



FPT Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec

March 2, 2018



Introduction¹

French-speaking immigrants contribute to the strength and prosperity of our country, while adding to Canada's rich cultural and linguistic diversity. Francophone immigration plays a role in maintaining the vitality of Francophone and Acadian communities across Canada but it also helps address labour market needs and helps sustain Canada as a bilingual country.

To maintain the 2016 demographic share of the francophone population in Canada outside of Quebec, 275,000 new French-speaking immigrants would be required by 2036.

The annual number of French-speaking economic immigrants to Canada outside of Quebec increased from 850 in 2003 to 2,400 in 2017.

However, as the decline of the proportion of the Canadian population (outside of Quebec)² using French as their first official language continues, despite our current efforts and accomplishments, more work is needed. Therefore, there is a need for increased efforts to attract, select, integrate, and retain French-speaking immigrants. This calls for a sustained, multi-sectoral and cross-jurisdictional response

that builds on actions taken to date and identifies new ways of collaborating to develop and implement new solutions.

This **Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration (Action Plan)** outlines a plan that governments can implement, in collaboration with stakeholders, to improve the promotion, selection, settlement, integration and retention of French-speaking immigrants to Francophone Minority Communities (FMCs), using tools and approaches that are suitable to each community. This recognizes the diversity of FMCs across Canada – ranging from large urban centres to small rural communities.

Federal-Provincial/Territorial strategic direction

Recognizing the economic, social, cultural and demographic opportunity that French-speaking immigrants represent, in 2016, the FPT ministers responsible for immigration confirmed increasing the promotion of Francophone immigration outside of Quebec as one of their shared priorities. In addition, the first pan-Canadian Forum on Francophone Immigration was held in Moncton in March 2017. During this forum, ministers responsible for immigration and ministers responsible for the Canadian Francophonie in attendance agreed to work together to improve efforts to increase francophone immigration.

Targets

Federal government: (1) 4.4% of economic immigrants outside of Québec by 2018 (2) 4.4% of all immigrants outside of Québec by 2023.

Ontario: 5%

New Brunswick: 33%

Northwest Territories: 5% increase

Manitoba 7%³

Newfoundland and Labrador: 5% increase⁴

¹ For the purposes of this joint FPT Action Plan, Francophone Minority Communities represent communities outside of Quebec.

² Under the Canada-Québec Accord Relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens, Quebec has specific responsibilities in planning immigration levels, selection, francization, reception and integration of immigrants. In these areas, it defines its policies and programs, and establishes its own standards. As a result, Quebec favours bilateral relations with the federal government to discuss immigration issues. Nevertheless, it maintains a presence in terms of federal, provincial and territorial activities in order to assert its specificity in immigration and encourage the sharing of information and best practices.

³ Manitoba continues to include a francophone immigration strategy within the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program to support the ongoing growth and vitality of Manitoba's francophone communities. Manitoba's francophone communities continue to support a target of 7% of all Manitoba's immigrant landings to be francophone

⁴ Newfoundland and Labrador's francophone immigration targets are premised on partnership and collaborative effort with francophone service providers and community organizations.

Guiding principles

In the implementation of the Action Plan, the collaboration of Immigration and Canadian Francophonie ministers will be guided by the following four principles, which promote positive actions to increase francophone immigration:

- Promoting Francophone immigration outside of Quebec is a shared, federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) priority.
- Collaboration on the promotion of Francophone immigration should build on the existing efforts of FPT governments. Jurisdictions can adopt new initiatives based on respective capacity and policy alignment.
- FPT governments are committed to collaborative efforts that recognize the important role that immigration plays in enhancing the vitality of FMC by mitigating labour shortages and the impact of aging populations.
- FPT ministers have a strong leadership role to play in promoting Francophone immigration, which includes engaging other government departments, communities, stakeholders and employers, who also have a role to play in increasing Francophone immigration.

Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration (Annex A)

This Action Plan centres on **three strategies for collaboration**:

1. Championing Francophone immigration;
2. Collaborating on three targeted areas:
 - employment,
 - accessible services,
 - inclusive communities; and
3. Reporting on progress.

These three strategies are to be implemented through concrete actions. The Action Plan recognizes provincial/territorial and regional asymmetry by **presenting ten collaborative actions** (Annex B) as a menu that immigration and Canadian Francophonie ministers can consider, individually or collaboratively, to move towards achieving their respective desired outcomes and allows jurisdictions to adopt initiatives based on respective capacity and policy context.

Strategies for collaboration

Championing Francophone Immigration

Immigration and Canadian Francophonie ministers have a role to play in championing the benefits and opportunities of francophone immigration through shared leadership and complementary actions with a variety of partners.

Collaborative actions:

1. **Enhancing international marketing activities** to promote awareness of opportunities for prospective French-speaking applicants to immigrate to Canada outside of Quebec. These efforts should build on existing promotional activities, and can include greater community engagement and greater employer involvement to increase employment opportunities available to prospective candidates.

The percentage of Express Entry invites sent to French-speaking immigrants has increased by 40% from 2015 to 2016.

2. **Promoting and increasing awareness of immigration pathways** to prospective French-speaking immigrants and French-speaking temporary residents looking for opportunities to live or study in Canada, and promote the private sponsorship of refugees within FMCs.
3. **Enhancing e-tools to promote the benefits and opportunities** of FMCs to prospective French-speaking immigrants, and including information on available immigration pathways and settlement services.
4. **Holding a pan-Canadian symposium** to act as a catalyst for broader stakeholder engagement and action.

From 2015 to 2017, the number of French-speaking immigrants admitted through provincial/territorial immigration programs has more than doubled and represents 38% of all French-speaking immigrants of the economic category.

Targeted areas for collaboration

Employment

Immigrants who speak both official languages make a significant contribution to the Canadian economy in that they have higher incidence of employment, higher average employment earnings and higher growth in employment earnings than other immigrants. In other words, they tend to fare well economically. However, lack of employer demand, in some jurisdictions, is a major constraint to hiring and benefiting from French-speaking immigrants. Identifying and fostering strong employment opportunities is fundamental to increasing the attraction and retention of French-speaking immigrants to live and work in Canada outside of Quebec. For immigrants, language training tailored to the workplace can also support them in fully integrating into the labour force. Employers could support language needs by offering language training on the job or by facilitating access to third-party training.

In the 10th year after landing, bilingual immigrants to Canada had higher average employment earnings (\$51,000) compared to other immigrants (\$49,000).

Therefore, it is essential to ensure that employers in FMCs are engaged to identify employment opportunities and understand the advantages of hiring French-speaking immigrants to meet their employment needs.

Collaborative action:

5. **Increasing employer engagement within FMCs** to identify and leverage employment and opportunities for French-speaking immigrants, by marketing the benefits of hiring French-speaking immigrants, enhancing connections with employers and improving information services to help employers that are interested in recruiting and hiring French-speaking skilled workers navigate the immigration system.

Accessible Services

Increasing the availability, awareness and accessibility of services in French is another key factor that contributes to the successful integration of French-speaking immigrants in FMCs, particularly when services are provided by and for Francophones. Supporting French-speaking immigrants in accessing services in their official language of choice allows the fostering of connections and a sense of belonging within a community, leading to higher retention rates in FMCs.

Collaborative actions:

6. **Increasing awareness, availability, and access to settlement services** for French-speaking immigrants in FMCs to support better social integration and community connections.
7. **Strengthening the provision of public services** in French in FMCs such as health or education, to help build long-term sustainable connections to these communities.

Inclusive communities

Diverse and inclusive communities offer newcomers, including French-speaking immigrants, the opportunity to live and work in environments that are receptive and welcoming. In turn,

Access to employment and housing can be critical barriers to the integration of French-speaking immigrants in FMCs.

Top five settlement services accessed by French-speaking clients:

Information and orientation

Needs assessment and referrals

Language assessment

Language training

Community Connections

French-speaking immigrants are able to contribute socially, culturally and economically to FMCs. Community characteristics that may improve the retention of immigrants in a province/territory include affordable housing, presence of family and social networks, access to services in French, and diverse populations. Inclusive communities offering supports and programming tailored to the unique needs of French-speaking immigrants are essential in helping them develop a sense of belonging and attachment. This can contribute to higher retention rates of French-speaking immigrants in their communities.

Collaborative action:

8. **Supporting initiatives that promote diverse and inclusive FMCs** through pilot projects or campaigns. Some projects could be funded through Quebec's existing grant programs, which support the vitality of francophone and Acadian communities outside of Quebec, created under their Policy on the Canadian Francophonie.

Reporting on progress

It is important to track the progress of our individual and collaborative actions. Just as important is the ability to learn from the successful actions taken by others. This will require ongoing sharing of best practices to sustain collaborative actions, jurisdictional policy and program approaches, as applicable. Immigration and Canadian Francophonie ministers can report annually on francophone immigration outcomes through their respective tables. For example, immigration ministers will report on progress as part of the Vision Action Plan. The immigration and Canadian Francophonie tables will share progress with each other, through periodic events such as ministers' meetings and community events that bring together government representatives and other stakeholders.

Identifying performance indicators can provide the context by which individual and collaborative actions can be informed. These indicators can inform policy direction and support evidence-based adjustments to Action Plan activities, as required. Reporting on progress of the action plan must take into account the breadth and asymmetry of jurisdictional activities.

Examples of potential indicators could include:

- Number and percentage of immigrants outside of Quebec who identify as French-speaking;
- Number and percentage of French-speaking immigrants who are employed and self-employed;
- Number and percentage of French-speaking immigrants who have a strong sense of belonging;
- Percentage of French speaking immigrants and refugees who volunteer in Canada.

Collaborative actions:

9. **Collaborating to develop appropriate indicators** that jurisdictions can use to contextualize, inform and assess the direction of our individual and collaborative work
10. **Sharing best practices and reporting on progress** achieved based on their specific program and activities related to Francophone Immigration.

Moving forward

Desired outcomes

Through the above strategies, immigration and Canadian Francophonie ministers seek to support the following outcomes:

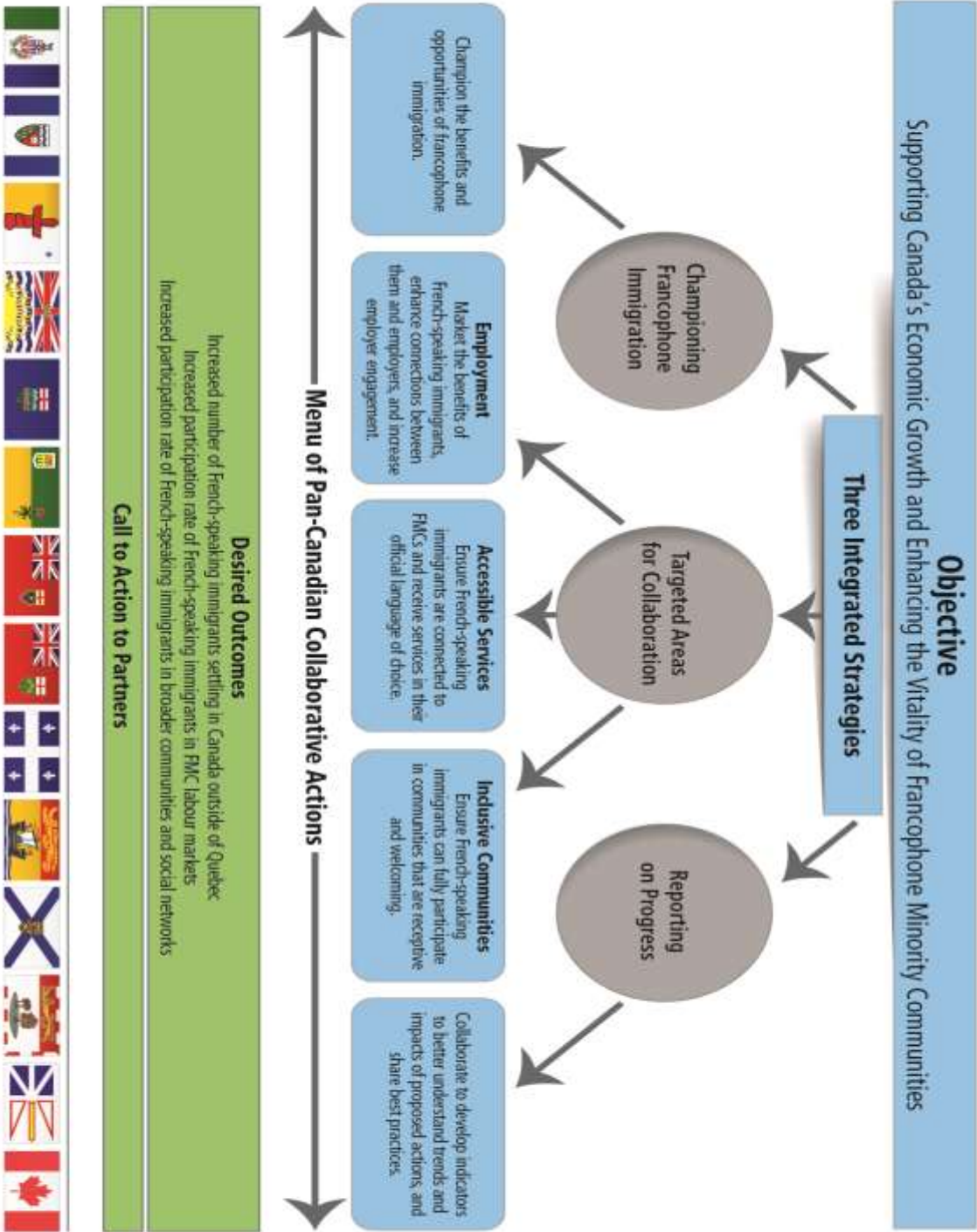
- An increased number of French-speaking immigrants settling in Canada outside of Quebec;
- An increased participation rate of French-speaking immigrants in FMC labour markets; and
- An increased participation rate of French-speaking immigrants in broader communities and social networks.

Call to action

This Action Plan recognizes the importance of partnering with communities, municipal governments, national organizations, post-secondary and vocational institutions, immigrant settlement agencies and employers, to leverage opportunities, and to maximize efforts and system-wide enhancements associated with increasing the vitality of francophone communities. Building buy-in and gaining support from stakeholders to implement complimentary actions contributes to the common goal of supporting the integration and retention of French-speaking immigrants in FMCs.

Conclusion

FPT governments will continue to play an active role in leading collaborative actions to attract and retain French-speaking immigrants. The strategies for collaboration in this Action Plan aim to advance the shared objectives of supporting the vitality of FMCs and creating economic opportunities for French-speaking immigrants. The Action Plan also calls on others to join in these efforts by continuing their support for francophone immigration and by recognizing the important role immigration plays in helping to make positive contributions to communities across the country.



Annex B – Menu of Collaborative Actions

Strategies for collaboration	Collaborative actions
Championing Francophone immigration	<p>1. Enhancing international marketing activities to promote awareness of opportunities for prospective French-speaking applicants to immigrate to Canada outside of Quebec. These efforts should build on existing promotional activities, and can include greater community engagement and greater employer involvement to increase the number of employment opportunities available to prospective candidates.</p> <p>2. Promoting and increasing awareness of immigration pathways to prospective French-speaking immigrants and French-speaking temporary residents looking for opportunities to live or study in Canada, and promote the private sponsorship of refugees within FMCs.</p> <p>3. Enhancing e-tools to promote the benefits and opportunities of FMCs to prospective French-speaking immigrants, and including information on available immigration pathways and settlement services.</p> <p>4. Holding a pan-Canadian symposium to act as a catalyst for broader stakeholder engagement and action.</p>
Targeted areas for collaboration	
1. Employment	5. Increasing employer engagement within FMCs to identify and leverage employment and opportunities for French-speaking immigrants, by marketing the benefits of hiring French-speaking immigrants, enhancing connections with employers and improving information services to help employers that are interested in recruiting and hiring French-speaking skilled workers navigate the immigration system.
2. Accessible services	<p>6. Increasing awareness, availability, and access to settlement services for French-speaking immigrants in FMCs to support better social integration and community connections.</p> <p>7. Strengthening the provision of public services in French in FMCs such as health or education, to help build long-term sustainable connections to these communities.</p>
3. Inclusive communities	8. Supporting initiatives that promote diverse and inclusive FMCs through pilot projects or campaigns. Some projects could be funded through Quebec's existing grant programs, which support the vitality of francophone and Acadian communities outside of Quebec, created under their Policy on the Canadian Francophonie.
Reporting on progress	<p>9. Collaborating to develop appropriate indicators that jurisdictions can use to contextualize, inform and assess the direction of our individual and collaborative work.</p> <p>10. Sharing best practices and reporting on progress achieved based on their specific program and activities related to Francophone Immigration.</p>