unaware of minority communities, they will not be looking to settle in them. According to most of the immigrants appearing before the Senate Committee, what brought them to a francophone minority community was secondary mobility, driven by their desire to learn English or find work.

As pointed out by two researchers in a 2013 study, the Canadian Francophonie needs a higher profile. Destination Canada would seem to be the ideal vehicle for promoting Canada's linguistic realities and increasing the number of potential French-speaking immigrants. On this subject, one immigrant who arrived in Canada in 2007 and is now about to receive her Canadian citizenship spoke about an idealized view of Canada and how it gave some candidates false expectations. One immigrant to Ontario said that he had to adjust his expectations once he arrived in Canada. A refugee from Colombia, now well-integrated into New Brunswick's Acadian community, was not made aware of Canada's linguistic realities prior to his arrival in the country. A CIC foreign recruitment official said that this information is indeed given to Destination Canada participants. This shows a disconnect between expectations and reality.

Community representatives rely on other organizations in the immigration system to promote francophone and Acadian communities as a place to call home. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration acknowledged that he has a role to play in combatting misperceptions.¹³⁹ His department has already done work in this area.¹⁴⁰ The FCFA's Director General said that

Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada needs to work more closely with her organization. The Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages also recognized the need to promote official languages abroad. One researcher sees promotion as a key factor in attracting immigrants to the regions. This was echoed by the President of the National Community Table on Francophone Immigration.

2.2.3.2 Special needs of certain immigrant classes

Recent studies have shown that, in addition to economic immigrants, francophone minority communities are welcoming a high number of refugees, temporary workers and international students. However, immigrants in the latter two immigrant classes are not eligible for settlement services or language training, which creates challenges. An FCFA representative told the Senate Committee that CIC appears to be somewhat open to exploring avenues for extending these services. However, in the meantime, a number of these immigrants turn to anglophone communities for the services they need. As one Acadian representative said,

... [W]hen people are welcomed in English, that unfortunately helps accelerate assimilation in regions already very much afflicted by that problem. 146

Witnesses said it was important to work with the families accompanying the newcomers. While spouses and children are included in the immigration process, their needs are often overlooked when too much of the focus is on economic aspects. For instance, minority schools work hard to integrate these children into the minority school system. Successful integration also depends on the ability to reach out to parents. However, this can sometimes be difficult when the children are learning in a language their parents do not speak. Attention also needs to be paid to children who are not of school age or do not manage to integrate properly into the school system. They should be allowed to obtain a work permit so that they can work just like their parents. This would also apply to spouses who hold an open work permit and should have access to employability services.

Francophone women immigrants have special needs, as pointed out by one representative from an Ontario francophone organization, since the current system tends to make them more vulnerable to victimization and increases their risk of violence. Similarly, welcoming a skilled worker does not require the same kinds of resources as welcoming a refugee, who very often has lived through traumatic experiences before coming to Canada. Refugees have a more limited knowledge of their new home country. The services they need once they arrive will probably be different. This was the experience of one immigrant invited to appear before the Senate Committee. Senate Committee.

Not having access to services in French makes these populations all the more vulnerable. The Commissioner of Official Languages said that they require support tailored to their needs, particularly when they are welcomed into minority communities. This was the view of one immigrant to Saskatchewan. A permanent resident of the same province also suggested speeding up the family reunification process for protected individuals. A francophone representative from Alberta recommended that humanitarian class immigrants settled in francophone minority communities be entitled to residence instead of being deported.

2.2.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The vitality of official language minority communities depends on their commitment to their own development. A number of witnesses referred to the concept of "by and for" francophones. The public hearings revealed that these communities need to move from a reactive to a proactive role and have the necessary resources to assume their rightful place in the constantly changing immigration system. It is crucial to provide ongoing, enhanced support for francophone immigration networks, provide support for French-language pre-departure services, promote the communities abroad, and consider the special needs of refugees, temporary workers and international students.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 4

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada must, in consultation with francophone and Acadian communities, maintain an approach designed by and for the communities when it comes to current and future changes. That, as part of the consultations to be held this fall with francophone and Acadian communities, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration pay special attention to the following positive measures:

- (a) providing ongoing and enhanced support for francophone immigration networks;
- (b) providing support for French-language pre-departure services;
- (c) promoting official language minority communities abroad; and
- (d) considering the special needs of refugees, temporary workers and international students who settle in francophone minority communities.

Before the communities can **capitalize on the recent changes**, they must be able to identify best practices and assess the impact of measures already in place. In other words, they need to be given the means to achieve the desired outcomes by basing their efforts on **solid data**. In addition to the work carried out by the CIC – FMCs Committee and the National Community Table on Francophone Immigration, Statistics Canada could certainly help update this knowledge by conducting a survey on the issue.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 5

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada fund a Statistics Canada survey on French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec and on English-speaking immigrants in Quebec so that official language minority communities can be better equipped to deal with the immigration challenges they will be facing over the coming years.

CIC also has a responsibility toward **Quebec's anglophone communities** under Part VII of the <u>Official Languages Act</u> and section 3 of the <u>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act</u>. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration acknowledged his responsibilities in this area, although he did not make any commitments other than to fund research projects. While anglophone community organizations praised this commitment, they specified the type of projects they wanted. It is important **that federally funded research be aligned with their needs**.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 6

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada take into consideration the priorities identified by Quebec's anglophone communities in order to conduct immigration research projects that will provide a concrete and direct benefit to these communities and will build their capacity to economically, socially and culturally integrate English-speaking newcomers.

2.3 Official language learning

There was a lot of interest in official language learning and language testing as part of the modernization of the immigration system. Several recent studies found that proficiency in the official languages is a key determinant in the integration of immigrants and that it clearly strengthens their active engagement in Canadian social life. Language testing, access to language training and the role of postsecondary institutions are three key themes on which the Senate Committee focused.

2.3.1 Language skills

The federal government took regulatory action to strengthen the selection criteria regarding language. The purpose behind this move is to encourage newcomers to gain the language skills they need more quickly. The public hearings revealed how important it is for newcomers settling in minority communities to become proficient in the majority language.

2.3.1.1 The need to learn English in francophone minority communities

According to a representative of a francophone organization in Ontario, language is one of the biggest challenges to overcome when trying to access services. This is consistent with a 2012 study of immigrants' language skills and social integration in Canada. An official from Statistics Canada said that francophone immigrants who do not speak English have an unemployment rate that is three percentage points higher, despite having a high level of education.

The Senate Committee invited immigrants who chose to settle in francophone minority communities, but whose mother tongue is not necessarily French, to speak about their experiences. Despite having different immigrant experiences, every single one of the witnesses referred to the importance of learning English. The public hearings revealed that English is the key to economic integration, while French is essential for social and cultural integration.

This is why the focus in francophone and Acadian communities is increasingly on learning both official languages. During her appearance before the Senate Committee, the President of the FCFA said the following:

We know that francophone newcomers will need English training in the provinces, because they will have to go to the bank and get their groceries and so on in English. However, we also know that we need to make sure that French training is offered consistently, whether it be for anglophones or people who do not already speak French, because if not, this money will not benefit all of our communities. ¹⁵⁹

An official from a francophone college held a similar view, proposing to expand access to courses in both official languages for immigrants through a combined CLIC/LINC program. One researcher stated that a learning program which is based on both official languages provides an opportunity to learn about the culture of the host community. These kinds of initiatives would promote the economic integration of newcomers in English while developing their social networks in French. In a way, they would create gateways between the majority and minority communities. The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was receptive to the idea. However, a representative from a francophone college was skeptical that it would be implemented at all, given the lack of funding available to create a combined program.

2.3.1.2 The need to learn French in anglophone minority communities

In anglophone minority communities, integrating immigrants into the francophone majority is extremely important. Anglophone communities know this and are interested in informing employers that they can benefit from the bilingualism of newcomers. They want the provincial government to see them as "part of the solution not part of the problem." This is why they emphasize French-language learning as a key integration factor, while striving to deliver English-language services to newcomers in sensitive areas such as employment services. However, a QCGN official criticized certain aspects of the language training currently available in Quebec:

... [T]he level of French training being provided by the Government of Quebec is not sufficient for immigrants to economically integrate into their specific areas of expertise. ¹⁶⁶

One researcher echoed this view, pointing out that most Quebec companies give priority to francophone employees, making it difficult to attract English-speaking immigrants through employment.¹⁶⁷

2.3.2 Access to language training

In a 2012 study, two researchers examined official language learning as a factor influencing the economic and social integration of immigrants. They studied the approaches used to allow immigrants learn official languages in the Canadian context. They noted disparities in program availability across the country, highlighting the difficulties some immigrants experienced when learning English. They said that while there is a steadily growing number of temporary workers, immigrants in this class are ineligible for CLIC/LINC.

These learning difficulties stem from language instruction methods that do not allow students to develop general skills, including those that immigrants need to find work and successfully integrate into the workplace. Another is a lack of opportunities for immigrants to interact with English or French speakers as well as limited access to cultural knowledge, which then results in weaker participation in Canadian society. One researcher told the Senate Committee that

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immigrants taking language training need to understand the culture associated with this language in order to fully integrate into the labour market; they believe that changes to CLIC/LINC are necessary given the current situation:

Skilled workers will have the formal language but not the pragmatics and there will be serious issues in the workplace because newcomers will not have had any of the diversity training, the pragmatics and the Canadian sensibilities that are developed in their language courses that are currently available. 169

Many immigrants see government-offered language training as indispensable to proper economic and social integration, as stated by one permanent resident of Saskatchewan:

The program given to immigrants to learn one of Canada['s] official languages is a good thing that immigration can offer to newcomers because it removes barriers to employment and facilitates the social integration of these people, me included. 170

This candidate was able to go from level 0 to level 6 in three years. ¹⁷¹ However, the opportunities available to newcomers vary depending on where they live. In francophone minority communities, access to language training remains a challenge. Witnesses told the Senate Committee about disparities in program availability across the country. Some regions have longer waiting lists than others, according to an immigrant to Northern Ontario. ¹⁷² One researcher recommended extending language training to other immigrant classes, such as temporary foreign workers. ¹⁷³ This view was shared by many francophone representatives. The FCFA said that immigrant language skills assessment was not available in French in some provinces, which violates the principle of providing services of equal quality. ¹⁷⁴ This is the case in Newfoundland. ¹⁷⁵ In other provinces such as Manitoba, training costs are seen as too high. ¹⁷⁶ The FCFA believes that additional positive measures are required. ¹⁷⁷

According to a 2013 study, the newly implemented reforms are expected to lead to a decline in language training.¹⁷⁸ In the meantime, the federal government acknowledges the need to invest in this area, as illustrated by the following remarks from the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages:

There is no doubt about it, our official languages are a tool for integration and cohesion in our society. This is why our government invests in language training for newcomers ... Knowing French and English will help them become part of the labour market as well as our communities. Requiring immigrants to know French or English is not only in the interests of Canadians, it is in the interests of the immigrants.¹⁷⁹

Given the commitments set out in the <u>Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013–2018</u>, francophone and Acadian communities have stressed the important role that their postsecondary institutions should play in language training for all immigrant classes.

2.3.3 The pivotal role of French-language postsecondary institutions in the new immigration system

The public hearings revealed that postsecondary institutions are being asked to play a leading role in the new immigration system. Recognizing from the outset what the needs are, Frenchlanguage postsecondary institutions have developed programs to attract, welcome and integrate newcomers. Some institutions provide pre-departure briefing services, while others provide skills upgrading or mentoring. Most institutions are equipped to provide language training. Witnesses called for increased capacity and improved infrastructure in Frenchlanguage colleges and universities in order to accommodate this increasingly diverse client base. ¹⁸⁰

Year after year, these institutions bring in a growing number of international students. The number of students and the services provided to them vary by location. According to witnesses, it needs to be acknowledged that international students attending these institutions are a potential source of renewal for francophone and Acadian communities. The focus is steadily shifting toward this type of immigration, as confirmed by one researcher:

We now recognize that one of the reasons for recruiting foreign students is to retain them. This is a very important vehicle for the minority communities because it is a vehicle that we control. We have post-secondary institutions that are capable of recruiting foreign students, of bringing them in and of having them live in our communities for three, four, five or six years before they move on to permanent residence. This is becoming another way to consolidate their emotional attachment to the minority community.¹⁸¹

These students need access to services tailored to their needs as well as to jobs in these communities while studying and after graduation. The President of the FCFA said that having these students work on or off campus would allow them to gain experience and accumulate more points for their application for citizenship. French-language colleges also welcome these changes. 183

In January 2014, the federal government launched its international education strategy with the goal of doubling by 2022 the number of students who choose Canada as a study destination.¹⁸⁴ Similar to what the witnesses told the Senate Committee, this strategy could target students from francophone countries, such as those in Africa. Some expect that international students will be making increasingly greater use of the Canadian Experience Class as a path to permanent residence. This means that mechanisms should be developed to help retain and integrate these students from abroad, according to one francophone representative.¹⁸⁵ Many called for settlement services in French to be made available to these students. The public hearings revealed that French-language postsecondary institutions are prepared for this role.

As for language training for immigrants, many witnesses called for training to be delivered by institutions deeply rooted in the community. The President of the FCFA summed up the situation as follows:

We have institutions. We have colleges. We have post-secondary education, university, adult education, ongoing education. We have institutions and programs in our French communities, and they actually teach English as well in our French communities. So we want this language training to be given through our institutions. ¹⁸⁶

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The Executive Director of the CNFS and the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne (AUFC) shared these views, recognizing that such a strategy would ensure greater cultural integration into minority communities.¹⁸⁷ A number of witnesses believe that this would help retain francophone immigrants.

Given the funding provided in the <u>Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013–2018</u>, it is difficult at this point to accurately identify the criteria for providing language training to economic immigrants. There are also no hints as to how the new rules for selecting service providers will impact foreign credential recognition for immigrants from francophone countries. This is why the President of the FCFA asked

... that measures targeted towards immigration within our communities [be] put in place, including for example access to language training, assessing language skills and recognizing qualifications. ¹⁸⁸

In 2013, the Alliance des établissements postsecondaires de la francophonie canadienne en immigration was created out of a desire to work in partnership to provide a wide variety of training programs and services to skilled workers, international students and French-speaking immigrants. The Senate Committee was presented with five proposed measures to improve immigrant programs and address the needs of a highly skilled bilingual labour force:

... [I]ncreasing the number of language training programs for immigrants and foreign students so that they are accessible and meet Canadian standards; increasing the number of employment-focused programs in colleges and universities to improve the job skills of immigrants and foreign students by forming closer relationships with employers; ensuring that training and employability best practices and approaches are shared; increasing the number of immigrants from the foreign students group and offering them employability programs; and, lastly, increasing the availability and accessibility of French-language orientation services for immigrants and foreign students.¹⁸⁹

A representative from a French-language college in BC identified the kinds of services requiring increased investment:

More specifically, we need to improve services for welcoming immigrants, develop the availability and accessibility of orientation services in French, continue to fund French and English language training programs, including CLIC and LINC, and support recruitment activities by providing a special place for colleges within Destination Canada and in recruitment fairs organized by the Canadian consulates and embassies. ¹⁹⁰

Postsecondary institutions in Canada's francophone communities are aware that they need to work with employers to educate them about the importance of having a bilingual workforce. They need to develop training programs that meet employability, professional transition and cultural adaptation requirements. La Cité collégiale and Collège Boréal were given as examples of institutions that work very closely with employers in their communities.¹⁹¹ An official from Collège Boréal indicated that it plans to work with employers to "get a real commitment from them to hire francophones."¹⁹² A "one-stop shop" model bringing all services together under one roof is being considered.¹⁹³ An official from Collège Éducacentre referred to a structure able to deliver integrated services so that immigrants have a seamless experience.¹⁹⁴

2.3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Several witnesses called for **postsecondary institutions in the Canadian francophonie** to become hubs for official-language instruction for immigrants. The Senate Committee heard that these institutions are the way forward to achieving synergies in delivering services to immigrants. Citizenship and Immigration Canada needs to support these institutions through **targeted positive measures** with respect to language training, language testing, foreign credential recognition and skills upgrading.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 7

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada provide targeted support to postsecondary institutions in the Canadian francophonie for language training, language testing, foreign credential recognition and skills upgrading.

The focus on immigrants' language skills is a good sign, as long as it gives them access to training in the language of their choice, or even in both languages, regardless of the region where they live. Other classes of immigrants, particularly temporary foreign workers and international students, also need to be able to access federally funded language training programs. Access to language training is all the more vital given that the requirements to have sufficient knowledge of the official languages were just extended to individuals 14–18 and to those 55–64 applying for citizenship. The Senate Committee repeatedly questioned the figure of \$120 million that appears in the *Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013–2018*, and its possible use to support language training for immigrants. Not having received any specifics on how the funding will be allocated, the Senate Committee expects that it will be used to promote access to language training programs in either official language in all regions of the country.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 8

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada allow temporary foreign workers and international students to register for its language training programs and that it expand access to these programs in either official language in all regions of Canada.

2.4 Identified targets

In recent years, the federal government and some provincial governments set targets to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants to Canada outside Quebec. Through its public hearings, the Senate Committee sought to find out what action the federal government intends to take in order to achieve these targets.

2.4.1 Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities

In 2003, the <u>Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities</u> set a target of increasing the number of French-speaking immigrants to Canada outside Quebec to 4.4% by 2008. This target was equal to the proportion of francophones in the Canadian population outside Quebec as per the 2001 Census. When it was launched in 2006, the <u>Strategic Plan To Foster Immigration To Francophone Minority Communities</u> lowered the target, giving the government until 2013 to increase the proportion of French-speaking immigrants to Canada outside Quebec to 1.8%, and until 2023 to achieve the initial target of 4.4%.

Data from the 2011 Census show that the interim target was indeed reached, although there is still a way to go before the initial target is reached. A francophone representative from Alberta expressed serious concerns about reaching the initial target. The Strategic Plan expired on 31 March 2013. In his annual report, the Commissioner of Official Languages recommended that

[T]he Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, in cooperation with official language minority communities, provinces, territories and federal institutions, implement a follow-up initiative to the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*, and specify the roles and responsibilities of the various partners, ways of achieving the planned results, and the evaluation and data collection mechanisms.¹⁹⁶

A memo sent to the members of the Senate Committee regarding follow-up to the Commissioner's recommendation states that CIC "does not intend to renew the Strategic Plan. Rather, it plans to concentrate on the objectives in the new Roadmap." 197

2.4.2 Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018

The <u>Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013–2018</u> does not set out any plans to renew the Strategic Plan and related targets. This five-year plan does include a new target of 4% for French-speaking economic immigrants by 2018. In the Roadmap, the government states that CIC will reflect the modernization of the immigration system by focusing on concrete, measurable priorities and increasing the level of recruitment of French-speaking economic immigrants in francophone minority communities.¹⁹⁸ It has not, however, given any indication as to how it plans to reach these targets. The CIC-FMCs Committee's terms of reference adopted in December 2013 refer to the Committee's intention to follow up on the work of the former steering committee and implement the Strategic Plan, while remaining dedicated to achieving the target of 4.4% for French-speaking immigrants by 2023.¹⁹⁹

2.4.3 Achieving results

As recognized by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages in a 2007 report, "setting targets also depends on the ability to identify the initial conditions." In other words, in order to measure the results achieved, it is important to know on which data the analysis is based. The Senate Committee's public hearings revealed that there is reason to wonder whether these targets are achievable. There does not currently appear to be a single validated, universally accepted method for calculating the number of immigrants settling in minority francophone communities. While statistics show that there has been an increase in the number of francophone immigrants to Canada outside Quebec, this figure cannot be accurately measured. According to the CIC evaluation,

... it is highly desirable that all partners working in this area be able to agree on an appropriate measure. ²⁰²

There was no clear indication in the public hearings as to what variables the department uses to calculate the number of French-speaking immigrants to Canada. As pointed out by one Statistics Canada official, the government's targets are not enough to compensate for the decreased demographic weight of francophone and Acadian communities. One professor recommended taking such an approach. The provincial strategies adopted by Manitoba and New Brunswick are designed to help reverse this decline. In order to determine the number of francophone immigrants needed to compensate for demographic losses, a projection study would need to account for such factors as interprovincial migration and an aging population.

There is the additional challenge of harmonizing federal targets with those set by certain provincial governments. Once again, it appears that a coordinated approach involving the various levels of government is crucial in order to achieve the desired results. Another recurrent theme that came up during the public hearings was the need to consult francophone and Acadian communities. It is important for these communities to consolidate and strengthen the reception services already in place in order to continue building on their achievements. The President of the National Community Table on Francophone Immigration believes that we need to look beyond the numbers and encourage cooperation:

We do have targets for francophone immigrants, but I think this goes beyond numbers because the French fact is one of this country's underlying values. ... We all need to work together to ensure their immigration is successful.²⁰⁷

The public hearings showed that the Provincial Nominee Program, the Canadian Experience Class and the Express Entry system are just some of the programs most likely to help increase the number of francophone candidates. How will they help reach the federal government's 4% target? Some of the witnesses wondered how much importance language will have when selecting future candidates.²⁰⁸

2.4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

There is still work to be done before francophone and Acadian communities receive their fair share of immigration. The various immigration system partners must ensure that there is a sufficient number of francophone candidates to be selected and to settle in the anglophone majority provinces. Among the programs the federal government could focus on are the **Provincial Nominee Program** and the **Canadian Experience Class**. The evidence appears to indicate that the francophone immigration quotas are insufficient. The positive impact these programs have on communities very often depends on the goodwill of the provincial/territorial governments to work in partnership with them.

The communities need to have tools and mechanisms together with specific measures and targeted initiatives. This is what is called the **francophone lens**. Such an approach would go hand in hand with the obligations set out in Part VII of the <u>Official Languages Act</u> and would also be applied to the new **Express Entry system** to be launched in the coming months. It is also important for the government to ensure that francophone and Acadian communities participate in developing the tools to support immigration to their communities. This would ensure that all partners are working together to support the federal government in achieving its objectives.

The Senate Committee recommends:

Recommendation 9

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada recognize the following:

- (a) the Provincial Nominee Program and the Canadian Experience Class must attract a sufficient number of francophone immigrants;
- (b) the Express Entry system must include a francophone lens so that francophone and Acadian communities can capitalize on targeted positive measures; and
- (c) these communities must participate in developing the tools to promote immigration to their communities.

"The immigration system is undergoing continual reform and changes continue to be implemented ... While communities have already adapted a significant number of their activities and practices to ensure that they are relevant and effective in the new immigration landscape, governments still have a responsibility to ensure that recent changes to the immigration system are beneficial to [them]."

Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada, *Brief*, 4 April 2014.

Conclusion

Canada's immigration system is undergoing profound, constant change, with a special emphasis on measures for promoting economic immigration, hiring skilled workers and ensuring greater control over language testing of immigrants. The Senate Committee's public hearings were intended to determine what impact these changes could have on Canada's francophone and Acadian minority communities.

The evidence showed that it is difficult for newcomers to integrate when they are unemployed and do not know at least one official language. This is why the federal government has gone to great lengths to make it easy for immigrants to come here and contribute to Canada's economic growth. However, this means having to work with many partners.

In modernizing its immigration system, the federal government must ensure that immigration continues to play a major role in the development of minority francophone communities and contributes to their economic vitality. Like all federal institutions, CIC has the duty to ensure that positive measures are taken to enhance the vitality of Canada's two official language communities and to support and assist their development. The needs of skilled workers must be considered as well as those of temporary foreign workers, international students, refugees and the families they bring with them. Current supports need to be broadened in order to really stimulate the growth of these communities as part of a coordinated national strategy. Greater effort is needed to promote the communities abroad, support French-language pre-departure services and provide ongoing, enhanced support to the structures already in place in minority-language communities.

During the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration's appearance before the Senate Committee, he asked for immigration success stories to be highlighted. Based on the evidence heard, there appear to be a number of success factors at play:

- Community organizations or immigration networks that provide support to newcomers
 once they arrive, and sometimes even before. The newcomers' package and assistance
 with finding housing are examples of successful initiatives. A strong social network appears
 to be critical for minority communities to attract and retain immigrants.
- Provinces and territories that demonstrate a desire to work in partnership with official language minority communities to address their needs and support growth. Political will is key to any success.

- Employers who get involved in networking activities, acknowledge their social responsibility
 to official language minority communities and encourage immigrants to take language
 training or job retraining as needed. In light of the recent reforms, it is critical to focus on the
 power of a skilled, bilingual workforce able to help renew minority communities. "Win-win"
 solutions for both employers and communities need to be found, and time must be taken to
 promote success stories.
- Service providers and municipalities that understand community needs and realities. The
 more they are aware of the challenges involved in immigration to minority communities, the
 better the chances for successful integration and a contribution to the vitality of Canada's
 anglophone and francophone communities.
- Postsecondary institutions that get involved in welcoming and integrating newcomers.
 They need to work together with employers to identify the economic and linguistic needs of newcomers. Institutions in the Canadian francophonie, which are deeply rooted in minority communities, offer interesting possibilities for integration and the long-term development of francophone and Acadian communities.
- A coordinated approach by all immigration system stakeholders to help the federal government achieve its objectives.
- Targeted positive measures that address the needs of official language minority communities are required.

As for Canada's anglophone and francophone communities, they need to capitalize on the reforms in place and seize the opportunity before them to ensure their long-term development. Their work will be helped tremendously if the federal government acts to meet their special needs. In its report, the Senate Committee has therefore presented the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration with a series of recommendations that would ensure full implementation of his linguistic obligations. It is now up to him and his partners to take the action needed to ensure that these reforms have a positive impact on anglophone and francophone minority communities.

Recommendation 1

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in cooperation with all of its partners and in consultation with official language minority communities, quickly develop a coordinated national strategy to support the development of these communities through immigration. This strategy must identify the roles and responsibilities of the various partners and be flexible enough to take into account the unique characteristics of each region.

Recommendation 2

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in cooperation with all of its partners and in consultation with francophone and Acadian communities, ensure that francophone immigrants will be able to register in the pool of qualified candidates in the Express Entry system without hindering the recognition of their foreign credentials.

Recommendation 3

That the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration take advantage of the consultations to be held this fall with francophone and Acadian communities to identify, in cooperation with them, positive measures to support immigration to their communities. That the Minister pay special attention to the following positive measure:

(a) recruitment initiatives targeting francophone countries.

Recommendation 4

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada must, in consultation with francophone and Acadian communities, maintain an approach designed by and for the communities when it comes to current and future changes. That, as part of the consultations to be held this fall with francophone and Acadian communities, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration pay special attention to the following positive measures:

- (a) providing ongoing and enhanced support for francophone immigration networks;
- (b) providing support for French-language pre-departure services;
- (c) promoting official language minority communities abroad; and
- (d) considering the special needs of refugees, temporary workers and international students who settle in francophone minority communities.

Recommendation 5

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada fund a Statistics Canada survey on French-speaking immigrants outside Quebec and on English-speaking immigrants in Quebec so that official language minority communities can be better equipped to deal with the immigration challenges they will be facing over the coming years.

Recommendation 6

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada take into consideration the priorities identified by Quebec's anglophone communities in order to conduct immigration research projects that will provide a concrete and direct benefit to these communities and will build their capacity to economically, socially and culturally integrate English-speaking newcomers.

Recommendation 7

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada provide targeted support to postsecondary institutions in the Canadian francophonie for language training, language testing, foreign credential recognition and skills upgrading.

Recommendation 8

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada allow temporary foreign workers and international students to register for its language training programs and that it expand access to these programs in either official language in all regions of Canada.

Recommendation 9

That Citizenship and Immigration Canada recognize the following:

- (a) the Provincial Nominee Program and the Canadian Experience Class must attract a sufficient number of francophone immigrants;
- (b) the Express Entry system must include a francophone lens so that francophone and Acadian communities can capitalize on targeted positive measures; and
- (c) these communities must participate in developing the tools to promote immigration to their communities.

	Name of Organization and Spokesperson	Date		
Of	fice of the Commissioner of Official Languages	0040 04 00		
•	Graham Fraser, Commissioner of Official Languages	2013.04.29 2013.11.25		
•	Sylvain Giguère, Assistant Commissioner, Policy and Communications Branch			
•	Carsten Quell, Director, Policy and Research	2013.04.29		
•	Sylvain Giguère, Assistant Commissioner, Policy and Communications Branch			
•	Ghislaine Saikaley, Assistant Commissioner, Compliance and Assurance Branch	2013.11.25		
•	Johane Tremblay, Director and General Counsel, Legal Affairs Branch			
St	atistics Canada			
•	François Nault, Director, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division	2013.05.27		
•	Jean-Pierre Corbeil, Assistant Director, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division and Chief Specialist, Language Statistics Section	2010.00.27		
Ca	rrefour des femmes du Sud-Ouest de l'Ontario	0040.00.00		
•	Émilie-Françoise Crakondji, Executive Director	2013.06.03		
	Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne and Consortium national de formation en santé			
•	Jocelyne Lalonde, Executive Director	2014.05.05		
Qι	uebec Community Groups Network			
•	Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General			
•	Stephen D. Thompson, Director of Policy, Research and Public Affairs	2014.02.26		
Vo	pice of English-speaking Québec			
•	Jean-Sébastien Gignac, Executive Director			
Ca	nadian Heritage			
•	The Honourable Shelly Glover, P.C., M.P., Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages			
•	Hubert Lussier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Citizenship and Heritage			
•	Jean-Pierre C. Gauthier, Director General, Official Languages Branch	2014.03.03		
Fé	Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada			
•	Marie-France Kenny, President			
•	Suzanne Bossé, Director General			

Name of Organization and Spokesperson	Date
University of Sherbrooke	
Michèle Vatz-Laaroussi, Professor, School of Social Work	
Concordia University	
 Chedly Belkhodja, Professor and Principal, School of Community and Public Affairs 	2014.03.31
Brynaert Brennan and Associates	
Mathieu Brennan, President	
As individuals	
Habibatou Konate	
Daouda Sow	0044.04.07
Chabha Bettoum	2014.04.07
Judicaël Moukoumi	
Juan Manuel Toro Lara	
INRS Urbanisation Culture Société	
Nicole Gallant, Professor-Researcher	
University of Alberta	
Tracey M. Derwing, Professor, Department of Educational Psychology	2014.04.28
Table nationale de concertation communautaire en immigration francophone	
Ibrahima Diallo, President	
Citizenship and Immigration Canada	
The Honourable Chris Alexander, P.C., M.P., Minister of Citizenship and Immigration	2014.05.12
 Corinne Prince-St-Amand, Director General, Integration and Foreign Credentials Referral Office 	2014.05.12
Rénald Gilbert, Immigration Program Manager, Paris (France)	
 Yves Saint-Germain, Director, Information, Language and Community Program Policy 	2014.06.09
University of Ottawa	2014 05 40
Gilles Levasseur, Professor, Telfer School of Management	2014.05.12

Name of Organization and Spokesperson	Date
Collège Éducacentre	
Yvon Laberge, Executive Director	
Collège Boréal	
Pierre Riopel, President	2014.05.26
Jean-Pierre Cantin, Director, Services and Programs, Central- Southwestern Region	
Mildred Jean-Paul, Member of the Board of Governors	
Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador	
Danielle Coombs, Coordinator, Francophone Immigration Network	
Société franco-manitobaine	
Mamadou Ka, Chair	00440000
Société de l'Acadie du Nouveau-Brunswick	2014.06.02
Jeanne d'Arc Gaudet, President	
Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario	
Denis Vaillancourt, President	
Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité	
Roukya Abdi Aden, Manager, National Coordination	
Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta	2014.06.09
Jean Johnston, Chair, Board of Directors	
Ima Kamariza, Coordinator, Francophone Immigration Network of Alberta	

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