



# VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie – *The Legacy*



Atlantic Canada  
Opportunities  
Agency

Agence de  
promotion économique  
du Canada atlantique

Canada 

New  Nouveau  
**Brunswick**  
C • A • N • A • D • A

## INTRODUCTION

The VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie bringing together 52 heads of states and governments having French as a common language was held from September 3 to 5, 1999 in Moncton, New Brunswick.

Organization of the event began in the spring of 1998 with the signing of a memorandum of understanding by the three hosts: the governments of Canada, New Brunswick and Quebec. The Organizing Secretariat, set up to deal with the logistics of the Summit, was made up of federal and provincial public service employees and a large number of private sector resource people. Preparations for this international gathering were extensive. Buildings had to be built and renovated, and logistical arrangements had to be made for accommodations and transportation, media relations, administrative, financial and personnel management, a sponsorship program and a comprehensive security organization.

The Government of Canada also invited Canadians from every part of Canada to celebrate La Francophonie together, from March 1999 to March 2000, under the heading of the Year of La Francophonie in Canada, an event designed to highlight the contribution of the country's Francophones and Francophiles to the development of Canadian society.

This Summit provided a unique opportunity for all of Atlantic Canada to promote its expertise and know-how in every economic sector. Given its wide-ranging mandate in matters of economic development throughout the Atlantic Region, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) was a natural choice to play the lead role on behalf of the federal government when it came to economic activities related to the Summit. As soon as the announcement was made that the Summit would be held in Moncton, New Brunswick, ACOA began to work with the New Brunswick Department of Intergovernmental Affairs (DIA) to maximize the potential economic spin-offs of the Summit. Several other representatives of federal and provincial departments in the Atlantic Region were also involved in the process, particularly through the Coordination Committee for Economic Activities linked to the Sommet de la Francophonie.

By working with the main economic players of Atlantic Canada and the organizers of the VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie, ACOA increased the chances of attracting new economic spin-offs to the region beyond the Summit.

The New Brunswick government adopted a very wide-ranging and inclusive approach in planning the Summit. Its goal was to promote, with its partners, all kinds of exchanges and contacts between the citizens of New Brunswick and individuals and organizations from the countries of La Francophonie.

This document presents some of the results of peripheral activities according to the five intervention sectors. It takes into account the role and involvement of ACOA and the Government of New Brunswick, the media coverage, and the economic impact of the Summit and its peripheral activities.

## **ACOA'S ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE VIII<sup>e</sup> SOMMET DE LA FRANCOPHONIE**

As soon as it was announced that the Summit would be held in the region, ACOA, along with the DIA, established a coordinating committee made up of representatives from federal departments (Industry Canada, Canadian Heritage, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Health Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs) and from the governments of three provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island). The committee's mandate was to help coordinate, support, and promote the various activities that would be held before, during and after the Summit.

The Francophonie Summit's main interest for the Agency lay in the fact that this international event provided a unique opportunity to promote the advantages of the Atlantic Canada business community to an international audience. In addition, Summit-related activities would help strengthen ties and partnerships between the businesses, associations, academics and governments of Atlantic Canada and those of the countries of La Francophonie.

In order to more precisely target the various activities related to the Summit, ACOA, in partnership with the Province of New Brunswick, contributed financially to four studies (communications, cultural strategy, peripheral events and coordination of sponsorships). The purpose of these studies was to gain a better understanding of and increase the opportunities for economic development related to the Summit. These studies identified four main intervention sectors: youth, culture, the economy and the community.

ACOA undertook to coordinate the economic activities to be carried out in this sector. Participating in events of an economic nature fit in directly with the Agency's mandate, which is to promote economic development opportunities in Atlantic Canada, and more particularly, higher revenues and job creation in the region.

In keeping with its mandate, ACOA made sure that businesses from all four Atlantic Provinces could benefit from the economic spin-offs of the Summit and its peripheral activities, even though most of the activities would be held in New Brunswick. In addition, a variety of public and private sector organizations sponsored and organized the majority of peripheral Summit events.

ACOA invested some \$1.7 million, i.e. about 25% of the total budget of around \$6.6 million, into some twenty peripheral events, which were mainly related to the economic sector. ACOA was aiming, through its participation and investments in Summit-related activities, to increase the direct and indirect economic development opportunities provided by such a large-scale event and to take advantage of the world-wide exposure enjoyed by the region.

## **NEW BRUNSWICK'S ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE VIII<sup>e</sup> SOMMET DE LA FRANCOPHONIE**

The New Brunswick government was in charge of coordinating events in the youth, culture and community sectors. In total, the province invested close to \$2.8 millions in the Moncton Summit.

Further to having suggested "youth" as the theme of the Summit, the New Brunswick Government organized a number of programs, projects, contests and forums, which got over 7,000 young people caught up in the Summit experience and enthusiasm

The Summit "cultural strategy" was also launched by the New Brunswick Government. Four partners contributed \$1.25 million to this strategy aimed at maximizing the promotion of Acadian and Francophone culture and getting as many artists as possible involved in the cultural events being held in conjunction with the Summit.

During the Summit, the New Brunswick Government held 16 bilateral meetings with 11 different countries. In addition, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Thiès region in Senegal. Several provincial departments are currently following up on these discussions and the departments of Agriculture and Education have established partnerships, particularly in the field of training, with Vietnam, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, Guinea-Bissau and Mali as well as with the Canadian International Development Agency.

## ACTIVITIES LINKED TO THE SUMMIT

In each intervention sector identified, several projects were developed to maximize the participation of the community, business people and artists of Atlantic Canada in the VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie.

### **1. Youth Sector**

"Youth" being the theme proposed for the Moncton Summit, the Government of New Brunswick believed it was important to feature this part of the population throughout the year preceding the Summit, and during the Summit itself.

A series of activities were carried out to maximize the participation of young people: six round tables on youth held in various communities in New Brunswick; the International Francophone Youth Forum, held on-site and on-line, which brought together young people in Shippagan, New Brunswick and Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; Young Pages of Canada, where 52 young Canadians were selected; Radio-Jeunesse '99, which brought together 70 young people from every corner of the Francophone world to introduce listeners to the diversity of cultures and peoples that make up the global Francophone community, for two weeks surrounding the Summit; the Canadian Francophonie Games, which brought together more than 1,100 young people from every corner of Canada for friendly competitions in sports, arts and education. In all, fourteen events involving young people attracted over 7,000 participants.

### **2. Cultural sector**

To maximize the promotion of Acadian and Francophone culture and foster the participation of the greatest number of artists possible, a specific cultural strategy was developed. As a result of this strategy, a number of artists using different forms of expression were able to participate in a variety of artistic and cultural events, including summer festivals, book fairs, art exhibitions and shows. For example, *Étonnante Acadie*, which depicted a slice of life in Acadia by way of a variety of cultural activities, was presented at the Canadian Cultural Centre, the Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles and at the Salon du livre de Paris during International Francophonie Week from March 15 to 24, 1999. The cultural amalgam was particularly appreciated during the art symposium "Attention, le Mascaret ne siffle pas" and at the Village de la Francophonie in Dieppe.

The Village de la Francophonie, a collection of more than 62 booths, offered singing, music, dance, theatre and story-telling performances. Over 250 artists, actors, craftspeople, and musicians from 30 countries and provinces were present. Some 110,000 people visited the Village de la Francophonie, which was also the site of the Canada Pavilion, an initiative of the New Brunswick Federal Council. A total of 26 federal departments and agencies, including ACOA, shared space in the Pavilion, and welcomed 75,000 people over five days. There are plans to organize similar villages at future summits, such as at the one scheduled for Lebanon in 2001.

### **3. Community Sector**

Several international meetings of Francophone organizations were held in the area in conjunction with the Summit, so as to maximize local participation. The 31<sup>st</sup> annual meeting of the Francophone press brought some 120 journalists from countries of La Francophonie together with 30 Acadian colleagues for workshops and talks on media training and journalism schools and allow foreign journalists to learn more about the Canadian Francophonie.

President Chirac visited the interpretive exhibit at the Monument-Lefebvre National Historic Site and gave a speech to the more than 2000 Acadians in attendance.

*The Agence universitaire de la Francophonie organized three events:*

- The Assises sur l'enseignement supérieur technologique et professionnel, a conference on higher education was attended by some 130 people from 25 Francophone countries. The gathering was held on the campus of the Université de Moncton, which organized the event. Discussions focussed on how to better prepare young people for the labour market of today and tomorrow by improving post-secondary and technical education.
- The first Francophone University Olympics brought together 48 young university students from every major Francophone region of the world for two weeks.
- The Université de Moncton, in collaboration with the Centre international pour le développement de l'inforoute en français, hosted the "Initi@tives '99" forum at its Edmundston campus. Approximately 250 people from 15 countries attended this gathering on "Virtual Universities, towards an egalitarian teaching". Internet users around the world were able to follow the event live on their computer monitors on the Initi@tives '99 website.

#### **4. Economic Sector**

A large number of economic activities were organized around the Summit to increase the business community's visibility and get the most economic benefit for Atlantic Region businesses. Beyond the immediate economic spin-offs from the Summit, 52 foreign delegations were introduced to the Atlantic Region, enabling the economic potential of local businesses to be highlighted and the middle- and long-term spin-offs maximized. The varied activities underscored the Atlantic Region's know-how in information technologies, biotechnology, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, health sciences, the environment, and continuing and distance education. They included:

- The "Third Forum of Francophone Business People of Canada", organized by the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick, held in Bathurst with "Partners for greater success" as its theme. The Forum drew some 264 participants. Each province and territory was represented by Francophone entrepreneurs who had come to Bathurst to discover new partners and sign new business agreements. The networking among Forum participants was fruitful, with 34 partnership agreements or accords announced. A youth business forum was held in parallel with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum of Francophone Business People of Canada.
- With the theme "The Challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Managing Change", the 7<sup>th</sup> Francophone Business Forum (FFA), held in Bathurst, brought together some 330 people, including economic decision-makers, investors and entrepreneurs from La Francophonie and some twenty speakers of 22 different nationalities. As part of the Forum, the Carrefour des affaires de la Francophonie gave participants an opportunity to create links, to develop new business relations and discover new technologies. The focus throughout the Forum was on new technologies and youth. The 7<sup>th</sup> FFA helped to establish and strengthen business partnerships on an international scale. One example is the agreement signed between the New Brunswick Community College in Bathurst and the Institut supérieur de technologie industrielle of Dakar. Another notable outcome of the forum was the establishment of an Atlantic FFA. This partnership will enable Acadian and Francophone entrepreneurs in the Atlantic Region to better network with business people from the Canadian and world Francophonie.

- The "Acadie-Sherbrooke 1999 Conference" was the first international Francophone conference on the topic of the practice and education of health professionals responsive to the needs of individuals and communities. Held in Moncton, it was co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO), and provided an opportunity for pertinent discussions on health in the Francophone world community. The event drew more than 530 participants from 23 countries, who attended over 230 scientific presentations.
- In Fredericton, the "Rendez-vous BioAtlantech 1999" international conference brought together some 343 participants, including 57 speakers from 12 different countries, who discussed developments in genomics and functional properties (biotechnology) in agriculture, aquaculture and forestry. Organized under the auspices of BioAtlantech Inc., and featuring Atlantic Canada's expertise in this field, the conference provided a forum for internationally and locally known scientists, entrepreneurs, investors and business people to discuss common biotechnology interests and needs.
- The "Franco Com 99" international trade fair was held in Dieppe, New Brunswick, and allowed the Atlantic provinces to showcase their products and services and promote partnerships and trade with the rest of La Francophonie. Eight leading sectors were highlighted: high technology, environment, agri-food, oceanography, fisheries and aquaculture, professional services, construction and continuing and distance education. Over 225 Atlantic Region and foreign delegates took part; 83 Atlantic businesses had booths presenting their products and services; 68 Francophones businesses from 13 overseas countries were represented; 17 Atlantic Canadian companies and organizations signed partnership agreements with companies and organizations from various Francophone countries.
- The "International Conference on Sustainable Development" welcomed some 200 participants from 20 different countries in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The topics discussed included Canadian and international model forests, ecotourism projects in coastal and Atlantic Acadian communities; an international perspective on ecotourism; new sustainable forestry management tools and technologies; and ecotourism industry products and services. Sponsored by the Nova Scotia Government, this seminar enabled Canada and the Atlantic Region to showcase their know-how in the field of sustainable development.
- The Institute of Island Studies of the University of Prince Edward Island, in collaboration with the Société Nationale de l'Acadie and the Government of Prince Edward Island, organized the "International Conference on the Development of Smart Communities". The bilingual event brought over 271 participants from eleven different countries to Summerside, Prince Edward Island, where they took part in some fifteen workshops on different aspects of information technologies and their use in rural community development.
- A "Technological showcase" was set up inside Place du Sommet, a gathering place for Summit delegates. The showcase was an innovative exhibition on a "plugged-in" Francophonie. A veritable virtual exhibition, the showcase allowed delegates to learn more about Canada, its governments and its services through some sixty multimedia projects and federal, provincial and international Internet sites. The information covered a variety of fields, including tourism, the economy, education and culture.
- A new airport apron and taxiway was built in 1999 with the help of a special financial contribution from the federal government. It covers an area of 16 acres. Not only did it provide landing space for the aircraft of the delegations of States and Governments participating in the Summit, it will also be of use to the people of Greater Moncton and the entire province of New Brunswick for years to come.

## **SUMMIT MEDIA COVERAGE**

Summit organizers were expecting approximately 700 journalists and technicians from around the world. More than 1,100 showed up to cover the VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie and its peripheral activities. All the major newsrooms of La Francophonie were represented, including Le Point and Express, two major French magazines that have millions of readers. Even the influential Washington Post and New York Times dailies sent reporters to cover the Summit. Since the VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie in Moncton was first announced in November 1997, more than 2000 newspaper articles and radio and television reports have appeared in the media in the Atlantic Region, in Canada and around the world.



## ***ECONOMIC IMPACT ON THE REGION***

The Summit Organizing Secretariat had a \$11.2 million budget to organize the event: \$9.2 million from the Government of Canada, \$1.5 million from the Government of New Brunswick and \$500,000 from the Government of Quebec. It gathered another \$4.7 million in sponsorships, giving Canadian business people an opportunity to enjoy international media coverage, show their support for the Francophone community and take advantage of business prospects in a global market context.

In addition to its contribution to the Summit's Organizing Secretariat, New Brunswick invested \$1.3 million hosting the Summit in the province. The money was mostly spent on supporting the Summit's peripheral activities.

ACOA contributed some \$1.7 million directly for Summit-related activities. In addition, the Agency managed the \$4.5 million allocated by the Government of Canada for the construction of the new apron and taxiway at the Moncton Airport. Several other federal departments participated in the Summit and its related activities, including Canadian Heritage, Industry Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Health Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs.

Some thirty Summit-related activities were organized in Moncton, New Brunswick, and also in Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. More than 129,000 participants attended the Summit and its related activities, including some 38,000 visitors from outside the region.

The economic impact of the VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie and its related activities on the Atlantic Region is estimated at over \$78 million. This impact was mainly felt by the service (accommodations, restaurants, recreational facilities), construction, wholesale and retail sales, communications and transportation industries. The medium- and long-term economic spin-offs will mainly arise out of partnerships and agreements signed during Summit-related activities.

The economic impact of the holding of the VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie in Moncton was estimated using the Conference Board of Canada's econometric model. The calculations are based on an assessment of the funds devoted to the organization of the Summit and some thirty peripheral activities.

## CONCLUSION

ACOA and the Government of New Brunswick were aiming to increase the direct and indirect economic development opportunities provided by a gathering of this scale, particularly with regard to the world-wide visibility it gave the Atlantic Region. Based on the results obtained by the holding of the VIII<sup>e</sup> Sommet de la Francophonie, the global visibility attained, the number of participants in the various Summit activities and the number of partnerships and agreements reached during various Summit-related activities, the challenge was met.

The long-term value of all these international experiences, which were so enriching for New Brunswickers and Atlantic Canadians, largely exceeds the economic spin-offs. The contacts made by our business people, the expertise acquired and the networks formed by our civil society, the special relationship that was forged with the governments of La Francophonie, the new artistic styles to which we were exposed and the open mindedness shown by our youth in their meetings are all of incalculable, inestimable value.

One thing, however, is certain: thirty years after New Brunswick's initial entry on the world stage, the Moncton Summit gave Atlantic Canadians an opportunity to open up to the world and gain new confidence in international situations, the confidence that is so vital in an era of rapid globalization.