



Public Service Human Resources
Management Agency of Canada

Agence de gestion des ressources humaines
de la fonction publique du Canada

Annual Report on Official Languages

REPORT IN BRIEF
2005–06

Canada

**The annual report in its entirety is available
on a mini CD-ROM at the end of this document.**

Also available in alternative formats

Published by the Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canada

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, represented by
The President of the Treasury Board, 2007

Catalogue No. BT23-1/2006-1

ISBN 978-0-662-49801-8

This publication is also available at the following addresses:

<http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/ollo>

<http://publiservice.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/ollo>

Mandate of the Public Service Human Resources Management Agency of Canada

Serving as the focal point for the people management of the public service of Canada, the Agency works towards establishing a workforce and workplace that is second to none.

In striving towards this goal, the Agency exercises leadership through policy and partnerships; delivers services that support public servants, managers and the human resource community; and maintains the integrity of the human resource management system through monitoring, measuring and reporting. These are the tools the Agency uses to support federal departments, agencies and institutions in delivering advice to the Government and services to Canadians.

Mission of the Official Languages Branch

Within the Agency, the Official Languages Branch monitors federal institutions (the institutions) and periodically audits compliance with their linguistic obligations. Institutions

have the obligation to serve Canadians in the official language of their choice, in the circumstances provided for under the *Act*, establish and maintain a work environment that is conducive to the use of both official languages, and ensure that the workforce of institutions tends to reflect the presence in Canada of the Anglophone and Francophone communities, taking into account the characteristics of those institutions, their mandate, their public, and their location.

Canada's official languages policy

The *Official Languages Act* (the *Act*) and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* form a unique model whose most essential characteristic is what is known as “institutional bilingualism,” a concept defined as the obligation of institutions to communicate with the public and their employees in regions designated as bilingual, in both official languages. In this way, linguistic obligations rest on institutions rather than on individuals.

Official Languages Program

The Official Languages Program is based on the following four major pillars (the Agency is responsible for the first three):

1. Communications with and services to the public (Part IV of the *Act*), or the obligation of institutions to actively offer and provide services to the public in both official languages, and the corresponding right of the public to communicate with these offices and to obtain services in the official language of their choice, under certain circumstances, not only in person at a service counter but also by telephone or in writing. Service must be of equal quality in both official languages.
2. Language of work (Part V), or the obligation of institutions to establish work environments that are conducive to the use of both official languages in regions designated as bilingual for this purpose, and the corresponding right of federal employees to be able to work in the official language of their choice, within the limits defined in the *Act* and official languages policies.
3. Participation of English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians (Part VI), or the commitment to ensure that Anglophones and Francophones have equal opportunities for employment and advancement within its institutions, and that the composition of its workforce tends to reflect the presence in Canada of the two official language communities.
4. Advancement of English and French (Part VII), or the commitment to enhance the vitality of Anglophone and Francophone minorities in Canada and to support their development, to foster the full recognition and use of English and French in Canadian society, and to take positive measures to achieve these goals. In November 2005, Part VII of the *Act* became justiciable, strengthening the commitment with regard to fostering the use of English and French and requiring institutions to take “positive measures” to implement this commitment.

Evaluation of the governance of the Official Languages Program

Leadership

Management is generally well aware of its responsibilities, and the Agency strongly encourages managers to provide sustained leadership in concrete ways. Here are a few encouraging results:

- Institutions are increasingly taking official languages into account in all their initiatives. Official languages are discussed at management committee meetings, and are incorporated into communications strategies, action plans, human resources planning, strategic planning, and supervisors' performance agreements, etc.
- Deputy heads approve the vast majority of official languages annual reviews, which is a very positive development. However, in some cases there are serious delays.

A number of institutional mechanisms support the government's commitment to official languages:

- advisory committees within institutions, which serve as forums for working together and mobilizing key stakeholders;
- official languages champions and co-champions, who act as ambassadors and leaders within institutions;
- regional federal councils, which serve as forums and networks for sharing information and initiatives in order to modernize the public service and respond more effectively to the particular needs of regions;
- agency portfolio officers, who provide liaison with institutions.

The Agency has also set up horizontal activities to facilitate discussions and information sharing:

- An "Official Languages Good Practices Forum" was held in the National Capital Region in November 2005.
- A second joint meeting including champions from departments and from Crown corporations was held. The networks had been meeting separately once a year since they were first set up in 1997-98.

Accountability

In a context where accountability and reporting have taken on increased importance, institutions must, in addition to reporting their achievements, evaluate their performance against the three pillars (Parts IV, V and VI of the *Act*) that fall under the Agency's responsibility and report on these to the Agency, in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in Treasury Board policies.

To strengthen accountability within institutions, the Agency has developed audit and self-evaluation tools that will help them to improve their performance. It has also continued its efforts to improve awareness and support within the institutions subject to the *Act*. The Agency has strengthened its monitoring of these institutions and has provided them with the tools they need to place more emphasis on concrete results in their annual reviews.

Information management

The Agency uses various information systems in its audit and monitoring activities; institutions are responsible for keeping their official languages data as up to date as possible. Although

the overall situation is improving, some institutions still have difficulty ensuring proper management of their official languages information.

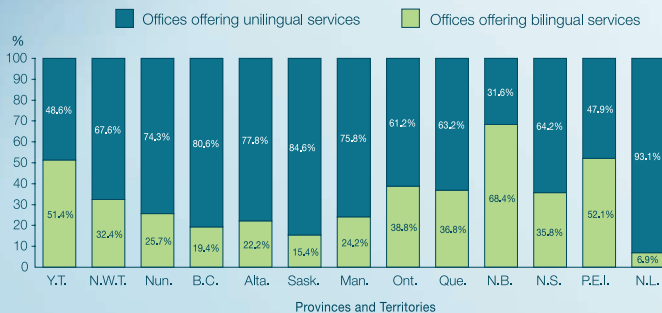
The Agency encourages institutions that are part of the core public administration to update their data in the Position and Classification Information System more regularly, and it will provide them with tools that will allow them to closely monitor their progress.

Evaluation of the implementation of the Official Languages Program

Service to the public

Under Part IV of the *Act* and the *Official Languages Regulations – Communications with and Services to the Public* (the *Regulations*), Canadians have the right, in certain circumstances, to be served by institutions in the official language of their choice. There are 11,973 offices and facilities in institutions subject to the *Act*, of which 4,003 (33.4 per cent) are required to provide services in both official languages.

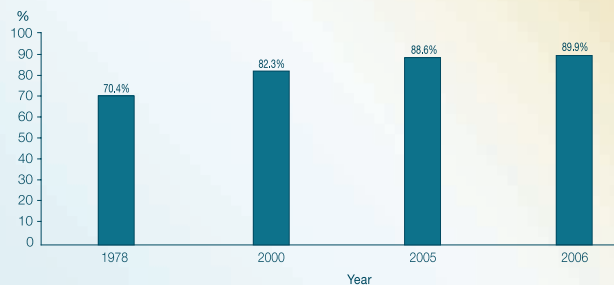
Distribution of Offices and Facilities that are Required or not Required to Provide Services in Both Official Languages, by Province or Territory



Other offices include 632 offices and facilities located outside Canada, and routes and toll-free telephone services.
 Note: Offices offering unilingual services in French are located in Quebec and those offering unilingual services in English are located elsewhere in Canada.

Source: Burotis

Service to the Public—Incumbents of Bilingual Positions who Meet their Language Requirements*



* See Table 6

Source: Position and Classification Information System (PCIS)

Here are some of the results:

- Overall, communications and services are available in both official languages in offices and facilities designated as bilingual. The number of incumbents in bilingual positions having to serve the public who met the language requirements of their position reached 89.9 per cent. This is an increase of more than one percentage point over the previous year.

- Information on the institutions' Web sites is generally posted in both languages. However, the English and French content are not always of equal quality and information is not systematically released simultaneously in both languages.
- Generally, the active offer of bilingual services through signage is not a problem. However, bilingual greetings in person or on the telephone are problematic.

- Some institutions call upon third parties to communicate with and provide services to the public, and most institutions include a clause on linguistic obligations in their contracts. However, there is a need to more closely monitor compliance with those clauses.
- Language proficiency associated with bilingual positions for the purpose of service to the public has improved considerably since 1978. The percentage of positions designated bilingual at the superior level (level C) for this purpose has more than quadrupled since 1978, rising from 8.4 per cent to 33.7 per cent in 2006.

Service to the Public—Superior Level (Level C) of Second Language Proficiency Required (Oral Interaction)*



* See Table 7

Source: Position and Classification Information Systems (PCIS)

- A compliance review of the *Regulations* carried out in the last fiscal year brought dual-language obligations to a number of offices.

- The Agency conducted audits this year in Quebec, Ontario and Alberta, the results of which will be made available during the 2007-08 fiscal year.

Language of work

Part V of the *Act* provides that English and French are the languages of work in institutions. Thus, in regions designated as bilingual, employees, under certain conditions, have the right to work and be supervised in the official language of their choice. Institutions must create a work environment that is conducive to the effective use of both official languages. Senior management plays a decisive role in this regard.

Here are some of the results:

- In general, work instruments and computer systems are available in both official languages. Also, employees who occupy a position designated as bilingual or reversible are generally supervised and evaluated in the official language of their choice. However, there are shortcomings in communications for employees, which are not always issued at the same time in both official languages. Language quality is not always equal in the two languages.

- Personal and central services are accessible in both official languages in the core public administration (the institutions for which Treasury Board is the employer). Of employees who provide such services, 89.8 per cent meet the language requirements of their position, compared with 88.6 per cent in the previous fiscal year. The situation seems comparable in institutions that are not part of the core public administration.

- There was a marked increase in the percentage of executives (EXs) who met the language requirements of their position: 92.9 per cent as at March 31, 2006, compared with 84.4 per cent the previous year.
- Lastly, Treasury Board established an implementation principle to allow employees who work in a head office situated in a region that is designated as bilingual to maintain their language-of-work rights if the head office is relocated to a unilingual region.

Personal and Central Services—Bilingual Positions in the Core Public Administration—Linguistic Status of Incumbents

Year	Meet		Do not Meet				Incomplete Records		Total
			Exempted		Must Meet				
2005	38,225	88.6%	2,516	5.8%	1,279	3.0%	1,111	2.6%	43,131
2006	42,016	89.8%	2,582	5.5%	923	2.0%	1,284	2.7%	46,805

Source: Position and Classification Information System (PCIS)

Human resources management (including equitable participation)

Part VI of the *Act* requires that the composition of the workforce of institutions tends to reflect the presence of both official language communities in Canada. As at March 31, 2006, bilingual positions made up 40.1 per cent of all core public administration positions. The other positions are designated unilingual and are

distributed as follows: 51.3 per cent English essential, 4.1 per cent French essential, and 4.4 per cent reversible (English or French).

Here are some of the results:

- The level of language proficiency required has increased considerably over the years: the percentage of incumbents requiring superior proficiency (level C) was 31.2 per cent in 2006, compared with 7.2 per cent in 1978.

Language Requirements of Positions in the Core Public Administration

Year	Bilingual		English Essential		French Essential		English or French Essential		Incomplete Records		Total
1978	52,300	24.7%	128,196	60.5%	17,260	8.1%	14,129	6.7%	0	0.0%	211,885
2000	50,535	35.3%	75,552	52.8%	8,355	5.8%	7,132	5.0%	1,478	1.0%	143,052
2005	65,884	39.7%	84,200	50.8%	7,490	4.5%	8,022	4.8%	235	0.1%	165,831
2006	71,269	40.1%	91,284	51.3%	7,247	4.1%	7,848	4.4%	131	0.1%	177,779

Source: Position and Classification Information System (PCIS)

Bilingual Positions in the Core Public Administration— Level of Second-Language Proficiency Required (Oral Interaction)

Year	Level C		Level B		Level A		Other		Total
1978	3,771	7.2%	30,983	59.2%	13,816	26.4%	3,730	7.1%	52,300
2000	12,836	25.4%	34,677	68.6%	1,085	2.1%	1,937	3.8%	50,535
2005	20,514	31.1%	42,479	64.5%	1,011	1.5%	1,880	2.9%	65,884
2006	22,216	31.2%	45,674	64.1%	1,000	1.4%	2,379	3.3%	71,269

Source: Position and Classification Information System (PCIS)

- As at March 31, 2006, the rate of participation of Anglophones in all institutions subject to the *Act* stood at 73.3 per cent, and that of Francophones at 26.7 per cent. For the core public administration, these rates were respectively 68.6 per cent and 31.4 per cent. The two official language communities are therefore relatively well represented, in light of the most recent statistics from the *2001 Census of Canada*.
- The 2005-06 fiscal year saw an improvement in the representation of Anglophones in Quebec. Their rate of participation in the core public administration (excluding the National Capital Region) was 7.7 per cent, compared with 6.9 per cent the previous year. This increase represents an important advance toward greater equity. Including the National Capital Region (Quebec side), Anglophones make up 12.9 per cent of the population of Quebec.
- Institutions are using language training less often to meet the language requirements of positions and are increasingly offering language training from a career-development perspective.

Culture change

The Official Languages Program has made a major shift in recent years. Rooted in the values of respect, fairness and inclusiveness, it has adopted an approach based on achieving results and strengthening accountability.

The *Action Plan for Official Languages*, which was adopted in March 2003, earmarked \$64.6 million over five years to make the public service exemplary in official languages. The Agency is strengthening its role as a centre of excellence. Among the activities it has conducted to this end are a review of policy instruments and the development of a linguistic-needs designator tool.

Conclusion – Results for Canadians

The 2005-06 fiscal year witnessed notable progress in both the governance and the implementation of the Official Languages Program. The Agency will continue to work in close cooperation with its key partners and the institutions to ensure that Canadians and employees receive the quality service to which they are entitled, in both official languages.

Linguistic duality is one of the cornerstones of Canadian society, and the strength of our country depends on the promotion of equal opportunity for all its citizens. The values that characterize the federal public service are intrinsically related to the equal recognition of both official languages. To truly anchor bilingualism in the workplace and provide quality service to Canadians, we must strengthen this message. We must also convey the message that competence in both official languages is not merely a matter of obligation but an opportunity to access the world. It constitutes a real economic and social advantage, fosters career advancement, and broadens prospects for the future.