

Accountability framework (1994) for the implementation of sections 41 and 42 of the *Official Languages Act*

In August 1994, the Government of Canada approved the establishment of an **accountability framework** for the **implementation of sections 41 and 42 of the *Official Languages Act***. Section 41 commits the federal government to enhancing the vitality of English-speaking and French-speaking minority communities, as well as to fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society. This commitment ensures not only that official-language minority communities have access to services in their language, but also that **all federal institutions** actively contribute to the development and vitality of these communities.

Section 42 of the *Official Languages Act* mandates the Minister of Canadian Heritage to promote and encourage a coordinated approach to these commitments among federal institutions.

The main elements of the accountability framework are as follows:

- Initially, measures will **target a certain number of key federal institutions** in areas of intervention which are vital to the minority official-language communities and have the greatest impact on their development. The key federal institutions are primarily those involved in the areas of **economic, human resources and cultural development**.
- Each key federal institution develops an **action plan** for the implementation of section 41 which takes into account the specific needs of the official-language minority communities.
- The action plans are developed in consultation with the **official-language minority communities** in order to identify community needs and to allow institutions to take these into account in their activities.
- Each minister or agency head must submit its action plan to the Minister of Canadian Heritage and **produce an annual status report**.
- The **Minister of Canadian Heritage will report to Parliament** on the implementation of this governmental commitment via the Annual Report on Official Languages. The Annual Report will highlight the **results** attained during the previous year by each key federal institution targeted by this framework.