

# Living in French in Québec

Québec 





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Québec, located in northeastern North America, has a population of more than seven million. It is also home to Canada's largest francophone population, with 81.4% of its inhabitants speaking French as their first language. Close to 86% of all francophones in Canada live in Québec.

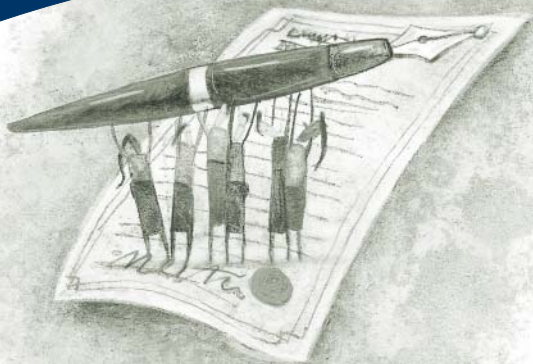
Nevertheless, francophones form a minority in Canada and North America. During the last 50 years, the proportion of Francophones in the Canadian population has steadily fallen, dropping from 29% in 1951 to 22.9% in 2001. And the French-speaking population outside of Québec accounted for just 4.4% of the Canadian population in 2001.

Looking at the linguistic figures for all of North America, we see that francophones make up only 2% of the continent's population. Surrounded by 300 million anglophones, they are confronted by linguistically-driven social and economic forces in Canada and the United States that give predominance to English. The position of French in North America is precarious, and it must be carefully and constantly monitored. That is why, beginning in the 1960s, successive Québec governments have enacted measures to provide Québec with a language policy.

The cornerstone of this language policy is the *Charter of the French language*, which was adopted by the National Assembly of Québec on August 26, 1977. The *Charter*, with a scope greater than that of previous language legislation, reaffirms the determination of Québécois to make French the normal, everyday language of Québec's public life, and the language for expressing its social, cultural, intellectual, and economic vitality.

The *Charter of the French language* is supplemented by close to a dozen regulations and a government framework policy concerning the use and the quality of the French language in the civil administration. To further ensure the sustainability and visibility of francophone society and institutions in Québec, other government policies have been adopted for sectors of equally strategic linguistic importance (e.g., education, culture, immigration, information & communication technologies, etc.). All these measures taken together make up Québec's language policy, the objective of which is to promote the French language and help it flourish in the context of North America.

Québec's efforts to preserve its identity and promote its culture and language have been accompanied by an opening up to the world, which over the past several decades has been greater than ever before. One important illustration of this openness is seen in the growing size of Québec's exports, which now account for 60% of its GDP. Québec is also home to the most bilingual and multilingual workforce in North America. Because of its particular geopolitical situation, European heritage, and determination to live in French within a North American context, Québec has become a strong proponent of cultural and linguistic diversity.



## THE WHYS AND WHEREFORES OF QUÉBEC'S LANGUAGE POLICY

Over the past 400 years, generation after generation has managed to preserve the use of French language in Québec.

### Factors leading to the adoption of the *Charter of the French language*

During the 20th century, several factors prompted the decision to develop a language policy that would delineate the relations between the languages spoken in Québec:

- The English language's power of attraction increased in North America in the wake of industrialization and urbanization.
- The demographic weight of francophones in Canada, and of Québec within Canada, has declined since 1951.
- Prior to 1977, the tendency of newly-arrived immigrants to enrol their children in English-language schools triggered various language crises throughout the Québec school system.
- A low birth rate means that the demolinguistic future of North American francophones depends strongly, even in Québec, on the integration of immigrants into a French-speaking environment.

### Progress made since the adoption of the *Charter of the French language*

Québec's language policy was instituted to offset the growing power of attraction of English, which was perceptible primarily in Montréal and in the regions of Québec where French came into daily contact with English. Twenty-five years after the adoption of the *Charter of the French language*, the use of French has visibly progressed in Québec:

- Public and commercial signs have, in part, recovered a French character, particularly in Montréal.
- Francophone consumers receive more services in their language.
- French is used to a greater extent among workers and in the day-to-day activities of enterprises.
- Increasing numbers of young immigrants are attending French-speaking schools, meaning they are integrating more easily into Québec society, which is mostly francophone.
- Gaps in terms of income and status, which previously worked to the disadvantage of francophones, have narrowed.

Despite these advances, a great deal more progress must be made so that French can become and remain the normal, everyday language of public communication in Québec. The French language is still confronted by pressures on a daily basis, especially in the context of the global economy and the rapid proliferation of information and communication technologies. Québec's language policy is therefore as fully relevant today as it has been in the past.



## **EDUCATION: MAKING ATTENDANCE AT FRENCH-SPEAKING SCHOOLS A PRIORITY**

Québec has a high-quality education system with an organizational structure and teaching that put it among the very best and most modern education systems in the industrialized world. Québec is also home to several universities that have outstanding international reputations for teaching and research.

The great majority of schools and higher learning institutions in Québec's public education system provide instruction in French. Québec has also long had a full public education system in English that extends from kindergarten to university.

### **Elementary and secondary education**

Québec's population is more than 80% French-speaking. It is thus understandable that most of its students are educated in French. Moreover, considering the importance of integrating immigrants into the French-speaking majority, the children of immigrants must attend French-language school until the end of their secondary studies. However, children may receive their schooling in English under various exceptions to this principle, on the basis of criteria used to set out a clear relationship with the English-speaking community of Québec.



### *Rules used to establish eligibility for attending English schools*

The *Charter of the French language* specifies the situations that qualify children to attend public and subsidized private English-language schools. The main rules are:

- The child's father or mother is a Canadian citizen who received most of his or her elementary education in English in Canada.
- The child's father or mother is a Canadian citizen and the child received most of his or her elementary or secondary education in English in Canada.
- The child's father and mother are not Canadian citizens but one of them received most of his or her elementary education in English in Québec.

Whenever a child is authorized to receive instruction in English, the child's brothers and sisters are given similar authorization. In addition, children who are temporary residents of Québec because their parents are studying or working there temporarily may attend either an English-language school or a French-language school for the duration of their stay.

These rules apply to the enrolment of children in public schools and subsidized private schools. However, there are private French and English institutions that do not receive public funding, and attendance at these institutions is not governed by the legislative provisions pertaining to the choice of the language of instruction. It should be further noted that when determining the eligibility of a child to receive instruction at a public or subsidized private English-speaking school, no consideration is given to the English-language instruction that the child received at an unsubsidized private school.

### *Language teaching*

The Québec ministère de l'Éducation has implemented a variety of measures to foster the teaching of French and improve the learning of other languages. The purpose of such measures includes motivating young people to learn and use French correctly. They also seek to foster functional proficiency in French through literacy programs and through intensive language training services for newly-arrived immigrants and their children whose first language is neither English nor French.

In Québec's French-speaking school system, significant classroom time is devoted to English as a second language, with instruction beginning in elementary school and continuing until the end of secondary school. At the same time, efforts are being made to improve education in French as a second language throughout the English-language school system.

Furthermore, third language teaching is already being offered in many secondary schools – a practice that the Québec ministère de l'Éducation plans to make more widespread.

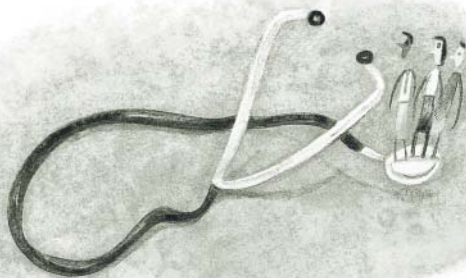
## College and university education

After students have completed high school, they may choose a French-language or English-language college or university to continue their studies.

For several years now, the French-speaking colleges and universities of Québec have had strategies in place to improve the quality of the French used by their students.

The *Charter of the French language* requires that Québec's colleges and universities adopt and apply a policy on the use and the quality of French. The policies adopted by institutions that offer French-language education to the majority of their students pertain to French as the language of instruction, the language of communication by the administration and the language of work. Its also covers the quality of French and its mastery by students and staff.

The policies adopted by institutions that offer English-language education to the majority of their students pertain to the teaching of French as a second language and the use of French as the language of written communication between the administration of the institution and the government (and government agencies), municipal and school bodies, health and services agencies, and legal persons established in Québec.



## HEALTHCARE SERVICES IN FRENCH AND IN OTHER LANGUAGES

Québec's health and social services network is mainly French-speaking. Accordingly, health and social services must be offered in French everywhere in Québec. Furthermore, the *Charter of the French language* enshrines the right of any person to communicate in French with providers of health and social services.

However, in order that anglophones can, like francophones, receive care in their language, certain healthcare institutions have been mandated to provide English services. As a result, every anglophone who resides in Québec is entitled to receive health services and social services in English, to the extent permitted by the human, material, and financial resources of the institutions providing such services. In practice, anglophones have access to health and social services in English throughout Québec.

In keeping with this same principle, the Québec ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux promotes access, where resources permit, for members of Québec's various cultural communities to health and social services in their own language.



## FRANCIZATION OF THE WORKPLACE

If French is not to be confined to private life or to low-level jobs within the hierarchies of Québec enterprises, it must be seen as important and valuable to learn. Knowledge of French must lead to well-paying jobs, including those in senior positions. In other words, French must become an indispensable part of the workplace. Accordingly, the language of work is the keystone of Québec's language policy.

Of course, making French the language of the workplace does not rule out the use of English or other languages as required. Given the importance of exports for Québec's economy, we can easily see why it is necessary for many Québec enterprises to communicate with customers and other enterprises outside Québec in several languages other than French.

However, because employees in Québec have the right to work in French, the *Charter of the French language* stipulates that enterprises established in Québec must normally use French, particularly in communications addressed to their employees and in those concerning business operations and labour relations. Likewise, collective agreements must be drafted in French. Under the *Charter of the French language*, employers are forbidden from dismissing or demoting employees who speak only French. Furthermore, employers

are prohibited from requiring that employees have knowledge, or a specific level of knowledge, of a language other than French, unless the job in question requires this knowledge. Any person who believes he or she has been a victim of this type of discrimination may seek redress from the courts.

Québec's enterprises are actively involved in the workplace francization process. Enterprises that wish to settle in Québec for production, marketing, or research purposes also stand to maximize the benefits of their future activities by fully embarking on a francization process, which will go a long way towards smoothing their integration into Québec society.

### What does “working in French” mean in Québec?

#### *Making the use and knowledge of French widespread in the workplace*

To ensure that French is used in all work environments, the *Charter of the French language* prescribes specific measures for enterprises having 50 or more employees in Québec. These enterprises must take part in a process aimed at making sure they comply with the law and use French as an integral part of their activities.

#### *Taking action to ensure that employees speak French*

To make sure French is used for work-related activities, it is important that managers and employees of enterprises know French and can use it in their day-to-day communications. Any enterprise that does not meet this requirement must take steps to equip its employees with knowledge of French, usually through courses given in the workplace or at language schools.

### *Posting signs in French inside enterprises*

Enterprises must make sure that in-house signs (bulletin board notices, inscriptions on office or factory machines, etc.) are in French. In those cases where French and another language are used, enterprises must see to it that French is markedly predominant or at the very least is given equivalent space, according to the situation. This latter rule also applies to all documents, work tools, and written communications of enterprises established in Québec.

### *Using French for workplace communications*

Official communication between senior managers of enterprises and their employees and official communication among employees must be in French. Enterprises' notices, directives, memoranda and newsletters must also be in French.

### *Providing work documents in French*

Enterprises must make sure that commonly used work documents such as forms, work instructions, plans, specifications, reports, etc., are drawn up or completed in French, according to the case. The same rule applies to all technical and reference documents.

### *Communicating in French with customers, the public and public agencies*

Every enterprise established in Québec must make sure that it can inform and serve its Québec customers in French. Initial contact and service with customers must be available in French, whether by telephone or in person. French must also be used for administrative, commercial, and advertising documents (including on-line documents) intended for Québec customers and the Québec public, as well as for documents that accompany products (instructions, warranty certificates, etc.).

## The francization of enterprises: An ongoing process

The Office québécois de la langue française is the body responsible for assisting, advising, and monitoring enterprises throughout their francization process, while the *Charter of the French language* sets out the steps that must be taken to complete that process.

### *Analysis of the linguistic situation*

All enterprises having 50 or more employees must register with the Office québécois de la langue française and produce an analysis of their linguistic situation with the assistance and advice of the Office. Large enterprises with more than 100 employees must set up a francization committee, which is mandated to direct the entire francization process and is made up of an equal number of employer and worker representatives. The Office may also require an enterprise with 50 to 99 employees to set up a francization committee, whenever it deems this measure to be appropriate.

Employers may not withhold employees' wages or dismiss, lay off, demote, or transfer employees for taking part in or performing tasks for francization committees or subcommittees.

### *Francization program*

Enterprises that the Office finds by way of an assessment of their linguistic situation to be using French for all their operations are issued francization certificates. The Office will ask any enterprise that is not doing so to submit and then implement a francization program. The aim of this program is to make sure French is used throughout the enterprise. It covers such issues as employees' knowledge of French (e.g., the number of persons who must be brought up to a level at which they can use French fluently) and the use of French for in-house communications, documents, work with information & communication technologies, etc.



### *Francization certificate*

When the Office québécois de la langue française deems that an enterprise has met its francization objectives, the enterprise is issued a francization certificate. The fact that an enterprise has obtained this certificate does not necessarily mean there is no longer any need to improve the situation and the quality of French in the enterprise. Instead, receiving this certificate must be seen as the beginning of normal business activities for the enterprise in French. The enterprise must see to it that French retains its place and is used in a real and lasting manner. To make sure that francization remains a permanent process, the *Charter of the French language* requires all enterprises that have a francization certificate to file a report with the Office every three years on the developments in their use of French.

### *Special cases*

When determining the francization measures that an enterprise must adopt, the Office takes account of the characteristics of the enterprise, for example, its area of activity and the extent of its communications outside of Québec. Also receiving special consideration are enterprises that produce cultural goods with non-French content and Québec-based head offices or research centres whose activities extend beyond the borders of Québec. In all of these cases, enterprises can sign special agreements with the Office to gain greater latitude with regard to the use of a language other than French. However, these enterprises are still required to use French in communications and documents distributed or released in Québec.



## **COMMERCE AND BUSINESS: GIVING FRENCH A VISIBLE PRESENCE**

More than 80% of Québec consumers are francophones. To make sure they can receive service and information in their language, the *Charter of the French language* sets out a number of rules with the objective of making French the normal, everyday language of commerce and business in Québec. These rules cover public and commercial signs and advertising, product labelling, names of enterprises, commercial documentation and advertising, as well as all customer contacts.

### **Public signs and commercial advertising**

Public signs and commercial advertising refer to all messages that are posted in public places. These forms of communication, which include enterprise name signs, placards, posters, billboards and store window signs, must be in French.

One or more other languages may be added, but the law requires that French be markedly predominant, in other words, that it have a much greater visual impact.

### *Exceptions*

All public signs and commercial advertising placed in subway trains, buses, and bus shelters, and presented by means of large billboards must be only in French.

Public signs with a health and safety message may be in another language as well as French, provided that the French text is given equal prominence.

Religious, political, humanitarian, and other messages of similar nature intended for a public speaking a language other than French may be exclusively in that language.

Public signs at a museum, botanical garden, zoo, or a cultural or scientific exhibition may be in another language as well as French, provided that the French text is given equal prominence.

Public signs and commercial advertising concerning an event intended for an international audience or an event at which most of the participants come from outside Québec may be in another language as well as French, provided that the French text is given equal prominence.

### **Product labelling**

Product labelling refers to the inscriptions on products, their containers and packaging, as well as to accompanying documents (operating instructions, warranty certificates, etc.).

Apart from a few exceptions provided for by regulation, French labelling is required for all products offered in Québec, whether they are made in Québec or imported, and whether they are sold on a wholesale or retail basis. The use of one or more languages in addition to French is allowed. In this case, inscriptions in French must be given prominence at least equal to that of the inscriptions produced in the other languages.

## Names of enterprises

The names of enterprises established in Québec must be in French.

### *Exceptions*

For commercial and advertising purposes, the following names may be exclusively in a language other than French:

- the name of an enterprise established exclusively outside of Québec;
- a name of origin, the name of an exotic product or foreign specialty, a heraldic motto or any other non-commercial motto;
- a place name designating a place situated outside Québec or a place name in another language that has been officialized by the Commission de toponymie du Québec, a family name, a given name, the name of a personality or character, or a distinctive name of a cultural character;
- a trademark recognized in Canada within the meaning of the *Trade Marks Act* unless a French version of this name has been registered.

An expression taken from a language other than French may also appear in the name of an enterprise, provided that it is accompanied by an equivalent generic term in French.

### **Commercial documentation and advertising**

Commercial documentation and advertising includes printed and on-line electronic documents such as catalogues, brochures, folders, commercial directories, and the Websites of enterprises established in Québec. It also encompasses invoices and receipts given to customers, order forms sent to suppliers, and other similar documents.

Commercial documentation distributed in Québec must be in French. One or more other languages may also be used, but the French version must be given prominence at least equal to that given the other versions.



## **A CIVIL ADMINISTRATION THAT FUNCTIONS IN FRENCH**

The civil administration in Québec has been called upon to play an exemplary and leading role in the work to promote French. Accordingly, its activities must reflect the fact that French is the official language and the common language of public life in Québec.

### **Official names, communications and dissemination of information**

The *Charter of the French language* requires that the civil administration, that is, the government, its departments and agencies, municipalities, educational institutions, and health and social services agencies, be referred to only by their names in French.

Under the *Charter*, all texts and documents of the civil administration must be drafted in French. However, this requirement does not prevent the use of both French and another language. The same principle applies in the case of the civil administration's written communications addressed to other governments or to legal persons established in Québec. In addition, the civil administration may use a language other than French when it corresponds with natural persons who address it in that other language.

### **The *Politique relative à l'emploi et à la qualité de la langue française***

In 1996, the government adopted the *Politique relative à l'emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l'administration* [policy on the use and the quality of French in the civil administration] to harmonize its linguistic-related activities. Some requirements of this policy are more stringent than those stipulated by the *Charter of the French language*. However, it applies only to the Québec government's departments and agencies. As such, it sets out the guidelines these bodies should follow in order to establish and adopt their own language policies.

Under this policy, government departments and agencies must, as a rule, use French exclusively for drafting and publishing their texts and documents, as well as for their communications. Mass distribution of public information is also in French only. However, a version in another language may be sent to a person who requests it.

Documents distributed on-line must be in French. However, to give Québec greater international visibility, these documents may also be presented in other languages. But in such a case, the French version must always be distinct and directly accessible.

Government employees are required to address the public in French first, whether on the telephone or in person. Recorded messages must also be in French, but equivalent versions in another language may accompany these messages with the appropriate instructions for helping callers access the information in that language.

In keeping with these general orientations, each department adopts a language policy based on its mission and the public it serves. For example, departments and agencies

dealing with an English speaking or Aboriginal community and those working to help new immigrants may adapt their policies to meet their specific linguistic needs.

Lastly, the *Politique relative à l'emploi et à la qualité de la langue française dans l'administration* stipulates that government departments and agencies may not grant any contract, subsidy or benefit to enterprises with 50 or more employees that do not meet the francization requirements of the *Charter of the French language*. This stipulation forms a part of all calls for bids made by government departments and agencies.

### **The Québec government's procurement policy**

In 1999, the government adopted its *Politique sur les marchés publics* [contracting policy] which applies to all levels of the civil administration-i.e., government departments and agencies, crown corporations, municipalities and municipal bodies, school boards, CÉGEPs (two-year general and vocational post-secondary colleges), universities, health and social services institutions, regional health boards, health and social services centralized purchasing services, and the entities owned or controlled by any of the above-mentioned bodies, excluding for-profit enterprises competing with the private sector.

The *Politique sur les marchés publics* requires that all of the steps in the procurement process be conducted in French. Procurement documents, documents accompanying goods and services, along with inscriptions on products, product containers and product packaging must also be in French. In addition, when any product, appliance or device requires the use of a language, that language must be French.





## **FRENCH AND INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES**

The development of computers and the Internet has created new challenges for the use of French in the workplace. These challenges extend even to our pastimes, as evidenced by the proliferation of electronic games and gadgets.

English has always held a predominant place in the information and communication technology sector. Still, ICTs, as work and communication tools, can be adapted to French just as easily as they can to most languages in use around the world. Because French is the usual language of everyday communication in Québec, measures should be taken to ensure that it is also used for communication involving the use of ICTs.

### **The Québec government's policy for using French in the ICT sector**

Since 1992, Québec has had a *Politique d'utilisation du français dans les technologies de l'information et des communications* [Policy concerning the use of French in ICTs], which applies to the government and its departments and agencies.

The main objective of this policy is to ensure that ICT-based communication between the government and citizens respects all the characteristics of written French and its typography (e.g., use of capital letters, accents, and other signs). Secondly, the policy seeks to maximize the use of French at the computer workstations of government employees, whether in terms of hardware, software, or documentation. Finally, it is intended to promote the wider use of French by information and communication technology specialists, wherever it is possible to do so.

This policy demonstrates the government's recognition of the full economic, social, and cultural implications that ICTs have for the French language, and its firm commitment to make a place for French in the ICT sector. By leading the way with concrete actions, the government is seeking to get the private sector actively involved in this rapidly developing sector, and in particular to promote the availability of ICT products in French.

### **Computer equipment and software**

Regarding the use of computer equipment (keyboard, monitor, printer, etc.), the Québec government is subject to the same rule that applies to enterprises under the francization process. Keyboards must have commands and displays in French and must be able to produce all signs specific to the French language. Most of the commonly-used programs, software packages, and educational software are available in French versions that provide all the characters of written French and allow users to execute commands in French. The goal of making French the normal, everyday language of work requires that preference be given to the French version.

All documentation accompanying computer equipment and software must also be in French. This requirement applies to advertising material, training manuals, and installation and user guides.

### **The production and transmission of information via the Internet**

Thanks to the development of the Internet, information now crosses national borders easily and quickly. It is bringing down all kinds of barriers between people, including language barriers. The production and transmission of knowledge and information over the Internet thus poses numerous challenges to States whose usual language of communication is not English. Québec's response to these challenges has included:

- taking measures to ensure a growing place for French in the ICT sector.
- working with international partners to foster the use of national languages, French in particular, on the Internet.

To achieve these objectives, it is necessary to have not only hardware that has been adapted to the French language but also production tools and navigation systems that allow users to surf the Internet in French and to increase French-language content on the Internet.

The Québec government works with its public and private sector partners to promote the use of French on the Internet. It has committed important funding to this mobilizing effort, which includes encouraging partners to provide French-language content in their Websites.



## **BILINGUALISM IN LEGISLATION AND JUSTICE**

In Québec, French is the language of legislation and the legal system. However, in accordance with the provisions of the Canadian constitution applicable to Québec, a certain form of legislative and judicial bilingualism must be respected.

### **The language of legislation**

Statutes and regulations, along with certain related acts, are adopted in French and English, with both versions having the same legal status.

### **The language of the courts**

In principle, anyone may use English or French in all affairs brought before the courts of Québec and in all accompanying legal proceedings. Occasionally, a judge may render a judgement in English even if some of the persons involved in the case speak only French. The opposite is also true: a judge can render a judgement in French even if one of the parties speaks only English. However, under the *Charter of the French language*, either of the parties involved can request that a judgement rendered in English or French be translated into the other language.

It should be noted that in criminal trials, accused persons are always entitled to a trial in French or English, that is, in the language they consider to be their first language. In such a case, the judge, the jury, and the prosecutor must be able to speak the language chosen by the accused.



## **FRENCH: THE LANGUAGE OF A DYNAMIC CULTURAL LIFE OPEN TO THE WORLD**

More than a social convention or a simple means of communication, the French language is for Québécois the very foundation of their identity and thus an intrinsic part of their culture. It is not surprising, then, that the *Politique culturelle du Québec*, adopted in 1992, begins by stressing the importance of promoting French as the vehicle of culture in Québec.

### **French as a language of creation**

French is the language used in Québec for most forms of artistic expression involving the spoken and the written word. French-language works from Québec in music, theatre, literature and cinema have gained an influence and an audience not only in francophone countries but around the world.

Québec has at times had to develop original approaches to foster the dissemination of French-speaking cultural products in a marketplace dominated by American culture. For example, since the mid-1980s, the *Cinema Act*, has worked to ensure that French versions of movies are seen in Québec. And for all areas of cultural activity, the Québec *ministère de la Culture et des Communications* has implemented measures to support the creation, emergence and production of French-language content in the arts and culture.

In Canada, the federal government has jurisdiction over radio and television broadcasting. To respect the francophone character of Québec's music industry, quotas for songs in French were imposed on French-language radio stations beginning in the 1970s – a model that governments elsewhere have since imitated. More recently, at the request of Québec, specific regulations have facilitated the emergence of specialized French-language television channels in a context where cable and satellite broadcasting have made it easier to access an ever-increasing number of English-language channels.

### **Openness to other cultures**

Québec's culture also draws part of its vigour and diversity from the contribution of anglophones, Aboriginal nations and the cultural communities of immigrants. These groups express their cultural vitality in their own artistic activities, and at the same time are showing greater openness towards and participation in francophone culture.

In the very same way, the francophones of Québec, although profoundly attached to their own cultural life and achievements, take a keen and active interest in other cultures.

Québec's cultural life is thus marked by its openness to culture and art coming from all horizons. At the same time that it affirms its feeling of belonging to a French-speaking culture, Québec actively promotes cultural exchanges of all kinds and makes full room for the cultural and artistic expression of other societies.

The people of Québec enjoy culture in all its diversity, due in large part to their strong cultural affinities with Europe, the huge impact and success of their many cultural events, and the rich cultural contributions made by successive waves of immigration.



## **IMMIGRATION AND FRANCIZATION**

Under the Canadian constitution, jurisdiction over immigration in Québec is shared by the Québec government and the Canadian government. Québec's main responsibilities include recruiting and selecting candidates for immigration, and providing orientation and integration services to newly-arrived immigrants.

Every year, Québec takes in close to 40,000 immigrants from around the world. Between 1997 and 2001, 43% of newcomers already spoke French on their arrival. The Québec government is hoping to raise that proportion to 50%.

The Québec government offers French courses to newly-arrived immigrants who do not speak French. These courses, intended to ease their integration into Québec society, are available through a number of means, which include full-time or part-time programs at *carrefours d'intégrations* ('integration hubs' for immigrant services) and educational institutions, community programs, and workplace initiatives.





**For** additional  
information  
**on** Québec's  
language policy

**Secrétariat à la politique linguistique**

225, Grande Allée Est, 4<sup>e</sup> étage

Québec (Québec) G1R 5G5

Telephone: (418) 643-4248

Website: [www.spl.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.spl.gouv.qc.ca)

The Secrétariat à la politique linguistique advises the minister responsible for the *Charter of the French language* regarding the implementation of Québec's language policy. It also coordinates work and research on amendments to language legislation and regulations. The Secrétariat's initiatives and monitoring activities are aimed at guaranteeing the consistency of the government's language policy and at supporting concerted actions targeting the use, quality and promotion of French in Québec.

The Secrétariat also provides information both in Québec and elsewhere about the government's language policy. To this end, it makes available upon request a variety of brochures and publications.

Furthermore, via its Website, the Secrétariat provides access to the main linguistic and textual databases produced by the French-speaking universities of Québec. These databases, which have been brought together in the Réseau des corpus lexicaux québécois, are intended for linguists, researchers, and all those who are interested in the French language as it is used in Québec.

### **Conseil supérieur de la langue française**

*800, place D'Youville, 13<sup>e</sup> étage*

*Québec (Québec) G1R 3P4*

*Telephone: (418) 643-2740*

*Website: [www.cslf.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.cslf.gouv.qc.ca)*

The Conseil supérieur de la langue française advises the minister responsible for the Charter of the French language on all matters related to the French language in Québec. To that end, it conducts or commissions studies and research that it judges to be necessary, and gathers and considers the opinions of individuals or groups. Furthermore, through notices, research, and a quarterly newsletter, the Conseil informs the public about issues concerning the French language in Québec. These documents are available on request, and several of them are available at the Conseil's Website.

To recognize the outstanding achievements made by individuals and organizations in the promotion of the French language, the Conseil annually awards the Prix du 3-juillet-1608, the Prix Jules-Fournier, the Prix Raymond-Charette, and the Ordre des francophones d'Amérique.

## Office québécois de la langue française

125, rue Sherbrooke Ouest, 1<sup>er</sup> étage  
Montréal (Québec) H2X 1X4

or

750, boulevard Charest Est, Rez-de-chaussée  
Québec (Québec) G1K 9K4

Telephone: 1 888 873-6202

Website: [www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca)

The Office québécois de la langue française is responsible for defining and carrying out the Québec government's policy on linguistic officialization, terminology and the francization of the civil administration and enterprises. It ensures compliance with the *Charter of the French language*, either on its own initiative or on the basis of complaints it has received concerning alleged violations of the *Charter*. The Office also monitors developments in the linguistic situation in Québec.

The services offered by the Office include:

- A general information service, accessible by telephone and at the Office's Website, which is intended for any person wishing to obtain information on the *Charter* of the French language and its regulations, on how to lodge a complaint regarding non-compliance with the *Charter*, or on the Office's products and services.
- Francization and advisory and consulting services for Québec civil administration bodies and for Québec-established enterprises that have 50 or more employees.

- Technical assistance regarding the francization of information and communication technologies for managers and employees of Québec-established enterprises that have 50 or more employees, and for the managers and employees of Québec civil administration bodies.
- Terminological and linguistic services and tools:
  - The *Grand dictionnaire terminologique* (GDT), which can be accessed at the Office's Website, contains more than three million French and English technical terms covering a wide range of Québec's economic, technical, and scientific activities.
  - The *Banque de dépannage linguistique* (BDL), which provides answers to the most frequently asked questions received by the telephone consultation service, is also available at the Office's Website.
  - The *Téléphone linguistique*, which is free and available at all times at the following phone numbers: (514) 873-9999 (Montréal area), (418) 528-9999 (Québec City area) and 1 888 829-8899 or 1 888 828-8899 (elsewhere in Québec).
  - Personalized linguistic and terminological consultations (call charges apply), which are offered to enterprises, language specialists, civil administration bodies and the general public.
- Publications: *Le français au bureau*, various publications on terminology and a specialized journal, *La revue d'aménagement linguistique*.

## Commission de toponymie du Québec

1060, rue Louis-Alexandre-Taschereau, 4<sup>e</sup> étage

Québec (Québec) G1R 5V8

Telephone: (418) 643-2817

Website: [www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.toponymie.gouv.qc.ca)

The Commission de toponymie is the public body responsible for managing the names of places in Québec. It makes proposals to the government concerning standards and rules of writing for the naming of places. In collaboration with the Office québécois de la langue française, it establishes and standardizes geographic terminology. The Commission also catalogues, preserves, officializes and publicizes the official geographic nomenclature of Québec.

The services offered by the Commission include:

- Several publications, including the *Répertoire toponymique du Québec*, which contains more than 100,000 place names and nearly 700,000 data items.
- TOPOS, a computerized bank of official Québec place names, which gives information about their geographic location, origin, and meaning.
- A free, personalized consultation service, available by telephone or e-mail and covering all aspects of place names: standards for selecting and writing names, the origin and meaning of place names, geographical terminology, etc.
- A specialized library to assist researchers on matters of toponymy, genealogy, geography, and history.

**Website:** [www.spl.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.spl.gouv.qc.ca)

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