



Best Practices Manual on Francophone Immigration in Canada



CONFÉRENCE MINISTÉRIELLE
SUR LA FRANCOPHONIE
CANADIENNE | MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON THE CANADIAN
FRANCOPHONIE



FÉDÉRATION DES COMMUNAUTÉS
FRANCOPHONES ET ACADIENNES
du Canada

Message from

Les Linklater, Official Languages Champion, Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Immigration is essential to preserving and enhancing the vitality of official language minority communities. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is working with its many federal, provincial, territorial and community partners to ensure that these communities reap the benefits of immigration. I am therefore pleased to present this collection of best practices—an innovative tool developed by the Metropolis Project in collaboration with the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophone—which is a testimony of the efforts of all those who work in the area of Francophone immigration.

The collection is a clear demonstration of the proactive approach taken by the various players from across the country to develop integrated services for Francophone clients. This comprehensive continuum of objectives, actions and results—from community promotion to immigrant recruitment, integration and retention—reflects the richness of these initiatives. Another feature of these practices is that the

identification of the issues and the search for solutions was done in consultation with Francophone minority communities themselves. This invaluable collaboration has formed the foundation of CIC's approach since the development of the *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities* (2003).

In addition, the inclusion of provincial and community practices demonstrates that leadership is thriving in all sectors and that creativity and local distinctiveness are supporting the quest for greater and more diverse Francophone immigration. Finally, sharing experiences as a way of addressing the challenges relating to Francophone immigration enables us to learn from these promising initiatives, to repeat them, to adapt them, and to build on them. I hope you enjoy reading the collection and that it will encourage many of you to follow through with your innovative ideas.

Les Linklater
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MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE CANADIAN FRANCOPHONIE | CONFÉRENCE MINISTÉRIELLE SUR LA FRANCOPHONIE CANADIENNE

An Open, Dynamic Francophonie that Contributes to and Participates Fully in the Growth of Canadian Society

The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, created in 1994, is the only intergovernmental forum made up of ministers responsible for the Canadian Francophonie from all levels of government. The ministers meet annually to focus on various topics and to engage in dialogue aimed at fostering the development of the Canadian Francophonie.

The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie firmly believes that immigration is an essential means of increasing the Francophone population in Canada. At their last meeting held in September 2009 in Vancouver, the ministers

reaffirmed the importance of Francophone immigration in Canada, and undertook to play a strategic role in this portfolio.

The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie is therefore proud to be associated with the publication of the *Best Practices Manual on Francophone Immigration in Canada*, which promotes Canada's accomplishments in the area of Francophone immigration. The action strategies and initiatives included in this collection demonstrate the governments' commitment to Francophone immigration.



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HORIZONTAL INITIATIVES



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada

Citizenship and Immigration- Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee

By Marie Eve Roy Marcoux
Citizenship and Immigration Canada

ISSUE

During the Dialogue tour organized by the *Fédération des communautés Francophones et acadienne du Canada* (FCFA) between 1999 and 2001 in Francophone communities, immigration and its importance to the vitality of the communities was addressed at length. It was discovered that Francophone minority communities (FMCs) had not benefited as much from immigration as anglophone communities had. At that time, an estimated 75 percent of Francophone immigrants chose to settle in Quebec. The tour report recommended that a national committee be convened to develop an action plan on Francophone immigration to remedy the situation. In 2001, the FCFA approached Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to discuss the next steps.

SOLUTION

CIC created the Citizenship and Immigration Canada–Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee in 2002 to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants in FMCs.

DESCRIPTION

The Steering Committee is co-chaired by the Official Languages Champion at CIC and one member of the community. It brings together federal, provincial, territorial and community partners in order to develop and implement a strategy to foster immigration to FMCs. The makeup of the Committee reflects the complexity of the issue and the magnitude of the efforts required to attract, welcome, integrate and retain French-speaking immigrants in FMCs. The Committee adopted a two-phase approach—develop a strategic framework and develop national, provincial and territorial action plans. In November 2003, the Steering Committee initiated the Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, the objectives of which are to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants to give more demographic weight to FMCs; to improve the capacity of FMCs to receive Francophone newcomers and to strengthen their reception and settlement infrastructures for newcomers; to ensure the economic, social and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants into Canadian society and into FMCs; and to foster regionalization of Francophone immigration.



In September 2006, the steering committee made public the Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, which calls for a series of long-term initiatives to meet the framework's objectives. To report on the progress made in implementing the strategic plan, the steering committee established an implementation committee.

WHY IS IT A BEST PRACTICE?

The Steering Committee is a best practice because not only were federal, provincial and territorial partners brought together, but these partners were made accountable for reaching the objectives outlined by the Committee through the establishment of each partners' roles and responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the Francophone and Acadian communities to take on the immigration issue, identify the communities' needs, accept greater accountability for the changes in attitude, and establish conditions for reaching the objectives of the Strategic Framework. As the initiative's Champion, CIC is working actively on implementing the Strategic Framework and on developing and implementing the national, provincial and territorial action plans. The government partners (federal, provincial and territorial) are involved in establishing and implementing the action plans through active engagement.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The establishment of the Steering Committee has resulted in numerous achievements, including ensuring the initiative's horizontality through the participation of the other departments by fostering their willingness to play a role in immigration matters through their respective programs; committing the provinces and territories to contributing to the federal government's Francophone immigration efforts; and ensuring alignment between the vision and priorities, and the guidelines sent to the regions regarding targets to achieve.

NEXT STEPS

The steering committee continues to meet once a year to monitor the implementation committee's activities and to continue discussing matters related to immigration to FMCs. The steering committee's meetings also enable partners to discuss their programs, projects, challenges and successes. The next meeting will take place in spring 2010.





Implementation of Part VII of the “Official Languages Act” at Citizenship and Immigration Canada

By Danielle Gaeremynck
Citizenship and Immigration Canada

ISSUE

Under Part VII (sections 41 and 42) of the “Official Languages Act”, the Government of Canada is committed to enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada, to supporting their development, and to fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society. Amendments to the Act in 2005 established the duty of every federal institution to take positive measures to implement that commitment. If they are to fulfil that duty, federal institutions have to listen to what official language minority communities (OLMCs) are saying. They also have to make sure that their programs and policies consider the needs of those communities and promote linguistic duality.

CONTEXT

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) is a designated institution under the accountability framework for the implementation of sections 41 and 42 of the Act. As a result, CIC must submit a multi-year action plan and an annual report to the Department of Canadian Heritage, which in turn reports to Parliament on the results achieved by all designated institutions.

Every institution has a national section 41 coordinator, whose role is to ensure that the

institution is taking the measures needed to fulfil its responsibilities regarding community development and the promotion of English and French in Canada. Each institution also has an assistant coordinator and regional coordinators.

SOLUTION

CIC implements Part VII of the Act in the following ways:

- implementing a strategic plan to promote immigration in Francophone minority communities;
- carrying out activities across Canada and abroad to attract and retain Francophone immigrants;
- developing activities to support anglophone minority communities in Quebec, particularly research projects, activities related to the multiculturalism program and citizenship ceremonies conducted in English; and
- fostering awareness within the department, carrying out other departmental initiatives and processing official languages complaints.

Section 42 of the Act states that the Minister of Canadian Heritage shall encourage and promote a coordinated approach to meeting the federal government’s commitment. To that end, the Interdepartmental Coordination Directorate (ICD) at the Department of Canadian Heritage manages



a network of national coordinators responsible implementing section 41 of the Act in designated federal institutions. Its members meet four times a year to share information and best practices. The ICD also provides training, advice and tools, including Gateway 41, a virtual community of national coordinators. Canadian Heritage also publishes *Bulletin 41-42*, which showcases the measures federal institutions have taken to support OLMC development and promote linguistic duality. The ICD analyses action plans, reports on results related to implementing section 41 and makes recommendations to federal institutions. Canadian Heritage officers also encourage collaboration among federal institutions in their province or territory.

Interdepartmental coordination is also supported by a network of Canadian Heritage officers responsible for encouraging collaboration among federal institutions in their province or territory. Interdepartmental coordination constitutes a best practice. Time and again, it has helped federal institutions like CIC by advancing efforts to enhance the vitality and support and assist the development of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.





Canada-Wide Network of Provincial and Territorial Coordinators Responsible for Francophone Immigration

By Sylvie Moreau

Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada

ISSUE

In 2006, the CIC-FMC Steering Committee launched the 2006–2011 Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities. With this launch, the committee opted for an approach that, while recognizing the importance of coordination at the national level, favoured the creation of local networks to develop open and inclusive Francophone communities that could receive French-speaking immigrants, meet their needs and help them integrate, while taking into account realities on the ground. In 2006, Francophone and Acadian communities were involved in immigration to very different degrees; some were not adequately prepared to receive and integrate newcomers. This uneven development raised issues and challenges related to setting up provincial networks and to mobilizing communities and other partners to carry out the strategic plan by recruiting, receiving and integrating immigrants.

SOLUTION

The *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada* continues to play a leadership role in Francophone immigration.

With CIC, it supports the work of the CIC-FMC Steering Committee, fosters cooperation among official provincial and national Francophone organizations regarding immigration, and supports the development of local networks. In June and July 2007, the FCFA toured several regions to get a picture of existing or emerging local networks. Beyond coordination through the steering committee—on which community representatives from each province and territory sit—the FCFA identified a need for increased consultation among coordinators who set up and organize support for local networks. Most of those responsible were already involved in official Francophone organizations, except in provinces such as Ontario, where players already involved on the ground were mobilized for this purpose.

The Canada-Wide Network of Provincial and Territorial Coordinators Responsible for Francophone Immigration is thus widening its role beyond the members of the FCFA. Francophone immigration coordinators all help the networks implement the five objectives of the strategic plan, according to the needs of their respective regions. The FCFA, through this immigration network, has put in place a winning collaboration to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities



many people encounter. The ultimate goal is to identify common issues related to setting up local networks, implementing the strategic plan, developing communication tools, exchanging expertise and practices, and providing occupational training. This approach makes it possible to maximize resources and emerging experiences in each province to optimize results in dealing with French-speaking immigrants.

To achieve this, the Canada-wide network has developed a collaborative structure that does the following:

- brings together coordinators and people responsible from nine provinces and two territories through
 - annual or biannual meetings,
 - quarterly and thematic teleconferences (such as pre- and post- Destination Canada teleconferences),
 - a regular electronic exchange of tools and information, consultations, and identification of common issues or issues specific to a region;
- makes it possible to develop a frame of reference for the network's mandate, as well as a list of common indicators to support and measure progress; and
- helps communities work together beyond specific projects by managing a series of long-term initiatives.

The Canada-wide network has also undertaken the following communication activities:

- publishing the *Bulletin Point d'arrivée* (biannual since 2006) and circulating it widely;
- creating an online directory for sharing good practices (slated for March 2010); and
- collecting data.

It has also offered the following training and expertise exchange opportunities:

- an immigration-related tour of Quebec regions (October 2008);
- a professional exchange day with the boards of associations of French-speaking jurists (January 2009); and
- occupational training in reception and integration of newcomers, in collaboration with the Saskatchewan Immigration Network (September 2009).

NEXT STEPS

The Francophone immigration issue is complex, for it requires the involvement of a number of community and governmental partners. Since 2006, significant progress has been made. However, a number of challenges remain. The Francophone and Acadian communities and the Francophone immigration networks organizing the efforts of partners on the ground have a decisive role to play in strengthening and giving concrete expression to this common objective of a diversified, welcoming and inclusive Francophonie, with all its subtleties and challenges. To support them, the Canada-wide network has to intensify the work begun and improve communication, ongoing training, evaluation, involvement and partnership among the players.





Nova Scotia - Community: A Real Partnership

By Joëlle Désy
Government of Nova Scotia

CONTEXT

In July 2009, the population of Nova Scotia was 938,183, or 2.8% of the total population of Canada. For several years now, the province has had one of the fastest aging populations; has had more senior citizens than young people; and has had a high median age of 42.6 years. Like many other provinces, it faces major demographic challenges.

Nova Scotia has about 10 Acadian and Francophone communities, almost all of them in rural areas. Francophones and Acadians make up 4% of the population, and most live in the southwestern part of the province or in greater Halifax. The Francophone population in urban areas is diverse, comprising Acadians, Quebeckers and Francophones from all over the world; in rural areas, it has deep Acadian roots.

IMMIGRATION STRATEGY

The Nova Scotia Office of Immigration was created in 2005 following a series of province-wide consultations, including one aimed specifically at representatives of Nova Scotia's Acadian and Francophone community. Nova Scotia's immigration strategy (2005) states that cooperation with partners is essential to implementing the strategy. One of the key partners is Nova Scotia's Acadian and Francophone community. The office wants to continue working

with that community under the new provincial immigration strategy.

FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION

Before 2005, immigration was rarely an issue for Francophone and Acadian community organizations. Since then, however, the community has taken a strong interest in immigration and become firmly committed to advancing the issue, to getting involved in different aspects of immigration and to laying the groundwork for Francophone immigration. Today, with French-speaking immigrants from Europe, the Middle East and Africa, Francophones account for almost 9% of immigrants to Nova Scotia.

PARTNERSHIP AND SUPPORT

The partnership between the Government of Nova Scotia and the community operates on many levels. First, the Office of Immigration and the *Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle Écosse* (FANE), which advocates for Francophone immigration, have forged a partnership for the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP). The partnership allows the FANE to recognize potential French-speaking immigrants who have established strong connections with the community; once they have that recognition, immigrants can apply to the Office of Immigration in the Community Identified Stream, a stream based on community needs. Communities can recognize or identify individuals who meet the economic needs of the



region or community and attract immigrants to rural areas, which is one of the objectives of the provincial strategy.

At the community's instigation, a steering committee on Francophone immigration in Nova Scotia was created to coordinate input from community groups and government bodies on initiatives related to Francophone immigration. The committee has developed a five-year strategy and an action plan in which all committee stakeholders are involved.

The Office of Immigration also provides financial support for organizations involved in Francophone immigration, including the FANE, which is responsible for intake, integration and settlement services; the Nova Scotia Economic Development Council, which deals with economic immigration and relations with Acadian employers; and the *Université Sainte-Anne*, which provides language training and labour market skills development for Francophone immigrants.

The government and the community work together closely to promote the province to potential immigrants at the annual Destination Canada job fair in France and Belgium. The Office of Immigration makes the initial contact with people at the fair, but it takes the entire team to make recruitment happen.

CONCLUSION

Over the years, the Government of Nova Scotia and the province's Francophone and Acadian community have found common ground that has done much to advance Francophone immigration. Drawing on the success achieved and the challenges overcome since the Office of Immigration was created, the government plans to devise an insightful and cohesive new strategy in which it will reiterate its commitment to this special partner—Nova Scotia's Acadian and Francophone communities.





Meeting the Needs of Francophone Communities in New Brunswick

By the Government of New Brunswick

ISSUE

In November 2007, the Government of New Brunswick released “Our Action Plan to Be Self-Sufficient in New Brunswick”, which identifies Francophone immigration as a key component of the province’s population growth plan. To ensure greater success in attracting and recruiting Francophone and other newcomers to French-speaking regions of New Brunswick, as well as integrating and retaining them, the provincial government has to develop a strategic program.

SOLUTION

The Government of New Brunswick opted to take part in the immigration component of the Roadmap for Canada’s Linguistic Duality by signing a four-year, \$10-million agreement with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to support Francophone immigration in the province.

The Population Growth Secretariat (PGS)’s framework comprises four major long-term objectives:

1. increase the number of Francophone immigrants in New Brunswick communities;
2. strengthen the ability of New Brunswick’s Francophone community to attract and retain immigrants;

3. facilitate the economic integration of newcomers into New Brunswick’s Francophone communities; and
4. facilitate the socio-cultural integration of newcomers into Francophone communities in New Brunswick.

It will do the following to meet these objectives:

- support promotion of the province in Francophone markets and work to attract Francophone immigrants to New Brunswick;
- establish settlement support services in Francophone regions to ensure socio-economic integration;
- enlist local employers, businesses and economic development agencies; and
- improve promotion, recruitment and counselling initiatives.

More specifically, the PGS will create settlement capacity in Francophone regions of New Brunswick by helping immigrant services agencies improve their organizational capacity to serve and support newcomers. This effort includes a number of interdependent components:

- programs targeting women, youth, senior citizens and other groups that might benefit from such programs;
- employer involvement;



- language training; and
- activities designed to foster welcoming communities.

This capacity can be increased by providing training, facilitating professional development opportunities for agency employees, funding additional positions in order to meet staffing requirements, funding necessary programs not currently offered by agencies, or by improving or expanding the programs agencies currently offer in order to ensure that they meet the community's needs.

The proposed model will take into account the needs of newcomers and communities and will help to build the infrastructure needed to foster the social and economic integration of Francophone immigrants in New Brunswick. Communities will be given the tools they need to deal with diversity and multiculturalism issues in both rural and urban areas.

NEXT STEPS

The PGS will help strengthen communities through the following initiatives:

- ensure the continuity of newcomer resource centres by asking them to develop a business and funding plan based on regional needs, to adopt results-based management principles and to provide regular performance reports;
- provide financial support that is flexible, sustainable and adapted to regional needs;
- enhance the knowledge of committee members of good governance practices for not-for-profit organizations; and
- create a network to enable committees and centres to form inter-regional partnerships and to learn from one another's experiences.





British Columbia Francophone Immigration Steering Committee

By the Government of British Columbia

The British Columbia Francophone Immigration Steering Committee (BCFISC) develops activities to promote Francophone immigration and settlement in British Columbia. The committee is funded through an annual grant from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) based on the federal government's financial commitments to the recruitment and integration of immigrants, identified in the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008–2013: Acting for the Future.

ISSUE

Through the Agreement for Canada–British Columbia Cooperation on Immigration, CIC gives funding to B.C. to provide settlement services to immigrants, including French-language services, where justified. With a limited budget, the province aimed to develop effective projects that incorporate best practices in the field of immigration and settlement; to respond to the needs and concerns of B.C.'s Francophone community; and to work in parallel with the labour and economic development plans of B.C.'s Francophone population. To do so, the province needed a way to effectively involve the appropriate actors into the planning and decision-making process.

SOLUTION

The provincial and federal governments developed the BCFISC to ensure that the voices of immigration and economic development organizations, as well as the B.C. Francophone community, are taken into account in the development of Francophone immigration and recruitment projects. The current membership of the committee includes federal and provincial government officials involved in immigration and economic development, including staff from the B.C. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), Immigration and Welcome B.C., the Francophone Affairs Program, Western Economic Diversification (WED), and CIC Regional Headquarters. Participants from the Francophone community include the FFCB, the *Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique* (SDÉCB) and the *Éducentre* (the provincial Francophone post-secondary education institution). This diverse group of participants was selected to ensure that a wide range of opinions and ideas is taken into account, and that the activities and expertise of various groups are effectively leveraged in the development of immigration projects. Other organizations may participate in the BCFISC on an ad hoc basis, when their advice is required.



The BCFISC meets at least bi-monthly to talk about activities, direction and opportunities. It usually discusses planning activities for the year in July and August, and submits a proposal of activities to CIC by September. It then carries out activities between September and April of the following year, and submits an annual report in May. The BCFISC works collectively to develop ideas and projects. Then, a lead for each project coordinates the implementation, referring to the BCFISC when further discussion is needed.

The BCFISC has proven to be an effective tool in developing and maximizing the benefits of Francophone immigration projects; its broad membership includes stakeholders from different backgrounds and with various interests. By including these various voices in project planning, the BCFISC ensures that projects incorporate best practices in immigration (CIC, the B.C. PNP, and Immigration and Welcome B.C.); issues of economic development (the SDÉCB and WED); and the concerns of the Francophone community (the FFCB, the *Éducentre* and the committee's Francophone Affairs Program). Each member has contributed positively to the committee. For example, the B.C. PNP has used its expertise to enhance B.C.'s participation in the Destination Canada recruitment event, with B.C. being the first province to bring employers and job offers to the fair.

The SDÉCB has also enhanced B.C.'s participation in Destination Canada by leveraging its networks to develop long-term economic and labour market ties. Recently, the SDÉCB and the Francophone Affairs Program successfully networked to secure a

booth to promote Francophone immigration at the *Place de la Francophonie*, the official Francophone cultural centre of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Also in the past year, the FFCB and the *Éducentre* highlighted the need for Francophone teachers in the province. As a result, the province showcased the education sector at this year's edition of Destination Canada, and worked with the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT) and Make a Future to use online tools to recruit Francophone teachers to the province. Through their expertise and networks, other members have also helped the BCFISC provide new opportunities and enhance existing activities.

NEXT STEPS

The BCFISC is implementing several new activities in 2009–10. For instance, it has promoted B.C.'s post-secondary education system to a Francophone audience and developed promotional campaigns related to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. These activities are in addition to continuing projects the BCFISC has developed and refined over the years, including its participation in Destination Canada, and information sessions on permanent residence opportunities for Francophones who are in B.C. on Working Holiday Visas (WHV). The BCFISC will study successes and lessons learned in the coming year to build on its experiences and develop new opportunities for the next fiscal year.



THEME 1: PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT



A Unique Approach to Newfoundland and Labrador's Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism's Partnership with the Francophone Community

By MaryAnn Scanlon
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

PAST CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

According to the 2006 Census, Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) is home to 2,225 Francophone residents. This population is dispersed over a vast territory, which presents challenges with respect to community solidarity and service delivery.

The Francophone population is primarily located in three regions: St. John's and its surrounding area, the Port au Port Peninsula and Western Labrador, with other clusters in Corner Brook, Gander, Stephenville, Happy Valley–Goose Bay and the Strait of Belle Isle area.

In 2006, a special consultation session on the provincial immigration strategy was held with representatives of the Francophone community in the province. During these consultations, stakeholders identified various issues and challenges pertaining to the Francophone community. In addition to indicating support for increased activities to promote the province in Francophone markets and for the enhancement of settlement services, stakeholders noted that

the Francophone community faced particular challenges caused by declining numbers. Maintaining the viability of Francophone facilities and services would require increasing the number of community members by recruiting and retaining Francophone newcomers.

SOLUTIONS

NL launched an immigration strategy in March 2007. In recognition of past issues and challenges within the province's Francophone communities, Goal 16 was created: "To increase the number of Francophone immigrants to the province."

The Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism began working in partnership with key stakeholders in the Francophone community. They include the Federation of Francophones of Newfoundland and Labrador, which promotes the rights and interests of the province's Francophone community, and aims to increase Francophone immigration to the province.



During the past three years, the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism has fostered a strong working relationship with the Francophone community, which has helped improve its service delivery, its recruitment and retention efforts, and community solidarity.

The Destination Canada job fair—which is organized by the Canadian embassy in France, in partnership with public agencies for employment and international mobility—is the office’s main way to recruit Francophone newcomers to the province. The office has participated in this event for three years and believes the unique structure of its recruitment team has become its best practice for Francophone recruitment.

The team consists of three representatives who provide valuable and unique perspectives on the province and why it is a wonderful place to live.

- The representative from the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism was born and raised in St. John’s. She chose to learn French and is passionate about the province.
- The consultant from the Francophone community is originally from Quebec but has been living in the province for several years. He is able to provide a Canadian Francophone perspective on why Newfoundland and Labrador was his preferred choice of destination in Canada.

- The representative from the Federation of Francophones of Newfoundland and Labrador was recruited from France during Destination Canada 2007. He tells potential immigrants about his real-life experience of immigrating to the province and outlines why it was an excellent decision.

The partnership of these three people is yielding positive results: an increase in the number of Francophones in the province.

NEXT STEPS

The province’s participation in Destination Canada has succeeded based on strong cooperation between the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism and the local Francophone community. They will continue to work together to reach their mutual goal of increasing the number of Francophones in the province. The office will continue to bring recruits from previous Destination Canada shows to speak to potential new recruits and to encourage them to choose Newfoundland and Labrador.





Manitoba's Strategy to Attract, Settle and Retain Francophone Immigrants

By Colin Lemoine
Government of Manitoba

STRATEGY

Increasing Francophone immigration is a key element of Manitoba's economic development and labour market strategies and a principle of the Canada–Manitoba Immigration Agreement.

Manitoba is developing a sound Francophone recruitment and retention strategy combining strategic initiatives of the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), community assets and strengths, and a strong partnership with the Government of Canada.

LONG-TERM GOAL

Manitoba aims to increase total annual arrivals to 20,000 by 2016. The province's long-term goal is to increase the level of Francophone immigrants to 7% of Manitoba's annual immigration intake, representing the community's proportional share of immigration and offsetting the effects of assimilation.

INITIATIVES

In collaboration with its major community partners—including the *Société franco-manitobaine* (SFM), the *Centre de développement économique du Manitoba* (CDEM), the *Association nationale et internationale du Manitoba* (ANIM), *Pluri-elles*, the *Amicale de la Francophonie*, the *Association des Juristes d'expression française du Manitoba* (AJEFM), the *Collège universitaire Saint-Boniface* (CUSB) and

the *Division scolaire franco-manitobaine* (DSFM)—Manitoba is working on targeted promotion and recruitment campaigns and innovative settlement and retention initiatives.

PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS

Two of the fundamental reasons for Manitoba's success in immigration and settlement matters have been its creative and strategic approaches, and its confidence in piloting innovative options. To achieve its Francophone language targets, Manitoba must use the PNP proactively. The Government of Manitoba's activities include the following.

- It is participating with Francophone community representatives from the SFM and CUSB in promotion and recruitment missions in North and West African Francophone countries (Morocco, Tunisia, Ivory Coast, Senegal and Mali), in collaboration with Canadian immigration missions.
- It is partnering with the SFM to identify and pre-screen a set number of potential immigrants from France and Belgium who would be participating in a streamlined application pilot project under the PNP. One of the goals of the pilot project is to provide prospective immigrants with better pre-migration information, and then assist those who choose Manitoba, prepare them



for resettlement, and link them to Manitoba's Francophone communities and the community at large.

- The government is developing tools and promotional materials so that it can participate in targeted Francophone recruitment opportunities.
- It is working with the French ministry of education on a project that would allow certified teachers to undertake temporary education assignments in Manitoba.
- It is partnering with community organizations and institutions in Manitoba to recruit international students and to participate in other youth temporary exchange programs. Temporary work visas and international students have been a very beneficial source of permanent immigration to Manitoba.
- The government is working with ANIM, a new organization that provides services to expand the presence of Manitoba organizations and businesses in national and international Francophone markets, and that works to attract Francophone businesspeople to Manitoba. ANIM recently participated in Destination Canada recruitment forums in France and Belgium.

SETTLEMENT AND RETENTION

By working with the Francophone community, the government has developed a well-organized and sophisticated settlement and integration infrastructure to help Francophone newcomers successfully establish themselves in Manitoba.

A key to successful integration is to start the settlement process as early as possible. Before arriving in Manitoba, prospective immigrants receive pre-arrival settlement planning information and tools to help them prepare for labour market success. They are also registered through a centralized system that will refer them to the appropriate settlement services when they arrive in Canada. Francophone agencies offer many of these services, including arrival orientation, housing support services, language training, employment support services and business start-up assistance.

Recent initiatives include the following.

- *Abri Marguerite*, a non-profit organization, has recently purchased five homes for use by newly arrived Francophone immigrants to Manitoba.
- The SFM established the *Accueil Francophone* in December 2003 to provide a variety of supports to help French-speaking newcomers settle in Manitoba.

RESULTS

Graham Fraser, Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages, has singled out Manitoba's strategy as the best in the country. Since 1999, Manitoba has attracted 2,100 French-speaking immigrants. In 2008, the province saw a 172% increase in French-speaking immigrant arrivals over 1999 figures. Through its settlement and integration strategy, Manitoba has achieved an 85% retention rate for provincial nominees. Momentum continues to build for gradual, pragmatic promotion, recruitment and retention objectives.





British Columbia's Strategy for Destination Canada

By the Government of British Columbia

OPPORTUNITY

Destination Canada is an annual event organized by the Canadian embassy in France, in partnership with French and Belgian public agencies for employment and international mobility, to promote Canada's minority Francophone communities to those interested in working and living in Canada, and to help provinces address their labour shortages.

Since 2006, the British Columbia Francophone Immigration Steering Committee (BCFISC), which promotes Francophone immigration and settlement in British Columbia, has funded select representatives to participate in Destination Canada.

The BCFISC takes advantage of the opportunity to

- a) promote B.C. to a Francophone audience;
- b) address B.C.'s labour market needs; and
- c) foster the development of Francophone communities in B.C.

STRATEGY AND RESULTS

The BCFISC selects the B.C. delegation for Destination Canada by focusing on priority sectors and featuring a B.C. region. This approach can be easily adapted based on the local conditions. In identifying the sector, the BCFISC considers

the current labour market climate, the short- and long-term demand for the occupations, the Francophone community's needs, and is the presence of an active industry/sector organization or association. The industry/sector organization works with the employers to find ways to take advantage of the recruitment opportunity. Certain sectors, such as construction, may not be considered based on research that shows France and Belgium do not have sufficient labour supply in that sector.

Since 2007, sector and employer representatives in aerospace, technology, tourism and hospitality, education and agriculture have participated in Destination Canada. Through this participation, they have recruited skilled talent for their employers and established valuable contacts for ongoing collaboration. To be considered, a B.C. region must have both an organization focusing on economic development and an active Francophone community organization. The roles of the regional economic development representative are to help employers in the region address their labour shortages, to promote investment opportunities and to attract potential business immigrants. The role of the Francophone community representative is to provide prospective Francophone immigrants with information about the Francophone community, and about regional and provincial settlement and integration services. This regional



partnership is vital in maximizing success. Both representatives work in tandem to ensure employer participation in their area and to promote the region to prospective immigrants at the event.

The BCFISC has supported economic development representatives from the regions of Central Okanagan, Comox Valley, Prince George and Coquitlam/Maillardville, working in partnership with the following Francophone community associations in their respective regions: the *Association Francophone de la Vallée de Comox*, the *Cercle des Canadiens-Français de Prince George* and the *Société Francophone de Maillardville*. These regions have reaped significant economic benefits from their participation in Destination Canada. In addition, the following B.C. employers have attended Destination Canada in person: the Wickaninnish Inn, Kelowna Flightcraft, Penta Aviation Services, Riverside Villa Management and A&W Restaurants. A larger number have posted jobs at the event, including Telus, the Fraser Health Authority, the Prince George School District, the Pan Pacific Hotel, Oak Bay Marine Group Resorts, the Quail's Gate Winery and Pacific Coach Lines.

BCFISC members—including the *Fédération des Francophones de la Colombie-Britannique* (FFCB), the *Collège Éducentre*, the *Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique* (SDÉCB) and the B.C. Provincial Nominee Program (PNP)—have also participated in Destination Canada.

B.C.'s delegation to Destination Canada always comprises the following:

- a sector representative;
- a regional economic development representative;

- a regional Francophone community representative;
- a BCFISC member;
- B.C. employers in the key sectors; and
- a PNP representative.

To ensure a successful B.C. mission, each member of the delegation brings his or her expertise in promoting the Francophone community structure in B.C. (FFCB), in providing settlement and integration services to newcomers (*Éducentre*), in offering services to potential French business immigrants, entrepreneurs and investors (SDÉCB), and in explaining B.C.-specific immigration options.

NEXT STEPS

B.C. continues to rank high on event attendees' list of possible Canadian destinations. They are attracted by B.C.'s employment opportunities, easy access to outdoor activities, diverse culture, quality of life and anglophone environment. Employers or their representatives are impressed by event attendees, who are well prepared and highly educated, who possess relevant experience, and who are functional in at least one language in addition to English, and often two or more.

The BCFISC hopes to build on its successes by continuing to develop projects with partners at the Canadian embassy in France and *Pôle Emploi International* to meet shared objectives for Francophone immigration.



Carrefour d'immigration rurale de Saint-Léonard

By Gabrielle Ouimet
Carrefour d'immigration rurale

ISSUE

In 2000, municipal councillors in Saint-Léonard, New Brunswick, began pondering the problem of population decline in the community. The exodus of young people, a declining birth rate and population aging led councillors to consider immigration as a possible solution. One major challenge was figuring out how to raise awareness of the importance of immigration among a very homogeneous population and how to prepare residents for the arrival of new immigrant families. Another was finding immigrants. Through a pilot project funded by the Rural Secretariat of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the *Carrefour d'immigration rurale* (CIR) opened in April 2005.

SOLUTION

One of the CIR's tasks under the pilot project was to develop a sustainable development model for Francophone immigration in Canada. To meet its objectives, the CIR brought its first immigrant investor on board in the summer of 2005. In January 2006, a second immigrant investor came forward to open an Asian restaurant. Saint-Léonard is a tiny community. It takes a steady hand to run a business. Opening a new business proved to be a major challenge for these newcomers. Unfamiliar with the region, they were unable to strike while the iron was hot. The first business, a discount store, did not open until

December 21, even though the peak retail seasons are back to school, Halloween and Christmas. All of the shopping had been done. The restaurant owner, meanwhile, grappled with a host of problems—restrictions, permits, the inability to get money out of his country of origin, high interest rates on loans to immigrants—that made it necessary to delay the much-anticipated opening until October, but by then the tourist season was over. The restaurant had to close.

The CIR stepped in to help these families find jobs. One family moved away, unfortunately, but the other stayed. The determined couple found work, and the family still lives in Saint-Léonard. Since then, families from Colombia, France, Nigeria, Romania, Mauritius, Denmark, the Philippines, Laos, Thailand, Brazil, Belgium and Bangladesh have settled throughout northwest New Brunswick. To help them adapt, the CIR offers beginner and intermediate French courses that make it easier for immigrants to enter the labour market. The CIR is delighted with the results.

To help business owners and employers get to know the immigrants, the CIR arranges internships for its students. Some immigrants have been offered jobs as a result of this initiative. The CIR also participates in the Destination Canada job fair in France and Belgium. The fair provides an opportunity to recruit professionals



and tradespeople, and thus help employers in northwest New Brunswick find the employees they need. Another CIR initiative aimed at raising public awareness of the various cultures present in the region is the annual northwest multicultural show, during which people from two dozen countries representing all the continents showcase their culture through food, dance and music.

NEXT STEPS

Drawing on its experience, the CIR has undertaken to sponsor refugee families through CIC. The sponsorship agreement allows the CIR to sponsor as many as 25 people a year. Also with a view to increasing the local immigrant population, the CIR has enrolled in the Joint Assistance Project; it will welcome its first family under the program in January 2010. The CIR approaches challenges with compassion and sensitivity. It welcomes new families who want to live in New Brunswick and helps them become part of the community.



THEME 2: SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada

The Classification Test Battery for the Canadian Language Benchmarks: More than Just an Assessment Tool

By Guy Routhier
Citizenship and Immigration Canada

ISSUE

The needs related to language training for immigrants have always been an important consideration in the programming offered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). Since 1992, the English-language training program, LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada), and the following support tools have been developed:

- Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000, English as a Second Language for Adults (CLB);
- LINC 1-5 Curriculum Guidelines;
- LINC 5-7 Curriculum Guidelines;
- Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000 : Theoretical Framework;
- Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment;
- Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test, etc.

In the past, the French-language training program, CLIC (*Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada*), offered in minority Francophone communities, was not very widespread and had no support tools.

However, CIC has been working in collaboration with partners from the Francophone community in order to address this shortcoming. After the first few attempts of the early 2000s, the Canadian Language Benchmarks 2006, French as a second language for adults (NCLC), the French equivalent of the CLB, were introduced. In 2009, the CLIC program Guidelines for levels 1 to 5 and 5 to 7 were established, but there was still no language assessment test available.

SOLUTION AND RESULTS

After attempting to simply adapt the existing English tests, the team quickly realized that their approach was inadequate and that it would be difficult to adapt one reality (LINC) to a completely different one (CLIC).

After the adaptation and translation of an existing test had failed, the research team repeated its analysis after revisiting the Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: Theoretical Framework. While the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages is a great example of the same theoretical framework being used for a number of languages, the practical tools resulting from the Framework leave much to be desired.



Why not develop a different approach that would not only satisfy the specific needs of the assessment, but could also be used as an assessment tool for each step of the language learning process? Usually, a normative approach is used in the development of a test, i.e. the norm is the desired result. The CTB research team came to the conclusion that a different approach could be more appropriate for Francophone immigrants: the criterion-referenced approach.

WHAT IS A CRITERION-REFERENCED APPROACH?

The CLB contain 12 benchmarks, and each benchmark, or level, is composed of descriptors for each of the language skills sought: oral expression, oral comprehension, written expression and written comprehension.

The research team has identified language skills and proficiencies that should be achieved for each skill level. Based on these skills and proficiencies, the research team produced a table and a continuum for all the levels (1 to 8) of the CLB with their distinguishing characteristics. In this way, the team was able to identify and isolate unique and measurable behaviours for each level. The only step that remained was to develop an assessment tool based on the criterion-referenced approach, as this approach is generally more precise than the normative one.

CLASSIFICATION TEST BATTERY OR CTB-CLB

The CTB-CLB is used to assess the proficiency of adult learners in French as a second language. It helps grade learners based on levels 1 to 8 of the CLB, in the four language skills. The Classification Test Battery uses two pre-tests (oral and written) and four tests, one for each of the language skills.

Table 1. Classification Test Battery (CTB-CLB) structure

CLASSIFICATION TEST BATTERY (CTB-CLB)	
Oral pre-test (10 minutes)	
Oral expression (from 10 to 20 minutes)	Oral comprehension (up to 40 minutes)
3 tasks	3 tasks
Individual examination	Individual or group examination
Written pre-test (15 minutes)	
Written expression (up to 50 minutes)	Written comprehension (up to 60 minutes)
3 tasks	4 tasks
Individual or group examination	Individual or group examination



NEXT STEPS

The next challenge that must be overcome is that of using and implementing the tool in the training process. The challenge is formidable because the French training program for immigrants is in its infancy. In addition, the CLIC community is not very familiar with the Canadian Language Benchmarks, its guidelines and other tools because the community formerly had to make do with what it had.

The criterion-referenced approach is problematic because of an additional issue it involves: people's reluctance to change and accept new things. Instead of just one test, now four must be administered, and the CTB-CLB requires that those involved understand the idea behind a criterion-referenced approach.

However, the assessor administering the CTB is provided with a more accurate tool that determines an immigrant's actual proficiency level for each of the oral and written skills, whereas the other tests can yield a result that may be up to two levels off on the CLB scale. The assessor is not only able to obtain an exact assessment of the learner's level, but is also able to identify

learner-specific strengths and weaknesses, and this is something that cannot be determined through other tests.

The development (or the building) of the CTB using the criterion-referenced approach has enabled us to go beyond the initial objective of developing a single test. The research team has defined a single behaviour for each of the language proficiencies and devised a table for tracking the progress achieved in each of the CLB levels and thereby provided the community with a tool that can be adapted not only to conduct the initial assessment of learners but also to allow the instructors to assess the improvements made by them. In addition, the CTB can be used as an official assessment tool for learning. The Francophone CLIC community has improved upon the work of the LINC community, which has been in existence for almost 20 years.

The implementation of the new tool will meet with rather interesting challenges, not only for the CLIC community but also for the entire French-as-a-second-language community, which can now adapt the CTB criterion-referenced approach and apply it to suit its needs. The challenge is there. It is now up to us to answer it.



The www.etablissement.org Web site

By Zeina Farah

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Etablissement.Org, an information and referral Web site for Francophone newcomers to Ontario, launched in March 2007. The site was developed by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI), and funded by CIC and the Ontario government. It brings together in one place a wealth of information on every aspect of life in Ontario, in a range of areas such as employment, housing, health, child and adult education, services in French in Ontario, and immigration.

Etablissement.Org experienced growing pains before it managed to establish itself as a unique and indispensable information and referral resource for a diverse group of immigrant newcomers from French-speaking countries around the world.

CHALLENGES

The French-language Web site faced the following challenges.

- OCASI did not adapt the content to the target audience, Francophone immigrants. The content came from Settlement.Org, OCASI's English-language Web site, and was translated systematically into French with no prior adaptation for target users;
- the content contained numerous grammatical and stylistic errors, adversely affecting the site's reputation and reliability;
- the target audience was elusive and poorly understood;
- OCASI had difficulty finding people with good writing skills and the ability to write articles in proper French
- it also had difficulty finding someone with the skills to manage the site's content;
- promoting the site and reaching the target audience using traditional contact and promotional methods such as pamphlets was difficult, because this minority audience is widely scattered.

BEST PRACTICES

OCASI hired a professional French-speaking writer to review and manage the content of the site. That person:

- had the necessary education, qualifications and experience to write in French and conduct research;
- understood the issues facing Francophones in Ontario; and
- was sensitive to immigrant issues in general.

As a result, OCASI also adopted the following practices:

- reviewing content on the site to systematically eliminate all spelling and stylistic errors and to provide users with texts written in simple, clear and correct French;



- reviewing existing content to adapt it better to the target Francophone audience by
 - adding relevant links of particular interest to Francophones,
 - introducing, where applicable, sections of exclusive interest to Francophones,
 - adding articles not translated from English, exclusive to the site,
 - dealing with issues related exclusively to Francophones, and
 - directing content at newcomers in general, with the possibility of including material aimed solely at Francophones;
- searching for information taken exclusively from expert and reliable sources, with the source systematically indicated;
- devoting equal effort to the four information vehicles used—articles, news, a discussion forum and videos—to ensure constant renewal of the information, with updates clearly indicated on the home page;
- searching constantly for new topics for articles, such as topics of current interest, known issues yet to be addressed in articles, and topics deemed to be in demand given certain statistics or recurrent questions in the discussion forum;
- developing a directory of French-language resources, to supply the news section;
- providing personalized, well-researched and detailed answers to questions raised in the discussion forum;
- publishing a regular electronic newsletter and disseminating it to registered members to inform them of new site features; and
- using social networking and other non-traditional methods to identify, reach out to and educate a geographically scattered minority audience.

RESULTS

This approach restored the site's reputation and reliability, and secured readers' trust. Statistics show that the number of visitors to the site and activity in the discussion forum both increased. Clearer identification of the target audience gave OCASI a greater chance of reaching that audience.

NEXT STEPS

OCASI will make greater use of videos as an information and referral medium, because videos encourage feedback and are widely used today. The organization will also review content with a view to reformatting it into shorter articles, each dealing with a single aspect of a given topic, to make information easier for users to locate and read.



Three Pilot Projects to Facilitate the Professional Integration of International Health Graduates

By Maggy Razafimbahiny

Consortium national de formation en santé

The *Consortium national de formation en santé* (CNFS) brings together 11 college and university institutions that represent the Francophone minority community's post-secondary education network. The mission of the CNFS is to enhance health services in French for Francophone communities outside Quebec through post-secondary training for Francophone health professionals, and through health research done in conjunction with this training that reflects community needs.

ISSUE

Canada has been grappling with a persistent shortage of health professionals since 2001, despite considerable investment and great efforts to increase their numbers. The situation is even more acute in FMCs, where access to health services is undermined by the lack of French-language resources. Recruiting, integrating and retaining Francophone international health graduates (IHGs) are therefore worthwhile initiatives for Canadian society, particularly for FMCs struggling to improve access to health services in French.

CONTEXT

Federal studies and consultations dating back to 2001 have played a crucial role in developing the CNFS's approach to immigration. One of the key initiatives is the 2006–2011 Strategic Plan

to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities, put forward by the Citizenship and Immigration Canada–Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee. The strategic plan fosters IHGs' employability by recognizing their credentials and experience. The steering committee suggests that the health sector be given priority in immigration. It also recommends the development and provision of refresher training and internships to upgrade IHGs' professional competencies and employment-related skills.

SOLUTION

Since 2006, the CNFS has been working to develop appropriate responses to the situation of IHGs. In March 2009, the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities conducted a national study on the CNFS's behalf. The final report, *L'Intégration des Diplômés internationaux en santé Francophones dans les communautés Francophones en situation minoritaire* (integrating Francophone international health graduates into Francophone minority communities), illustrates the negative impact of the shortage or lack of French-language services, resources and training on the integration process. After analysing the study findings and consulting local partners involved in integrating IHGs, the CNFS created four regional social and professional integration models in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Toronto and Edmundston. The integration models are being applied to pilot



projects in Winnipeg, Edmundston and Ottawa. These municipalities were chosen because of their unique demographic, economic and linguistic characteristics.

PILOT PROJECTS

The pilot projects were launched in May 2009. CNFS development officers are implementing them locally with the assistance of their institutional partners. The pilot projects are unique in that their “experimentation” aspect takes local needs and characteristics into account. Each of the three CNFS officers guides IHGs who have agreed to participate in the projects as part of their efforts to obtain professional accreditation or licences in order to practise in their initial area of education or in related fields. The result is holistic, personalized support for IHGs, provided with the help of various local partners: reception agencies, community associations, provincial professional associations, and prospective employers such as health authorities and local hospitals. The three pilot project steering committees clearly reflect these partnerships, thereby ensuring continuity of support and alignment with implementation. The following is an overview of the pilot projects seven months after their launch.

OTTAWA, ONTARIO

Ottawa is a large urban centre with a sizeable Francophone population and a significant number of IHGs. The city is also home to a large number of health and post-secondary institutions, with regional service outreach. Extensive immigrant reception and integration services complete the key elements of this project.

In late 2009, 35 IHGs, mainly doctors and nurses, were taking part in the Ottawa pilot project. They range in age from roughly 25 to 45, and most are married and have children. Partnership agreements have been reached with five community

organizations to help these professionals with their careers. Further, through a partnership with a city hospital, some of these IHGs can take part in clinical placements during their first few months on the job. Discussions are also underway with other local employers. Links with the programs of CNFS member institutions, such as *La Cité collégiale* and the University of Ottawa, provide access to appropriate refresher training, as required.

The participants appreciate the help they receive, as well as the clear and targeted referral services that enable them to access professional associations and social services. Further, the Ottawa pilot project refers IHGs—particularly doctors—to its Winnipeg and Edmundston counterparts, resulting in a meaningful support and interaction network linking the three pilot projects. The ultimate goal of the Ottawa pilot project is to establish a single window for services that are crucial to IHGs’ social and professional integration in the region. Of course, there are still significant needs to be met. However, the leverage provided by the pilot project and the CNFS partners’ commitment is helping to create the conditions needed to achieve the ultimate aim of this initiative.

EDMUNDSTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

Edmundston has a different dynamic than Ottawa, since it is a small regional service centre in a rural area. The large Francophone population and the small number of IHGs not practising their profession are indicative of the challenges inherent in attracting immigrants to this part of the province. However, the region does have small-scale, French-language immigrant reception and integration services.

From the beginning, the dynamism of the professional, social and political environment surrounding the pilot project boded well for its implementation. As of December 2009, five IHGs were taking part in the project, and 15 were in the



recruitment process. Partnerships are helping to lay the groundwork for local networking, which is intended to facilitate the social, economic, cultural and linguistic integration of IHGs and their families in northwestern New Brunswick.

In the first few months of the pilot project, a number of local challenges were noted. However, there have been some positive changes, such as strengthened relationships among stakeholders, thanks to CNFS actions in the field. The pilot project has also had an unexpected outcome: the personalized services it offers have inspired other organizations, institutions and professional associations to become involved in increasing the availability of French-language health services in the region.

Edmundston's rural nature makes it difficult to attract and retain health professionals. The CNFS pilot project is helping to address this problem by supporting IHGs who have expressed a willingness to practise in rural communities.

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

Winnipeg is a medium-sized urban centre that serves as a regional service centre with outreach into surrounding rural areas. It has a sizeable Francophone community with a small population of IHGs, and boasts French-language health and post-secondary institutions. In late 2009, the Winnipeg development officer was monitoring seven IHGs, mainly nurses. In addition, the inter-project support network established by the three officers is helping four Ontario doctors move to Winnipeg; they are expected to arrive in early 2010.

The uniqueness of this pilot project lies in the political support it has generated in the provincial areas of health, immigration and recognition of foreign credentials. In that regard, the Credential Recognition Program refunds 50% of the expenses IHGs incur, up to a maximum of \$2,500. This is very significant, given that the project's partner institution provides a wide range of refresher training opportunities. Regulatory bodies, including professional associations, are also excited about the pilot project and have been taking steps to help process the files of the Francophone IHGs involved. Professional associations assist the pilot project team and welcome this CNFS initiative, which helps to answer their questions about Francophone candidates.

PROJECT OUTLOOK

Encouraged by these initial results, the CNFS has distilled its vision for integrating IHGs into a five-year action plan, which aims to improve access to health services in French. Through these pilot projects, the CNFS hopes to collect data that will enable it to fine tune the current referral process and measure the level of individual assistance that IHGs taking part in the project receive. In cooperation with other immigration stakeholders, the CNFS will then analyse social and professional trends noted among these IHGs, as well as local needs. All of these initiatives are converging toward the establishment of genuine "single windows" where IHGs can access a wide range of institutional and community services supporting their professional integration into Francophone minority communities.





Resettlement Assistance Services in the Francophone Community of Saint-Boniface, Manitoba

By Lynne Belding, Connie Jonasson and Joan Pullen
Citizenship and Immigration Canada

In September 2006, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Minister of International Cooperation, and the Minister for the Francophonie and Official Languages were in Winnipeg to launch the 2006–2011 Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities. One of the priorities of the five-year plan is to increase the number of French-speaking immigrants heading to Francophone minority communities and to ensure their settlement and integration into these communities.

Francophone immigration is a key element of Manitoba's immigration strategy. In response to targeted recruitment efforts in Manitoba since 2006, an increasing number of French-speaking newcomers have arrived in Manitoba, including French-speaking government-assisted refugees. As a result, the SFM approached CIC to express a need for and a strong interest in providing resettlement programming (RAP) to French-speaking government-assisted refugees arriving in Manitoba. These RAP services may include meeting newcomers at the airport; providing temporary accommodation; helping them find permanent accommodation; orienting them to banking services, public transportation and school systems; and referring them to other services, such as health, employment and language assessment services.

By offering RAP services in addition to federally funded settlement and integration programs, the SFM felt it could provide a more holistic approach to this client group. After discussions with the well-established RAP provider in Manitoba and with the support of the Province of Manitoba, the SFM negotiated a RAP contribution agreement with CIC on a pilot basis for up to 50 French-speaking government-assisted refugees destined for Winnipeg, starting on September 1, 2009, and ending on March 31, 2010. To date, 35 French-speaking government-assisted refugees from Liberia, Mauritania and the Democratic Republic of Congo have received French resettlement services from the SFM. Another 15 French-speaking government-assisted refugees are expected to arrive in Winnipeg before the end of March 2010.

The pilot will be evaluated and assessed in 2010. CIC Winnipeg will determine whether the SFM achieved the outcomes specified in the agreement and whether the families have begun their integration and settlement into Winnipeg's Francophone community. CIC will decide at that time whether to provide ongoing funding, based on the results of the evaluation.





Meeting the Needs of International Students in New Brunswick

By the Government of New Brunswick

CONTEXT

Newcomers to Canada often experience difficulties in finding a job commensurate with their skills and level of education. According to a survey conducted by Statistics Canada on immigrants' success in the Canadian labour market after they arrive in Canada, 70% of newcomers face problems or obstacles when searching for a job. To address those difficulties, the Government of New Brunswick, through the Population Growth Secretariat (PGS), has committed to working with post-secondary institutions to inform foreign students about job and career opportunities in New Brunswick. This commitment is part of a series of measures set out in *Be Our Future: New Brunswick's Population Growth Strategy*, launched on February 5, 2008.

SOLUTION

Since 2008, through its settlement support program, the PGS has funded a project to facilitate the integration of international students, in partnership with the *Université de Moncton*. The objectives of the project, *Destination emploi pour étudiants internationaux* (job destination for international students) are the following:

1. help international students at the *Université de Moncton* who are eligible for CIC's work permit programs enter the labour market during their studies and after graduation;
2. provide additional coaching to international students during their studies and assist them with their social integration into the community;
3. encourage small and medium-sized businesses in New Brunswick to hire international students to get skilled workers and a more global perspective;
4. inform students who are about to graduate and who want to stay in New Brunswick about how to immigrate to the province and about the advantages of doing so; and
5. promote student employment and work permit opportunities at the international level.



To meet these objectives during the 2008–09 fiscal year, this project made the following possible:

- 548 individual meetings with international students to discuss issues related to employment;
- six workshops on employability, which 132 international students attended;
- English-as-a-second-language instruction for 32 international students;
- two new job fairs to foster links between international students and New Brunswick employers; and
- the creation of a fact sheet for employers explaining the steps they must take to hire international students and listing the related advantages.

NEXT STEPS

This project was extremely successful with the international student community at the *Université de Moncton*, with placement rates of 77% for off-campus employment during studies and 61% for employment upon graduation. By helping international students integrate into the New Brunswick labour market, this project had a major impact on their employability. It also helped New Brunswick companies address their skilled labour needs by making it easier for them to hire foreign students from the *Université de Moncton*.

In light of those positive results, the PGS is evaluating the possibility of continuing to work with the *Université de Moncton* and, accordingly, of extending funding for this project into the 2010–11 fiscal year.





Ontario Bridge Training Programs

By the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration of Ontario

ISSUE

The level of education of newcomers to Ontario is increasing. Despite the higher education and skills levels, however, social and economic outcomes for newcomers have been getting worse in recent years. Newcomers need programs that reduce barriers to employment and help them to use their skills as quickly as possible in their fields.

SOLUTION

Bridge training programs help Ontario's highly skilled newcomers obtain licences and jobs that match their skills, education and experience.

While many of the programs funded serve all immigrants, some are specifically geared to French-speaking newcomers. For example, Ontario recently provided funding to *La Cité collégiale* for its Immigrants Accessing Construction Trades bridge training program.

This project is uniquely tailored to help internationally trained Francophones in the Ottawa region enter skilled construction trades. It allows newcomers with international education and experience in the skilled construction trades to get Ontario work experience and qualifications. The program offers practical and theoretical courses in specific trades. It provides high-level French-language courses, including occupation-specific French language instruction; basic and intermediate English instruction; and assistance in getting job placements or apprenticeships in construction-related skilled trades.

NEXT STEPS

In November 2009, the ministry announced 16 bridge training programs worth \$22.6 million that will help 5,000 internationally trained individuals obtain employment in their fields.

Included in this announcement was the *Formation linguistique en Administration, finances et gestion pour immigrants Francophones du Sud de l'Ontario* (linguistic training for business, finance and administration in Southern Ontario) bridge training program delivered by *Collège Boréal*. That program will help internationally trained Francophone professionals in finance, administration and management obtain employment in their field. The program provides English-language training, workplace culture and communications training, a six-week work placement, and employment services. It will help 108 internationally trained individuals obtain employment.

The ministry's 2009–10 Invitation for Proposals for Bridging Projects for Internationally Trained Individuals gave special consideration to projects targeting Francophone internationally trained individuals.

It is anticipated that new bridging projects will be announced in the winter or spring of 2010.





Toronto's Mokonzie Sewing Co-op

By Marie-Joie Brady – Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and
Annie Dell – *Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de l'Ontario*

ISSUE

In 2008, a group of immigrant women in Toronto got together to share a common interest in sewing. They met in each other's homes to share their expertise in design, tailoring, sewing and so on. The women gradually started thinking about ways they could capitalize on their talents in order to become financially independent. When they realized they were able to work together, they turned their attention to various issues that affected them directly, including the integration of new immigrants. Their discussions eventually brought them into contact with the coordinating group on Francophone economic development and employability, the *Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité de l'Ontario* (RDÉE Ontario).

SOLUTION AND RESULTS

RDÉE Ontario helped the group of immigrant women determine the type of project that would meet their needs. The women opted to establish a sewing-based social enterprise. The social enterprise model allowed them to work toward financial independence and gave them enough flexibility to meet needs ranging from basic training and skills upgrading to design and production. The

cooperative creates an environment that fosters the integration of immigrant women who have an interest in sewing, whether as producers or as consumers. In the first phase of the project, 10 immigrant women completed their training and four went on to find jobs. Another 10 women are taking evening and weekend classes, eight of them through the Ontario Works program, which helps social assistance recipients enter the labour market. A coordinator oversees the cooperative, and the co-op store now has all the supplies needed to meet the demand from its clientele.

WHY IS IT A BEST PRACTICE?

The project is a shining example of a best practice for three reasons. First, the cooperative is a project identified by the community for the community. It is a grassroots initiative designed to meet real needs and directly linked to a desire to take charge and accept responsibility. Second, the project is a way of supporting financial independence and entrepreneurship in the immigrant community and, ultimately, of fostering the economic integration of immigrants into their host community. This social enterprise enables women not only to create their own job, but also to share their expertise. They are able to help other low-income immigrant women by offering them



free sewing classes so that they can develop their skills and learn how the Canadian labour market works. Finally, in August 2008, RDÉE Ontario received a \$105,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to create the *Coopérative de couture Mokonzie*, making the sewing cooperative an initiative supported by federal, provincial and community funds.

NEXT STEPS

In the next five years, the cooperative hopes to do the following:

- increase the number of women interested in sewing, either as consumers or as producers;
- provide more women with training and guidance in the sewing trade;
- broaden the cooperative's client base;
- increase the number of clients;
- develop the cooperative's membership base; and
- make presentations to other women's groups to share the cooperative's experience.



Government of Alberta

Accès-emploi—Mentorship for Francophone Immigrant Professionals in Alberta

By Cindie LeBlanc
Government of Alberta

ISSUE

It is very difficult for professional immigrants to integrate into the workforce in their chosen profession when they arrive in most parts of Canada, including Alberta. Language barriers amplify the challenge significantly. Too often, unilingual Francophone immigrants find themselves alone as they try to navigate the Alberta system. First, they need to get their training recognized and accredited by the relevant professional association in Alberta. Then, they face the challenge of perfecting their English and job search skills. In most cases, they find themselves in jobs where their training and skills are not recognized. As a result, neither the immigrants nor Canadians as a whole are fully benefiting from the immigrants' potential.

SOLUTION

With the support of Alberta Employment and Immigration and the Government of Canada, *Accès-emploi*, the Francophone career and employment centre in Edmonton, developed a mentoring program aimed at helping new, Francophone, unilingual professional immigrants integrate into the region's workforce. Only those clients without adequate skills in English are eligible for the program. More proficient clients are referred to other appropriate programs offered in English.

Mentoring was selected as the type of support because it is a form of voluntary assistance that focuses on personal and professional development. It also creates an interpersonal relationship that allows experienced people to use their expertise and wisdom to help immigrants develop needed skills and meet their professional objectives. This relatively low-cost approach makes it possible to create buddy systems for a great variety of professional sectors and can be easily adapted to meet client profiles.

The program is still in its first year. Its success depends on a few key ingredients, including the following:

- active community partners who help establish lists of mentors and that refer potential mentees to the program;
- professionals from different fields who are interested in helping immigrant professionals and have the ability to do so;
- a coordinator who assesses the capacity of mentors and mentees to participate, who matches them according to the field of work and study, and who provides ongoing support for the duration of the mentorship;
- training for mentors and mentees to help them prepare and better understand their respective roles;



- a guided discussion between the mentor and the mentee to determine objectives and to sign an agreement;
- an evaluation of participants' experiences and the results of their mentorship; and
- an annual event to publicly recognize mentors for their commitment and contributions to the program.

The mentor and mentee meet twice per month for up to six months. This timeframe gives mentees an opportunity to improve their knowledge of English and their profession in Alberta, build a network of professionals and, possibly, obtain transitional employment. When a mentee has become sufficiently proficient in English, he or she is referred to other services for professionals that other institutions offer in English.

NEXT STEPS

While the program was modelled on various English-language programs offered elsewhere in Canada, the Francophone program is still in its early stages. *Accès-emploi* anticipated certain challenges, such as the difficulty in recruiting enough French-speaking mentors from various professional sectors. Consequently, *Accès-emploi* is considering promoting the program more widely through the media, the communication channels of community partners and contacts with professional colleges. *Accès-emploi* will closely monitor the first pairings between mentors and mentees and will adjust the program as necessary to ensure its long-term success.



Government of Alberta

Francophone Intercultural Sharing Activities for the Integration of Newcomers at the *Centre d'accueil et d'établissement d'Edmonton*

By Cindie Leblanc
Government of Alberta

ISSUE

Despite many waves of migration and immigration, and the existence of well-established ethno-cultural communities dating back over 100 years, Alberta society has remained largely homogenous. However, with the recent economic boom, Alberta's population has increased significantly and rapidly. That has changed the face of Alberta, including the face of Alberta's Francophone community.

This transformation presents a few challenges. On the one hand, French-speaking newcomers arrive in a community where they know no one and where an active and vibrant Francophone community does not exist. Some of these newcomers live in isolation without any contact networks. On the other hand, many members of the host community are unaware of the values and cultures that many of these French-speaking newcomers bring with them. This reciprocal lack of awareness, which sometimes becomes mistrust, discourages contacts between the two communities and reduces community involvement.

SOLUTION

With support from Alberta Employment and Immigration, the *Centre d'accueil et d'établissement d'Edmonton* (CAÉE) organizes monthly intercultural exchange days. The day starts with a presentation on the history, the culture and the values of a specific Francophonie country or region, and includes a free meal. Members of the community get to know and appreciate each other, so they can mutually manage change and form relationships. In 2009–10, the presentations will focus on France, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Congo (Brazzaville), Guinea, Acadia and Burundi.

The CAÉE relies on a number of community partners to promote these exchange days not only to newcomers but also to the members of the host community. Generally, these exchange days are held at *Campus Saint-Jean*, an easily accessible venue in the heart of Edmonton's Francophone neighbourhood. Thanks to these intercultural exchange days, newcomers and members of the host community have gained a new awareness of the extent, vitality and diversity of Alberta's Francophone community. The entire community is learning to notice not only the differences but also the shared values, therefore facilitating the creation of social ties. Given the regularity and the diversity of the presentations, these exchange days have



become monthly gatherings for Francophones, and it has become difficult to accommodate all those that would like to participate.

NEXT STEPS

While members of the host community do participate, participation levels are lower than the community's demographic proportion. Indeed, the CAÉE hopes to increase the participation of members from the host community, because certain individuals continue to stay away except when it is an exchange day related to their ethno-cultural community. The CAÉE hopes to undertake a more in-depth evaluation of the intercultural exchange days to measure broader results related to integration and community networking among newcomers.



THEME 3: RETENTION AND INCLUSION



Ontario's Inclusive Definition of “Francophone”

By Serge Bastien
Government of Ontario

ISSUE

After passing the “French Language Services Act” in 1986, the Government of Ontario used a definition of “Francophone” based solely on mother tongue. That definition gradually fell out of step with the evolution of Ontario’s Francophone population. In June 2009, the Government of Ontario adopted a new definition of “Francophone” that is more reflective of today’s diverse Franco-Ontarian community.

The Office of Francophone Affairs (OFA) was asked to develop a new definition more inclusive of the different segments of Ontario’s French-speaking population. The new definition includes not only persons whose mother tongue is French, but also newcomers to Ontario for whom French is the language of integration.

SOLUTION

All definitions of “Francophone” are derived from Statistics Canada censuses, which are carried out every five years. Census results are based on answers to a series of questions centred on subcategories. The wide range of possible answers produces a finer and more detailed snapshot of the population, but also opens the door to multiple interpretations.

For statistical purposes, Francophones were previously defined as persons whose mother tongue was French. The new inclusive definition captures allophones—persons whose mother tongue is neither English nor French—who speak French. It does so by combining the following census variables:

- knowledge of French only; and
- French as the language most often spoken at home.

As a result of the new definition, Ontario’s Francophone population has increased from 532,000—the number determined by mother tongue alone—to more than 580,000 since 2006 ($532,855 + 49,835 = 582,690$).



NEXT STEPS

The next step in this process is to distribute a new statistical report describing economic, social and demographic trends in French-speaking Ontario based on the new definition. The report, produced in partnership with the Ontario Trillium Foundation, was officially released on December 9, 2009.

The report states that there are now more than 580,000 Francophones in Ontario, comprising 4.8% of the total population. That number represents an increase of almost 10% from the number under the old definition. The differences resulting from the new definition are more pronounced in central and eastern Ontario than in other parts of the province, particularly the Ottawa and Toronto regions. Under the new definition, there are 58,390 Francophones among the visible minority population, up from 52,590 using the first official language spoken (FOLS) variable. Visible minorities account for 10% of the total Francophone population, similar to the proportion obtained using FOLS (9.8%). The next step will be to produce four more profiles—of Francophone youth, women, senior citizens and visible minorities—based on the new definition in 2010



The Research Group on Inter/Transculturality at the *Campus Saint-Jean* of the University of Alberta

By Cindie Leblanc
Government of Alberta

ISSUE

In the past few years, developed countries have confronted big questions related to integrating significant numbers of immigrants from around the world. To address this new reality, Canada implemented a multiculturalism policy in 1971. In 1988, it gave the policy the same force as legislation by enacting the “Multiculturalism Act.” While those actions were important, the Canadian model still has flaws, despite its world-class reputation.

Even before the Bouchard-Taylor Commission made its recommendations regarding the accommodation of immigrants in Quebec society, Quebec had chosen an intercultural model, which emphasizes interaction in French between newcomers and the host community. However, this model reflects specific ideological requirements that are not necessarily those of Canada’s other Francophone communities.

SOLUTION

The Research Group on Inter/Transculturalism (GRITI) advocates an alternative inclusion model whose main objective is “transculturalism”—that is, intercultural relationships and reciprocal fertilization that lead to diverse, new, shared cultures.

This model favours a real dialogue between immigrants and the host community, transforming the dynamics of exchanges by decentralizing the dominant culture, making possible the emergence of a renewed and complex identity representing all. It eliminates the built-in inequalities of both interculturalism and multiculturalism.

The GRITI recognizes the need for a comprehensive study of inclusion in the society of tomorrow that starts with our own society. The group aims to produce one or more models that it can export to other parts of the world. Such models are greatly needed, given the integration problems many countries face.



NEXT STEPS

Alberta's Francophone community—which is welcoming an increasing number of immigrants—is looking to the GRITI to increase its knowledge of the issues and to find the best possible inclusion practices that are both efficient and human. Indeed, many organizations have participated in GRITI activities and workshops, and collaboration between the GRITI and Alberta's Francophone community is expected to increase as the GRITI finds its wings. In the future, the GRITI plans to hold a symposium, host talks by renowned speakers, organize bi-monthly workshops, further develop university courses that already incorporate the principles of transculturalism and so on. As consultants, members of the GRITI will also work more directly with some organizations.



Ontario Cultural Competency Training Program

By La Passerelle IDÉ

ISSUE

If we are to succeed in a world without borders, where people of all origins live and work together, we need a skill set that includes not only technical, relationship and organizational proficiency, but cultural competency as well.

La Passerelle, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to integration and economic development, has observed a growing need for cultural competency training in the course of its work in the Greater Toronto Area and other parts of the province. Both Canadian-born Francophones and newcomers feel this need. Thus was born the idea of developing a training program that would help people develop the cultural competency they need to understand and accept one another and become full participants in Canadian society.

SOLUTION

The Cultural Competency Training Program was launched in 2009 in a number of Francophone communities to help community members adapt to and take full advantage of socio-demographic changes in Ontario. Using a clearly defined curriculum, the program offers flexible training that can be tailored to specific situations to produce realistic, effective ways to manage cultural relations. Because the program uses a two-way approach, all of the parties involved are urged to help create favourable conditions in society as a whole.

The program consists of three components and four training workshops. It is a truly comprehensive cultural education product. The first component assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the participants (organizations and new Canadians). That is followed by an awareness workshop geared to the participants' particular situation and understanding. The second component is designed to develop cultural competency through training workshops. The third component evaluates the extent to which participants have acquired cultural competency. A 100-page training manual describes all the training modules in detail.

Workshops have already been held for groups across the province in cities such as London and Ottawa. Results so far indicate that participants believe the formula works. The evaluations and feedback from participants have been very positive. Representatives of organizations, meanwhile, are finding that becoming culturally competent gives them a better understanding of newcomers, their circumstances and their needs, which helps and guides the representatives in their work. New Canadians describe the training experience as educational and rewarding. All participants want to learn more and recognize the importance of demystifying cultures. The training program is a success from every perspective.



WHY IS IT A BEST PRACTICE?

The Cultural Competency Training Program offers a systematic and reproducible approach to helping newcomers integrate into host communities. Its approach can be adapted to different circumstances and cultures, wherever the program is offered.

NEXT STEPS

The most important next step is to offer the program to different stakeholders at different levels. For example, it can be offered in the education sector—at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels—through school boards in which many cultures are represented. It can also be offered to elected representatives and to federal, provincial, regional and municipal employees.



Awareness-Raising and Civic Education of Francophone Racial and Ethno-Cultural Minorities

By the *Regroupement ethnoculturel des parents francophones de l'Ontario* and the *Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario*

CHALLENGE

The purpose of this project, developed by the *Regroupement ethnoculturel des parents francophones de l'Ontario* (REPFO) and the *Association française des municipalités de l'Ontario* (AFMO) is to introduce immigrants to their democratic and civic rights in Canada, in Ontario and in Ottawa. After the municipal and school board elections of 2003, several immigrant candidates pointed out that they had experienced enormous difficulties in participating in these elections. They also noted that most of the members of Francophone ethno-cultural communities had had trouble exercising their right to vote. Many of them could neither read nor write. Moreover, surveys have shown that these immigrants have a poor understanding of the Canadian electoral system and of their rights.

SOLUTION

In light of this situation, the REPFO and the AFMO piloted an awareness-raising and educational program in the Ottawa region. This pilot project was a success and the organizations wish to extend it to the provincial level, thanks to their partnerships with municipalities. Civic and democratic rights are fundamental rights granted to all citizens, and the success of integration can be measured, in part, by the ability of newcomers

to exercise those rights. There should be minority representation on Ontario's French-language school boards and school parent committees, on both the public and Catholic side.

It is crucial to include all minority French-language communities in local decision-making, by giving them the necessary tools and by supporting their integration into civic and democratic structures. This project was also designed to help the parents of Francophone newcomers exercise their rights, by developing action plans to ensure the full integration of immigrants at the economic, cultural, social and demographic levels.

DESIRED OUTCOME

The project is designed to train and educate members of Francophone ethno-cultural and racial minorities (FERMs) to exercise their civic and democratic rights.

Performance indicators will include the following:

- the number of FERM members participating in training sessions and consultations;
- changes noted following the participation of FERM members in these sessions; and
- FERM members' level of satisfaction.



Performance will be measured using the following means:

- opinion surveys carried out via questionnaires, focus groups and other methods; and
- training evaluation forms.

Immediate results may include the following.

- FERM members have an increased awareness of school and municipal election processes.
- French-language school boards take the recommendations and advice of FERM members into account.
- FERM members take an active part in the 2010 elections.

Medium-term results may include the following.

- FERM members have better knowledge of municipal and school issues.
- Members of these communities who wish to enter politics or participate actively in the electoral process receive support and guidance.

Long-term results may include the following.

- FERM members have an influence on school and municipal systems.

NEXT STEPS

The REPFO is considering retaining the services of experts to evaluate the results of this project. Within the framework of this evaluation, the consultants will use different investigation methods, such as surveys and focus groups.

The consultants should take the following indicators into account during this evaluation:

- the number of parents from French-language ethno-cultural communities taking part in school boards and parent committees;
- the parents' degree of satisfaction;
- the number of school administrations that adapt to ethnic diversity by supporting parents' participation;
- the school administrations' degree of satisfaction;
- the number of partner organizations involved in the process and supporting the development of inclusive policies through these programs; and
- the level of integration and participation of parents from Francophone ethno-cultural communities in the Franco-Ontarian school system.

After the consultants evaluate the project, it will be possible to determine whether the project met its objectives and led to lasting changes that will eliminate the problems originally identified.



Racism Prevention Initiatives in the Acadian and Francophone Community of Nova Scotia

By Meredith Henley
Citizenship and Immigration Canada

CHALLENGE

Immigration continues to play a vital role in net labour force and population growth in Canada. Immigration also features in Canada's increasing diversity, with three quarters (75%) of immigrants arriving between 2001 and 2006 belonging to visible minority groups. Increasing diversity provides unique opportunities but also potential challenges to the vitality and cohesion of Canada's communities.

The Welcoming Communities Initiative (WCI) is Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC)'s contribution to the Government of Canada's efforts to leverage the benefits of Canada's diversity by reducing discriminatory barriers. This initiative funds projects that aim to create connections between newcomers and Canadians, eliminate barriers to integration by fostering welcoming communities, and educate people against racism. In 2008–09, CIC provided funding under the WCI to the *Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Écosse* (FANE) for a racism prevention project, entitled *Initiatives de prévention du racisme au sein de la communauté acadienne et Francophone de la Nouvelle-Écosse* (initiatives to prevent racism within the Acadian and Francophone communities of Nova Scotia).

Francophone communities in Nova Scotia are increasingly turning to immigration as a way to foster continued population growth and innovation in their communities. The majority of Francophone immigrants to the province, however, come from cultural and ethnic backgrounds previously not present in these centres. In support of the WCI's objectives, this racism prevention project worked toward the following goals in Nova Scotia's Acadian and Francophone communities:

- to foster the development of welcoming communities for Francophone immigrants;
- to combat and prevent racism in Acadian and Francophone communities in Nova Scotia;
- to sensitize community leaders to the presence of racism in their community and to provide them with tools to counter discrimination;
- to prevent racism in the Acadian schools of Nova Scotia; and
- to promote the implementation of other racism prevention initiatives, and the promotion and celebration of ethno-cultural diversity in all Acadian communities.



SOLUTION

Racism prevention workshops were held with community leaders in three regions of the province (central, southwest and northeast); with schoolchildren and youth in three Acadian schools in Halifax (part of the *Conseil scolaire acadien provincial*); and with youth at the *Prends ta place* gathering in Halifax in March 2009. These workshops raised awareness of the existence of racism in institutional practices and everyday interactions, while also inspiring potential community leaders to reinforce prevention efforts in their communities.

Workshops with schoolchildren and local youth capitalized on the FANE's prevention efforts, in seeking to avoid the development of discriminatory viewpoints and practices rather than merely working to combat them. Youth were encouraged to reflect on issues such as respect for differences, the impact of words, intercultural relations and human rights, as well as to discuss the bonds they have in common with new immigrants.

FANE workshops engaged local settlement agencies, such as the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association; academic institutions, such as the *Université du Cap-Breton* and the *Université Sainte-Anne*; community centres; federal departments, including the Canada Revenue Agency and CIC; and schools and the *Conseil scolaire acadien provincial*. In total, the workshops reached 35 community leaders across the province, approximately 1,000 students and teachers at three schools in the Halifax area, and 85 youth aged 15 to 18 through the *Prends ta place* event.

NEXT STEPS

These noteworthy efforts will now be complemented by initiatives and strategies conceived at the local level by the community leaders the workshop facilitators engaged, the teachers with whom they shared additional materials, and the youth they trained to be champions for ethno-cultural diversity in their communities.



The Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de l'Alberta Society's Caravan / The Government Perspective

By Meredith Henley
Citizenship and Immigration Canada

ISSUE

Immigration continues to play a vital role in net labour force and population growth in Canada. Immigration also features in Canada's increasing diversity, with three quarters (75%) of immigrants arriving between 2001 and 2006 belonging to visible minority groups. Increasing diversity provides unique opportunities but also potential challenges to the vitality and cohesion of Canada's communities.

The WCI is CIC's contribution to the Government of Canada's efforts to leverage the benefits of Canada's diversity by reducing discriminatory barriers. This initiative funds projects that aim to create connections between newcomers and Canadians, eliminate barriers to integration by fostering welcoming communities, and educate people against racism. From 2007–08 to the present, CIC has provided funding under the WCI to the *Alliance jeunesse-famille de l'Alberta Society* (AJFAS) for the Caravan project.

SOLUTION

Adapted from the Quebec Foundations of Tolerance project and launched in Alberta in 2005, this interactive caravan works with Francophone students across the province to foster

an appreciation of diverse cultures and to combat racism and discrimination. The AJFAS travels to Francophone schools to recruit and train student performers, providing them with orientation and tools to conduct peer workshops and performances on issues of human rights, diversity and discrimination. Through these interactive platforms, youth have an opportunity to critically assess themselves and the world around them, to learn how to solve conflicts through dialogue and other peaceful approaches, to recognize the dangers associated with discrimination in all its forms, to appreciate the positive aspects of diversity, and to work toward living with others in respect and harmony. Workshops also enable school staff to help immigrant and Canadian youth form strategies to combat racism and discrimination.

NEXT STEPS

This project will continue in Alberta and will involve a wider range of actors—including schools, police forces, the justice system and the media—to combat racism and discrimination and ensure an integrated society.



The Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de l'Alberta Society's Caravan / The Community Perspective

By Ernest Éric Tundula

Alliance Jeunesse-Famille de l'Alberta Society

CHALLENGES

Times have changed. Gone are the days when Francophone immigrants came to Alberta and felt lost, with no resources tailored to their needs and no real measures in place to make them feel included once they were integrated. The local language—English—was a major hurdle for many. Employment opportunities were limited. The situation was bound to be frustrating for many immigrants, because those who had decided to make Canada their new home and hoped that their bilingualism would be an asset discovered, much to their surprise, that English was the language of work and the language of instruction in many schools. What could they do to deal with the situation? How could they thrive as Francophone immigrants in Alberta, where anglophones are the majority? To answer questions like these, the AJFAS is trying to establish closer ties among youth, communities and the population at large through the Caravan Project to Fight Discrimination and Canada's Exchange Program.

INTEGRATION: THE KEY TO INCLUSION

The AJFAS made a commitment to help Francophone immigrant families become part of Alberta society because of the bitterness it saw. There was no policy in place to ensure the inclusion of Francophone immigrants in many key areas of Alberta society. Some people were expecting different immigrants—"regular" immigrants. For others, the arrival of Francophone immigrants who looked different and spoke with a different accent than most other Francophone Canadians was not reassuring in the least. On the contrary, these newcomers instilled undue fear in some circles that became a breeding ground for apprehension and speculation. Bias against immigrants was the result. Were immigrants and non-immigrants in Alberta to be forever divided? Not if the AJFAS had anything to do with it.

To put everyone's mind at ease and end the prejudice that was good for no one, the AJFAS came up with the idea of bringing everyone together, starting with youth, through a campaign to raise awareness of discrimination. Interactive workshops are being held for schoolchildren, who will be tomorrow's leaders in a Canada that is growing more committed to multiculturalism



by the day. However, limiting the awareness workshops to Alberta schools would do little to bring young people together and help them gain an appreciation of one another. To fill the gap, the AJFAS has become involved in Canada's Exchange Program. That initiative twins young people from different social backgrounds and gives them the chance to live with each other's family for a while.

WHY IS IT A BEST PRACTICE?

Each year, the workshops make some 1,800 young people aware of the harmful effects of prejudice, which can lead to discrimination. The Caravan workshops teach them that discrimination is illegal. They learn about the remedies available to them, whether at school or in the community. They learn to respect cultural diversity and the fact that there is more than one race in the world. The Exchange Program brings together youth from different social and cultural backgrounds; helps them shed prejudice; and teaches them that people are different but that everyone is worthy of respect and equal in the eyes of the law. The AJFAS is helping to build a multicultural Canada in which respect for cultural diversity is the norm and bringing people together is a shared duty.

* For more information, please visit:
www.caravane.ajfas.ca.



***Karibuni*: DVD and User Guide on the Integration of Francophone Immigrants in Francophone Communities in Western Canada**

By Victor Moke Ngala —
Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations

ISSUE

Some Francophone immigrants from French-speaking Black Africa who have settled in Western Canada have chosen to live in Francophone communities. Those communities, which are minority communities that grapple with assimilation and a low birth rate, have welcomed the Francophone newcomers. However, it is hard for immigrants to adapt to a new culture and new surroundings; find a well-paying job; learn English; and deal with mistrust and rejection. If they are to keep these new immigrants, the communities have to help them overcome the challenges they face.

SOLUTION

The documentary *Karibuni* relates the experiences of Francophone immigrants from Black Africa who want to settle in Francophone communities in Western Canada. The film is aimed at Francophone communities and immigrants alike: immigrants encounter many problems when they arrive in Canada, and Canadians can do much to make newcomers' experience better. Some immigrants to Canada, refugees in particular, have overly high expectations and know absolutely nothing about their host country, which complicates the process of integration.

In addition to presenting options that can help ensure successful integration, the documentary shows that becoming part of Canadian society can be a long and difficult process, and that immigrants and the communities where they settle have to work together if integration is to succeed. The Centre for Race and Culture has incorporated the DVD and its accompanying user guide into workshops designed to raise awareness within long-established Francophone communities and among immigrants. The workshops illustrate the challenges—including language barriers, cultural differences and difficulty finding employment—that many immigrants face as they endeavour to integrate into the Francophone community and into Canadian society as a whole. Workshop participants learn how they can welcome these newcomers and make them part of their community. The workshops are also an excellent forum for discussing and learning about problems specific to immigrants and refugees in Canada.

The target audience for the *Karibuni* workshop includes students, teachers, staff of community agencies, public servants and private sector employees. The workshop activities can easily be incorporated into a one-day personal development program, or into any other conference or symposium. This centre chose this method because it wanted to put an end to the ignorance and



trust that are the first hurdles along the path to integration, and believed that awareness is the first step in ensuring successful integration. The DVD and user guide are provided free of charge to individuals and groups who want to raise awareness.

NEXT STEPS

The next step will be to update the *Karibuni* workshop material, particularly the DVD, to reflect rapid changes in immigration and accomplishments that have occurred since the material was developed. Producing the same type of documentary for the Atlantic provinces to track changes in immigration in that part of Canada might also be useful. Finally, work should be done to determine whether the children of Francophone immigrant families share their parents' attachment to their Francophone heritage.

*To order the DVD, please contact:

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Portail de l'Immigrant en Alberta's Comic Book

By Evelyne Kemajou —
Portail de l'Immigrant en Alberta

ISSUE

To address the topic of discrimination, the *Portail de l'immigrant en Alberta* (PIA) felt it necessary to find a different medium through which to convey the message. The PIA wanted to raise awareness among youth between the ages of 10 and 16 in order to change the way they think and act regarding diversity and discrimination. As a result, it opted for a user-friendly educational tool that would allow it to depict a wide range of scenarios: a comic strip called *La diversité dans ma ville, une richesse pour mon pays*. The organization hopes the strip will cast discrimination in a broader light and foster respect for diversity in all its forms. The PIA focuses in particular on child awareness, because what children learn today will determine the citizens they become.

SOLUTION AND RESULTS

Using a comic strip as a means of communication is a good way to do the following:

- develop reading, writing and oral communication skills;
- teach literary analysis techniques through a medium popular among young people;
- get to know the popular, familiar language many young people use;
- make young people aware of relational and human values; and
- raise awareness of the ways discrimination and intimidation undermine our society.

This form of communication is also an effective way of expressing feelings and conveying unspoken messages, and an ideal current affairs teaching aid.

Comic strips are powerful communication tools that raise awareness among youth through entertainment and give them a means of expressing themselves in their environment. As a particularly accessible form of expression, the comic strip is probably one of the best means of depicting day-to-day realities. Each drawing is also a message that can help young readers experience or re-experience a situation and thus accept the present.

Using comic strips to raise awareness has three benefits.

- They use humour to get serious messages across to young people.
- They use “modern” vocabulary and syntax, which is often closer to speech and therefore more accessible to readers.
- They are part of a non-literary youth culture, so they can reach a wider audience that is largely disinclined to read books.



WHY IS IT A BEST PRACTICE?

Each comic strip has two parts. The first depicts actual or latent behaviour and provides an opportunity to tie it in other forms of discrimination. The final pages explain how young people engaging in what was intended as innocent behaviour realize that they have actually offended a friend or peer. This realization encourages readers to avoid similar behaviour.

Teachers in some schools asked the PIA for the PDF version of the document so that they could read the comic strip with children under the age of 10. Did that mean they felt it was important and appropriate to convey the message to children that young? The involvement of parents, youth and teachers showed the PIA that the impact of the message goes far beyond the original clientele and that the medium works for everyone.

NEXT STEPS

The PIA believes that talking about cultural discrimination helps promote integration. Getting to know one's peers is the best way to understand them and make them feel more at home in the community. That is why many of the proposed awareness initiatives will target children and members of the school community, such as parents and teachers. To complement the comic strip, the PIA will carry out two types of awareness activity.

- Puppet shows: Friends from different schools will hold puppet show contests that present in a humorous and unaffected way the joys and sorrows, and the victories and defeats, of children from foreign cultures. At the end of each show, the audience will be given the chance to ask the puppets questions.
- Workshops: Workshops will be designed around activities that give children theoretical and practical information about difference. The goal will be to make children aware of the rights, day-to-day lives and identity of people from different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.



