



Industry
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Industry Canada Achievement Report 2003-2004



Implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*

Canada 

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Achievement Report
2003-2004**

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of Section 41 of the
*Official Languages Act***

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Message from the Champion

As Industry Canada's Champion for Official Languages, I am proud to present the 2003-2004 Achievement Report relating to Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. This fiscal year was an active one for the department, particularly in terms of strengthening partnerships with the official language minority communities and the regional development agencies.

During the past year, Industry Canada continued to encourage the minority communities to participate in existing programs and services. The communities have tended to be most involved in connectivity programs, such as Canada's SchoolNet, Canada's Digital Collections, *Francommunautés virtuelles* and the Community Access Program; these programs have helped to improve skills in information and communications technology, increase Canadian content on the Internet and create new networks at the community level. At the same time, we have maintained our partnership with Canadian Heritage under the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official-Language Communities and extended support to communities for technology-related projects.

In addition, several new initiatives were launched, under the federal government's Action Plan for Official Languages, to bring the department closer to the minority communities. In particular, the department, in co-operation with the regional development agencies, implemented a network of regional advisors to provide information to the communities on federal economic development programs and to establish a dialogue on community needs and how to address them. Additionally, for the first time ever, the department and regional development agencies held formal consultations with the minority communities to create a more open and long-lasting partnership. These consultations will continue in the future and will be reinforced by regular dialogue with the advisors and coordinators located in each of the regions. Finally, many community projects and studies were undertaken in the past year, ranging from a mentorship program for young Francophone immigrant entrepreneurs to creating connectivity toolkits for Anglophone minority communities.

Our programs are generating positive results for the minority communities and we intend to do even more to ensure that they share in Canada's growth and prosperity. To this end, we will reinforce the efforts launched in the past year by maintaining the dialogue and partnerships that support Canada's linguistic duality.

John McBride

Executive Summary

The 2003-2004 fiscal year was an active one at Industry Canada for activities related to Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. Industry Canada undertook numerous projects and activities that shared a common purpose: to increase the participation of the Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) in the department's programs and services and to encourage the prosperity and vitality of these communities.

For their part, the OLMCs participated in many ongoing initiatives. For instance, Computers for Schools, the Community Access Program, Canada's SchoolNet and other programs were well subscribed by these communities. As a result, Industry Canada made real progress in its effort to bridge the gap between the department and the two linguistic minority communities. In addition, for the first time ever, the department held formal consultations with the communities to help develop more productive working relationships and to give us a better understanding of their needs and concerns.

At the same time, Industry Canada moved to implement its component of the government's new Action Plan for Official Languages (instituted in 2003), in partnership with the regional development agencies: the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions (CED), Western Economic Diversification Canada (WED) and FedNor. The Action Plan represents a renewed commitment to Canada's linguistic duality and to the French and English linguistic minority communities. It provides \$53 million for the department's activities in support of the language industry and the economic development of the OLMCs during the period 2003-2004 to 2007-2008.

In all, in 2003-2004, Industry Canada spent over \$7 million on programs and activities that benefited the OLMCs; of this amount, \$2 million was invested by FedNor. With the exception of the *Francommunautés virtuelles* program, the programs and services that were supported are available to all Canadians. For instance, the Broadband for Rural and Northern Development Pilot Program and Canada's SchoolNet program have benefited Canadians of both language groups, whether they live in majority or minority linguistic communities. The extra efforts were necessary to ensure that the French and English minority communities share in these programs and do not miss out because of their minority situation.

With the success of ongoing programs and the promise of recent initiatives, we will continue to help the OLMCs benefit from Industry Canada's programs and services. Accordingly, we will strengthen our dialogue and reinforce our partnerships with the communities.

Working through the Regions

These initiatives would not succeed without the involvement of the Regional Offices. Regional staff maintain direct contact with people in official language minority communities in various ways, such as local events, forums, seminars and Info-Fairs, to communicate information on Industry Canada's programs and services.

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Achievement Report 2003-2004	
1. Activities	2
<i>1.1 Communications</i>	2
<i>1.2 Research and Analysis</i>	3
<i>1.3 Ongoing Programs</i>	4
<i>1.4 Partnerships</i>	8
2. New Programs	9
3. Conclusion	10
2003-2004 Key Achievements	11
Webography	12

Achievement Report 2003-2004

Implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*

1. Activities

Even before implementation of the Action Plan for Official Languages, Industry Canada and the regional development agencies were following a three-part strategy for Section 41, consisting of communications, research and analysis, and ongoing programs.

1.1 Communications

The success of any Industry Canada program is measured in terms of its reach and the extent to which the OLMCs have participated. Therefore, communications are indispensable to the department's work in support of the OLMCs.

The lion's share of communications activities took place within the communities themselves. The basic aim of these efforts was to ensure that French and English linguistic minority groups and individuals knew about and could participate in the programs and services that were useful to them.

To this end, ministers involved in the Action Plan for Official Languages formally met representatives of the minority communities in October 2003. These sessions were followed by detailed discussions with Industry Canada and the regional development agencies in February and March 2004, which allowed the department and the communities to share information and look for ways to maximize participation in existing programs and future initiatives. Subsequently, the department and the regional development agencies met with community representatives as part of the consultation process for the Action Plan organized by the Privy Council Office.

The following examples illustrate the scope of the many communications activities that took place in 2003-2004:

- To better inform the OLMCs of the programs and services that are available to all Canadians, the department worked to perfect the Web site CommunAction.ca, which was launched in 2002-2003. The department sought evaluations from representatives of the OLMCs and used this information to make the site more user-friendly. This effort also helped to make the site more visible. In March 2004, the site registered 3000 visits, and more than 7600 pages were displayed. These numbers represent a substantial increase over the 168 visits and 756 pages that were displayed a year earlier, in April 2003.
- Staff at regional offices throughout the country met frequently with members of community organizations and associations. The regional offices also sponsored outreach activities to increase awareness of Industry Canada programs and services and to gain new insight into the needs of the OLMCs. For example, in Ontario, members of the Francophone business

community and representatives of Francophone associations attended outreach sessions sponsored by the International Trade Centre to learn about trade, investment and other programs for entrepreneurs offered by Industry Canada. In the Atlantic provinces, hundreds of Francophone participants attended workshops, conferences, meetings of the coordination committee, presentations and Smart Fairs organized by the regional office. The Quebec regional office held meetings with Anglophone associations in various regions of the province. In the Prairie and Northern Region, a meeting of OLMCs and WED was held to present the Action Plan for Official Languages and to encourage a cooperative approach to the development of projects. In the Pacific Region, staff at the regional office attended various community events to exchange ideas and information, listen to OLMC concerns and build networks.

Communications activities also occur within the department itself. Managers and staff need information about how they can maximize the benefits of programs for all groups in Canada, particularly the OLMCs. This effort to increase staff awareness is continuing. Some of the activities of the past year are listed here:

- Individual meetings were held with managers of various programs and services to raise awareness of the needs of OLMCs.
- The department developed a plan for internal communications over the next three years, with the goal of making managers and officers more aware of the department's commitments in relation to Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*.
- An information kit was prepared to assist the new regional advisors.
- The intranet site ProAction 41 was completely reviewed and updated. This site, which provides information on all aspects of Section 41, is a valuable tool for staff, especially managers and advisors. At the end of March 2004, over 900 pages were displayed at this intranet site, more than double the 435 pages available at the same time in the previous year.

1.2 Research and Analysis

Through the second component of the departmental strategy, research and analysis, Industry Canada supported many studies that contributed to a better understanding and knowledge of the OLMCs.

The largest research effort was the production of a Strategic Framework to guide the department through the next four years. This major exercise evaluated 150 programs, policies and regulations within the department's mandate. The Framework drew on information gathered from consultations with Industry Canada program managers and senior officers, the regional development agencies, the minority Anglophone community and the minority Francophone community. From this Framework, the department has concluded it should set the following priorities:

- Increase awareness of OLMC needs, which should be taken into account in developing and delivering all programs and services. The Framework document suggests that the department examine its programs and services through a “Section 41 lens.”
- Focus on priority programs that are most likely to foster connectivity and economic growth in the OLMCs, helping them to fully participate in the knowledge-based economy. The targeted areas and programs are Connectivity, Youth and Connectivity, Communications and Information Tools, Tele-training and Tele-learning, Internships and FedNor initiatives.
- Work with other government departments at every level (federal, provincial and local) and participate in interdepartmental initiatives, such as the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official-Language Communities (IPOLC), to maximize effectiveness.
- Work systematically with community organizations and associations to establish an effective dialogue and foster better participation.

In addition to the Strategic Framework, the department added to its understanding of the OLMCs through other research studies and analyses, performed in cooperation with OLMC organizations and costing a total of \$317 000. The following are examples of these studies:

- A study on economic development for the rural English-speaking communities of Quebec, with the aim of gaining a better understanding of the potential for economic development in the natural resource sectors.
- Two studies to analyze the economic impact of Francophone non-profit organizations, one in western and northern Canada, using the Yukon community as a focus group, and another in New Brunswick, with the Acadian non-profit organizations.
- An evaluation of the technological infrastructure used by the network of university establishments working in Francophone minority communities to provide long-distance and on-line training.

1.3 Ongoing Programs

The third component of the departmental strategy focused on ongoing programs and ways of maximizing OLMC participation in them.

Industry Canada delivered a wide range of programs and services through its national and regional offices, as well as through partnerships with regional development agencies. These programs addressed innovation, connectedness, business services and partnerships. In fact, innovation and connectedness were at the core of many activities.

Industry Canada programs in information and communications technologies (ICT) provide basic connectivity and access to high-speed broadband, ensure that access is affordable and that Canadians have the skills to use and benefit from the programs, and contribute to Canadian on-line content.

Industry Canada estimates that, in 2003-2004, the total value of investment by its ICT programs for OLMCs as communities of interest was over \$5 million (see attached table).

- The very successful **Community Access Program (CAP)** added to the network of public Internet sites in both Francophone and Anglophone minority communities. In 2003-2004 the department invested more than \$2 million in 338 Francophone centres outside Quebec and 25 Anglophone centres within Quebec to consolidate the network.

In addition to providing public access to the Internet through CAP, Industry Canada supported other projects that helped to improve the Internet skills of individuals and groups in the OLMCs. Also, there was investment and support for developing Web content in French. Two examples are described here:

- In Ontario, CAP supported five projects that specifically improved the skills of OLMCs with respect to the new ICT and created new content of value to these communities. This support included funding for Collège Boréal to create the Réseau ontarien francophone des centres d'accès communautaires à Internet, which encompasses 117 Francophone CAP sites.
 - In New Brunswick, a project involving Connect NB Branché is creating math, science and language courses for a bilingual on-line general education development program. When complete, this project will remove barriers to secondary education and will permit Francophones to complete their high school equivalency regardless of where in the province they reside.
- Since its inception, **Computers for Schools (CFS)**, an effective, low-cost program, has collected close to 514 000 donated computers from government, the private sector and other donors and given them to schools and libraries across Canada. In 2003-2004, 6040 refurbished computers were donated to schools in OLMCs, 4726 to Francophone schools outside Quebec and 1314 to Anglophone schools within Quebec. FedNor and the CFS program also supported the CFS computer repair and refurbishing workshop located in Sudbury, Ontario. Thanks to this project, 27 young information technology graduates were hired and obtained initial practical work experience as repair technicians.
 - **Canada's Digital Collections** program also helped to foster innovation and connectedness. This program provides youth with practical experience in creating content for Web sites. In 2003-2004, participation by OLMCs was excellent. Fourteen projects worth nearly \$350 000 were approved, and 57 youths from the Francophone minority communities took part.
 - The ***Francommunautés virtuelles* (FV)** program makes a big difference to Francophone minority communities and to all Canadians who appreciate quality French-language content on the Internet. Since 1998, the program has provided support for more than 140 projects. In March 2003, under the Action Plan for Official Languages, the government announced the renewal of the program, and funding of \$13 million over five years will allow FV to continue its support of non-profit organizations that are developing French-language Internet

content, applications and services. In 2003-2004, the FV program renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with Canadian Heritage; this agreement provided access to \$1 million for the call for proposals for the period 2003-2005.

- **Canada's SchoolNet** is a diverse, multi-faceted program designed to create content and on-line learning tools that will contribute to the development of Canadian communities, including OLMCs. The program makes it possible for OLMCs to establish partnerships at the international level, as well with other OLMCs, and helps communities to prepare for the future. Canada's SchoolNet program has the following components: SchoolNet, Grassroots, Network of Innovative Schools, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Camps and Multimedia Learning Group. In 2003-2004, Industry Canada invested about \$1.2 million to support 653 OLMC projects through Canada's SchoolNet program.
- The **Smart Communities** program develops a range of on-line resources in both official languages to assist all Canadian communities in developing and implementing their own Smart Communities strategies. These strategies create opportunities for learning, as the communities share information about Smart activities, experiences and lessons learned. They also provide new business opportunities, domestically and internationally, for Canadian companies developing and delivering ICT applications and services. Various projects were supported in association with four sponsoring organizations: Association franco-culturelle de Yellowknife; Université Sainte-Anne, Nova Scotia; Municipalité de Clare, Nova Scotia; and *Le Courrier de la Nouvelle-Écosse* (a French newspaper), Nova Scotia.

One of the organizations that received funding in 2003-2004, Collectivité ingénieuse de la Péninsule acadienne (CIPA) inc., received \$1.2 million, out of a total of \$4.5 million over three years, for the New Brunswick Smart Communities Demonstration Project.

- The **Information Management/Information Technology (IM/IT)** program focused on providing the voluntary sector with access to information technology planning, expert advice, current hardware and software, training, and technical support. These services are important for OLMCs, where volunteers provide much-needed support to fledgling businesses and to educational and cultural enterprises. In 2003-2004, Francophone minority community organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba and British Columbia participated as partners with the recipient organizations.
- To date, the **Broadband for Rural and Northern Development Pilot Program** has invested a total of \$83.2 million¹ to assist communities without broadband access. Most often, improved access is needed in First Nations, northern and rural communities to provide services in the areas of health and education, as well as to augment economic opportunities.

¹ Of the full Broadband for Rural and Northern Development Pilot Program, \$4.2 million was invested in 154 business plan development projects representing approximately 2286 communities. In addition, \$79 million was invested in 58 projects to deploy broadband networks in approximately 850 communities. These estimates were derived from 2001 census data, using community boundaries based on Statistics Canada Dissemination Areas and Canada Post naming conventions.

Because of the nature of the program, it is difficult to ascertain the amount of investment pertaining solely to OLMCs. Nonetheless, it is estimated that the business plan development phase and the broadband deployment phase of the program reached approximately 64 and 79 OLMCs, respectively, in 2003 and 2004², as geographic communities.

Making broadband access available to all communities is a key commitment for the Government of Canada. New Brunswick offers a good example of strategic deployment in this area. Ninety percent of New Brunswickers will have access to high-speed Internet by the end of 2006 through a \$44.6 million public-private partnership involving Industry Canada, Infrastructure Canada, the provincial government and Aliant Inc. So far, all schools in the province have been connected. In the past year, the effort continued to extend these networks to most businesses and all regional health care centres, business parks and First Nations communities, providing many advanced broadband services for OLMCs.

- The **Student Connections (SC)** program, of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy, works with the Association of Canadian Community Colleges to hire and provide specialized training to student employees, who are typically computer science or business students in their third or fourth year of study. As certified Student Business Advisors they provide short, practical, hands-on e-commerce and Internet training sessions to small businesses and seniors across Canada. In the past year, 35 youths from OLMCs were trained and certified, representing an investment of \$213 000. This program constitutes a win-win strategy for the youths and those they serve.
- **Canada Business Service Centres (CBSCs)** were initiated 10 years ago. Their purpose is to assist entrepreneurs in identifying government resources that will help them to compete and prosper. In the past year, efforts to provide better services in French continued in the territories. For example, CBSCs in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and the Yukon put in place measures to ensure that minority language service requests are answered effectively. The CBSC program won a prestigious award in 2004, the United Nations Public Service Award for Improvement of Public Service Results.
- The **Canada-Ontario Infrastructure Program (COIP)** allows the federal government to make a significant contribution to the quality of life of Ontario citizens. The program's main priority is the creation of "green" municipal infrastructure, but it also invests in sports, culture, tourism, transportation and innovation. Between April 1, 2003, and March 31, 2004, Industry Canada announced that 71 projects had been approved, for a total Government of Canada contribution of more than \$94 million. Of those 71 projects, 12 have directly benefited OLMCs as geographic entities, including localities with an OLMC population of more than 5 percent or with a minority population of at least 5000 citizens.

² This estimate was derived from 2001 census data using community boundaries based on Statistics Canada Dissemination Areas and Canada Post naming conventions for communities with an OLMC population of more than 5 percent or with a minority population of at least 5000. Similarly, for the full Broadband for Rural and Northern Development Pilot Program, it is estimated that the business plan development phase and the broadband deployment phase of the program reached approximately 360 and 115 OLMCs, respectively.

1.4 Partnerships

Partnerships with other government departments and organizations allow Industry Canada to leverage support for some of its most innovative projects with the OLMCs.

Three noteworthy achievements of the past year are described here:

- The department supported a pilot project on mentoring, carried out by the Centre des jeunes francophones in Toronto. The project paired young Francophone immigrants interested in starting their own businesses with older, established entrepreneurs. Five successful matches were made. The results of the project will be shared, and it is hoped that this pilot project will serve as a model for other regions.
- The Department of Canadian Heritage provided \$1 million in funding support for Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program. Industry Canada invested another \$1 million.
- Under the IPOLC, Industry Canada contributed \$246 127 toward five initiatives in 2003-2004. Since the start of the IPOLC, Industry Canada and the Department of Canadian Heritage have contributed a total of more than \$2.5 million to 28 projects. These projects, which are mostly related to connectivity or the use of ICT, have encouraged the development of ICT skills and community capacity-building among OLMCs. One example of the positive impact of this partnership on the OLMCs is a pilot project on learning technologies, implemented through the establishment of a virtual language laboratory. This FedNor-supported project was carried out by Collège Boréal.

The number of communities that directly participated in and benefited from Industry Canada's programs and services represents only part of the picture. Through new technologies, Web sites, tele-learning and tele-training projects, and sharing of information, it is believed that these activities may have reached well beyond their target audiences.

2. New Programs

The Government of Canada's Action Plan for Official Languages, approved in 2003, set the tone for a renewed federal commitment to the OLMCs. The Action Plan has put the needs of the OLMCs at the top of the agenda in Industry Canada and other departments. Also, the Action Plan entails significant investments in major initiatives.

The Action Plan allocated \$33 million for economic development initiatives and \$20 million for language industry initiatives to Industry Canada and the National Research Council of Canada. Funding began in 2003-2004 and will last for five years. Under the economic development

component, an integrated management framework was established by the department, in association with the regional development agencies, for the delivery of activities approved under the Action Plan. The Action Plan provided \$13 million in new funding for *Francommunautés virtuelles*, the program that enables individuals, associations and communities to share information over the Internet, especially regarding economic and community development. In addition, Industry Canada established a network of advisors to work directly with the OLMCs in the regions. These advisors will bridge the gap between the communities and the department and regional development agencies. Their job is to keep the communities informed of programs and services and to make certain they know how to tap into them. The advisors are well positioned to bring the concerns and interests of the OLMCs to the attention of managers. In 2003-2004, two advisors have been hired, and the full complement of advisors will be put into place in the coming months. As well, the Action Plan provided financing for internships and pilot projects involving tele-learning and tele-training. The department worked with the regional development agencies to advise the minority communities about these initiatives, and planning was undertaken to launch the internship initiatives in 2004-2005.

The Action Plan for Official Languages also identified the promotion and development of the language industry — training, translation and language technologies — as essential to a bilingual country like Canada. It dedicated \$20 million for the delivery of language products and services, half of which will assist the industry in becoming a strong, effective and viable economic sector and in raising its profile through marketing and branding strategies. The other \$10 million was allocated to the National Research Council of Canada to establish the Language Technologies Research Centre in co-operation with l'Université du Québec en Outaouais and the Translation Bureau. Operations have begun, and additional funds from CED and the Quebec government were announced in May 2004 for the construction of a building to house the Centre. The Language Industry Association (AILIA) was created, and national networking activities were undertaken as part of an overall marketing and branding strategy. Furthermore, the Language Industry Program, a contribution program for small and medium enterprises, was established and is being implemented by Industry Canada.

Finally, an interdepartmental working group was created in support of French on the Internet. The group commissioned several projects, including a theme-based bibliography and a webography as well as a contact list of Internet experts. Also, an electronic forum was set up and became operational.

3. Conclusion

More work lies ahead in the department's efforts to work more closely with the communities and assist them in their economic development. The Strategic Framework for the implementation of Section 41 will help Industry Canada to focus on program areas where there is particular need and that offer the best chances of success: Connectivity, Youth and Connectivity, Communications and Information Tools, Tele-training and Tele-learning, Internships and FedNor initiatives. There will also be much work on the initiatives set out in the government's Action Plan for Official Languages, especially in the area of economic development and the language industry. In the coming year, the advisor network will be completed, and soon the full complement of advisors will be in the field, working with the OLMCs.

The department will monitor all these activities closely, to make certain they fulfill our commitments to the communities. We will look for tangible results and seek feedback from the OLMCs on their effectiveness. At the same time, we remain committed to a continuous dialogue with the OLMCs at the community, regional and national levels.

Industry Canada's ongoing programs and the important new measures and initiatives that are being undertaken, as well as the department's closer ties with the communities, all contribute to a high level of anticipation for success. All players — the department, the regional development agencies, the partners and the OLMCs themselves — look forward to an even more productive year in 2004-2005.

2003-2004 Key Achievements *
Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs)

SECTOR/PROGRAM	INVESTMENT (\$)	NUMBER OF PROJECTS	COMMENTS
Information Highway Applications Branch (IHAB) — Community Access Program	2 124 876		338 Francophone centres outside Quebec 25 Anglophone centres within Quebec
IHAB — Canada's Digital Collections	348 530	14	57 young Canadians acquired practical work experience in the multimedia sector
IHAB — Computers for Schools (CFS)		6040 computers delivered	4726 computers to Francophone schools 1314 computers to Anglophone schools
• CFS computer repair and refurbishing workshop	141 792		Investment by FedNor, \$95 000; investment by CFS program, \$46 792
IHAB — <i>Francommunautés virtuelles</i>	Call for proposals for 2003-2005 period launched in December 2003		
IHAB — Canada's SchoolNet Program: Total investment: \$1 201 622			
• SchoolNet	625 000	7	
• Grassroots	367 800	636	577 projects in French outside Quebec 59 projects in English within Quebec
• Network of Innovative Schools	60 000	6	2 projects in French outside Quebec 4 projects in English within Quebec
• Innovation and Entrepreneurship Camps	12 672	1	
• Multimedia Learning Group	136 150	3	
IHAB — Smart Communities	1 200 000	1	Project with Collectivité ingénieuse de la Péninsule acadienne (CIPA) inc.
Chief Information Office (CIO) — Student Connections	213 000		Funded salaries and activities for 35 OLMC students: 8 outside Quebec who declared French as first language and 27 within Quebec who declared English as first language
Operations Sector (OPS) — Section 41 and French on the Internet	1 131 381		Includes operations and maintenance (O & M) and salaries
FedNor	2 000 000		

* This is not an exhaustive list, and some information concerning programs that have benefited OLMCs as geographic communities, such as Broadband for Rural and Northern Development Pilot Program and Canada–Ontario Infrastructure Program, is not available.

Webography

Broadband for Rural and Northern Development Pilot Program	http://www.broadband.gc.ca
Canada Business Service Centres	http://www.cbsc.org
Canada–Ontario Infrastructure Program	http://www.ic.gc.ca/coip-pico
Canada’s Digital Collections	http://collections.ic.gc.ca
Canada’s SchoolNet	http://www.schoolnet.ca
Community Access Program	http://cap.ic.gc.ca
Computers for Schools	http://cfs-ope.ic.gc.ca
<i>Francommunautés virtuelles</i>	http://francommunautes.ic.gc.ca/
Information Management/ Information Technology	http://www.vsi-isbc.ca/eng/imit/program.cfm
Language Industry Program	http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/internet/inlip-pil.nsf/en/home
Smart Communities	http://smartcommunities.ic.gc.ca
Student Connections	http://www.scp-ebb.com
CommunAction.ca	http://communaction.ca
ProAction 41 (intranet)	http://icweb.ic.gc.ca/proaction41