



Réseau de soutien
à l'immigration francophone
Région Centre-Sud-Ouest de l'Ontario

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FRANCOPHONE NETWORK

By
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BACKGROUND

In March 2002, Minister Denis Coderre, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, established the Citizenship and Immigration Canada-Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee.

Sitting on this Committee are representatives of these communities, senior CIC officials and representatives of other federal and provincial departments. The Committee was given the important mandate of overseeing the establishment of the conditions necessary to facilitate the recruitment, selection and reception of newcomers and their integration into Francophone minority communities.

In 2001 and 2002, the Commissioner of Official Languages made a special contribution to advancing the issue of immigration to official-language minority communities by publishing two studies : « *Immigration and the Vitality of Canada's Official Language Communities: Policy, Demography and Identity* » and « *Official Languages and Immigration: Obstacles and Opportunities for Immigrants and Communities* ». It is also in 2002 that linguistic provisions were incorporated in the new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

The Strategic Framework supports the *Government's Action Plan for Official Languages*, released in March 2003 and allocates a sum of nine millions over a five-year period to provide the community and government partners the tools necessary to elaborate pilot projects in order to promote immigration into Francophone minority communities.

In November 2003, the Steering Committee announced the *Strategic Framework to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*. It is also the year whereby the Direction of Settlement and Intergovernmental Affairs – Ontario Region of CIC implemented the Sub-Steering Committee for the *Initiative of Francophone Immigration Within Minority Communities* in order to ensure a provincial collaborative structure (collaboration between communities and ministries) and to ensure an effective coordination of the project at the provincial level.

In 2006, the Honorable Monte Solberg, Minister of Citizenship & Immigration, launched the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*, a five-year plan based on the adoption of a strategic approach to foster attraction, integration and settlement of Francophones immigrants in minority communities. This plan is available at the following link: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/francais/pub/plan-minoritaires.html>

Also in 2006 and based on the recommendations of the Francophone Minority Communities Steering Committee and its Sub-Steering Committee – Ontario Region, a Call For Proposal was launched for the implementation of three (3) networks for the Francophone immigration in Ontario.

In answering the Call For Proposal and with the support of various partners such as Centre francophone de Toronto and ACFO London-Sarnia, the Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara successfully obtained the project to create the Francophone Immigration Network System for the Central South-West region of Ontario.

MANDATE OF THE NETWORK

- The Central South-Western Francophone Immigration Network is a regional project that supports the integration of Francophone Immigrants within this area.
- The main goal of the Network is to provide support to the Francophone minority communities to benefit from the coordination of recommendations, planning and implementation of initiatives and projects related to Francophone immigration.

OBJECTIVES

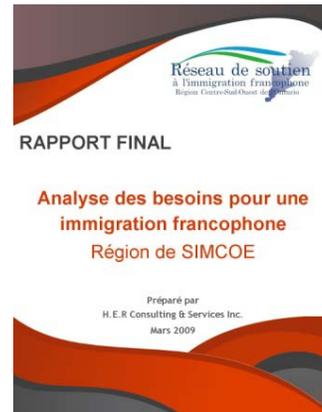
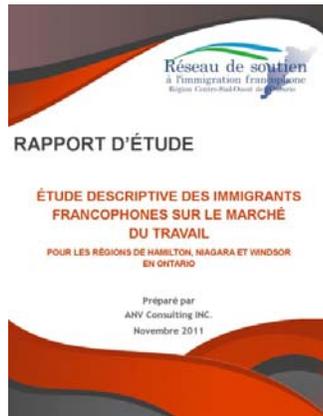
- Increase the number of French-speaking immigrants to give more demographic weight to Francophone minority communities
- Improve the capacity of Francophone minority communities to receive Francophone newcomers and to strengthen their reception and settlement infrastructures
- Ensure the economic integration of French-speaking immigrants into Canadian society and into Francophone minority communities in particular
- Ensure the social and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants into Canadian society and into Francophone minority communities

ACTIVITIES

- Organise dialogue meetings at the local and regional levels to identify and analyse the services rendered to Francophones, particularly with service providers who facilitate the reception and integration of newcomers and to formulate recommendations.



- Carry out needs assessments of Francophone immigrants, do the analysis and, based on the results obtained, formulate relevant recommendations and submit these to CIC.



- Develop a communication tool that will inform partners, key players and members of the community on the activities of the Network and the current situation of Francophone immigration in the Central South-West region of Ontario.
- Identify best practices of reception and integration of Francophone immigrants and share the information with agency partners and members of the community.
- Raise the awareness of employers in the region about benefits and advantages of francophone immigration
- Workshops designed to help French-speaking immigrants of the region to start their own business (Business Plan, Loan requirement, Marketing Plan and financial Plan)
- Implementation and/or participation in the establishment of local immigration committees
- Support local projects (Community gardens, Sewing cooperative...)



- Francophone Immigration Strategic Plan for the Central Southwest region of Ontario for 2013-2018

The recommendations arising from the dialogue activities and the needs assessments will be presented to CIC for follow-up.

However, some of these recommendations may be addressed directly to the Network. Based on their pertinence and scope of its implementation, these recommendations may be realized partly by the Network and completed in collaboration with community partners and within its own means.

Community partners are invited and encouraged to communicate directly with CIC for all kind of projects, whether it is answering a Call for Proposal or not.

GOVERNING OF THE NETWORK

CSC Hamilton/Niagara

It manages the Network's administrative and financial levels. The employees working for the Network are employees of the Centre de santé communautaire (CSC) and must adhere to the CSC's policies and procedures in place at the Centre.

Network's Team

The Network is a simple, flexible and effective structure. To accomplish its mission, it has a team composed of:

- A Director who supervises the activities of the Network
- Two project officers handling the London-Windsor and Durham-Hamilton-Niagara and Toronto regions
- One Communication & administrative assistant based in Hamilton who brings support to the team.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE CHALLENGES OF IMMIGRATION

The ultimate goals regarding the challenges of Francophone immigration are to:

- preserve the linguistic duality;
- develop quality services in French; and
- facilitate the reception, settlement and integration of francophone immigrants.

Successful immigration involves three major steps:

- Attraction: recruiting and receiving newcomers to a given community;
- Integration: ensuring the successful economic and social integration of newcomers;
- Retention and settlement: ensuring the settlement and long-term establishment of newcomers.

Based on the above statements, the challenges are linked to:

- The number of French-speaking immigrants: increasing the demographic weight of Francophones due to the decrease in the birth rate and the ageing of the population
- Immigrant mobility: attracting and retaining them in Francophone communities
- Integration difficulties for immigrants: employment; recognition of acquired skills and experience; knowledge of English, etc.
- Francophone Minorities Communities' lack of capacity to recruit, receive and integrate French-speaking immigrants

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Some initiatives are to be implemented in order to reinforce the linguistic duality and increase the diversity of communities:

- Improving the integration of immigrants who have already settled in the communities
- Recruiting new immigrants (economic class immigrants, students, sponsored refugees, etc.)
- Raise the awareness of employers in the region about benefits and advantages of francophone immigration
- Analysis of the labor market in the regions covered by the Network
- Local entrepreneurship support initiatives

- Raise awareness among francophone immigrants about entrepreneurial opportunities
- Contribute to the empowerment of Francophone minority communities through various activities
- Increased collaboration between LIPS and Réseau –exchange of best practices and settlement strategies to facilitate better planning of immigrant services
- Build the capacity of francophone community organizations to make them more dynamic and better performers (collaboration between organizations)
- Promote an effective and efficient network system within Francophone minority

WHO CAN PARTNER WITH THE NETWORK?

Institutions:

- Governments (governmental agencies and various levels of government)
- Municipalities, LIPs (Central South-western Region)
- Religious Communities
- Refuges for refugees and immigrants
- Health Sector
- Education Sector
- Etc.

Agencies:

- Service providers and representatives from the following demographic sub-groups:
 - Children and youth sectors of newcomers
 - Women's sector of newcomers
 - Ageing sector of newcomers
 - Racial ethnocultural minorities' sector
- Social community Sector
- Employment and Economic Development Sectors
- Chambers of Commerce
- Cultural Sector

Individuals:

- Users of services, political and community leaders, members of the community, etc.

HOW TO COLLABORATE WITH THE NETWORK?

All identified partners above can collaborate with the Network and bring their support by participating actively in the various activities organized by the Network: dialogue meetings, forums, needs assessments, training activities, conferences, strategic planning etc.

Partners are equally invited to share their ideas or initiatives with the Network regarding Francophone immigration, thus helping the Network in achieving its mission.

SECTORS OF ACTIVITIES AIMED BY THE NETWORK

1. Employment and economic development
2. Education
3. Health
4. Social and community services
5. Judicial and immigration services
6. Social and cultural integration

GEOGRAPHICAL ZONES COVERED BY THE PROJECT

The geographical zone covered by the Francophone Immigration Network System is the following:

Counties of Waterloo, Wellington, Hamilton, Niagara, Grey, Bruce, Huron, Perth, Halton-Peel, Simcoe-York, Thames Valley, Dufferin, Essex, Kent, Lambton, Durham, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge, and Toronto.

In order to be effective and to deal with the specificities of each region, the Central South-West region was subdivided in three zones.

1- London zone and surrounding areas:

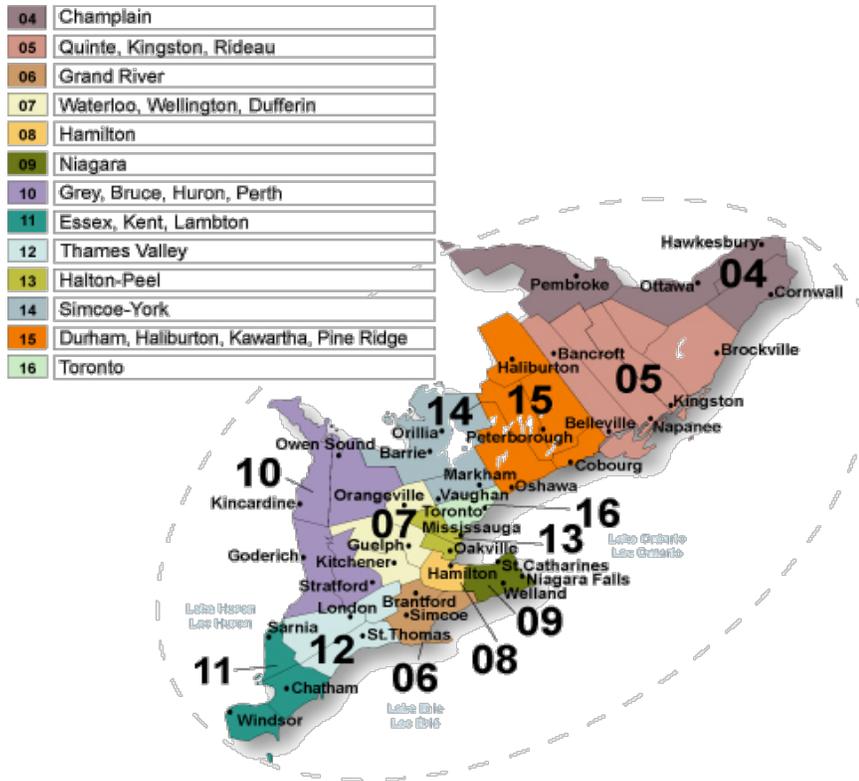
- **Counties of** Grey, Bruce, Huron, Perth, Thames Valley, Essex, Kent and Lambton.

2- Hamilton zone and surrounding areas:

- **Counties of** Hamilton, Niagara, Halton, Kitchener-Waterloo.

3- Toronto zone and surrounding areas:

- **Counties of** Peel, Simcoe-York, Durham, Haliburton, Kawartha, Toronto and Dufferin.



* This map is for illustrative purposes only and is not to scale.
* Cette carte est fournie à titre d'illustration et peut ne pas être à échelle.



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