



# REPORT ON FRANCOPHONE AFFAIRS

2026

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# Minister's message

Madam Speaker,

It is with great confidence that I present this report on Francophone affairs, which highlights the progress achieved over this past year and reflects our commitment to making Ontario's Francophonie a key driver in the development of our province.



Concrete and transformative results marked 2025. We expanded access to French language services by modernizing and extending designated areas. We supported transformative projects, such as the new MIFO Francophone Community Centre in Orléans, which will serve as a hub for the entire community. We contributed to the creation of the French Language Health Planning Centre. We also supported the implementation of postsecondary education initiatives designed to better align education with labour market needs. As a result, Université de Sudbury welcomed its first student cohort since entering into an agreement with the University of Ottawa, and Université de l'Ontario français launched a new program.

Across Ontario, the Francophonie is asserting itself with confidence. It is creating, innovating and building businesses. We are providing the tools necessary for the francophonie to reach its full potential and to continue contributing to Ontario's growth, both at home and abroad. The agreements signed over the past year with France, Louisiana and Nova Scotia are a testament to this commitment.

This past year was also defined by a unifying moment: the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag. On this occasion, our government invested more than \$1 million to support cultural and community initiatives to celebrate across Ontario. More than a symbol, this flag carries in its folds the determination and momentum of a community looking towards the future.


Our work rests on two complementary levers: the French Language Services Strategy, which guarantees access to high-quality French language services, and the Francophone Economic Development Strategy, focusing on talent and business growth. Together, they reinforce the vitality and prosperity of Ontario's Francophonie.

# Message de la ministre

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These achievements reflect a clear vision: a Francophonie fully integrated into the province's economic and social priorities. They are the result of a shared commitment. I warmly thank the Premier, my Cabinet colleagues, and all our community, institutional and economic partners. Their collaboration is essential to deliver concrete and sustainable initiatives.

Together, we are laying the foundations for a strong, modern Francophonie, prepared for tomorrow's challenges. A Francophonie driving prosperity for our province and actively contributing to Protecting Ontario, today and for generations to come.



The Honourable Caroline Mulroney  
Minister of Francophone Affairs

# Introduction

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## Mandate and Role of the Ministry of Francophone Affairs

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The mandate of the Ministry of Francophone Affairs is to oversee the implementation of policies and initiatives that support the vitality and sustainable development of Ontario's Francophonie.

Its strategic role is to foster equitable access to government services in French, in accordance with the *French Language Services Act*, and to support the full participation of Francophones in the province's social, cultural, economic and political life.

The ministry works to promote an inclusive environment where the French language and Francophone expertise are recognized and leveraged. Through its actions, the ministry supports other ministries and Francophone communities by providing them with resources and development opportunities in key sectors, notably in education, health, training and economic development.

This strategic approach is based on close collaboration with ministries, public and private organizations, and community partners, in order to help Protect Ontario. It aims to ensure that French, as a language of learning, work and services, is recognized as a key driver of growth, innovation, and social cohesion across the province.

# Celebrating and Showcasing Ontario's Francophonie

In 2025, Ontario's Francophonie celebrated a significant milestone: the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag. Created to reaffirm the identity, pride and resilience of the Francophone community, this symbol remains at the heart of its history and presence in Ontario.

Many events took place across the province to celebrate the 50th anniversary. These celebrations highlighted the French language and reaffirmed the importance of the Francophonie in Ontario's public life.

## The Franco-Ontarian Flag Honoured at Queen's Park and in Sudbury

On September 25, on the occasion of the 15th Franco-Ontarian Day and the 50th anniversary of the first raising of the Franco-Ontarian flag in 1975 at the Université de Sudbury, the flag was celebrated at Queen's Park, alongside representatives from all political parties and members of the Francophone and Francophile communities.



The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Her Honour the Honourable Edith Dumont, the Honourable Nolan Quinn, Minister of Colleges and Universities, Research Excellence and Security, and the Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Francophone Affairs and President of Treasury Board, were present at the Université de Sudbury to mark this anniversary at the very site where the Franco-Ontarian flag was raised for the first time.

A few months later, in December 2025, the Franco-Ontarian flag began a new chapter when it was permanently raised on the ceremonial flagpole at Queen's Park, in front of the visitors' entrance.

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## A Mobilized Government

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Several ministries and government agencies worked together to mark the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag and increase its visibility.

The **Ministry of Transportation** featured the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag on highway signs across the province, reaching a broad audience.



The **Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)** unveiled a vehicle bearing the colours of Ontario's Francophonie, reaffirming its commitment to serving the public in the official language of their choice. Since 2024, bilingual officers wear a distinctive badge, demonstrating this commitment to offer to French-language services.

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Similarly, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag, the **Ministry of Natural Resources**, through its Aviation, Forest Fire and Emergency Services, launched an initiative aimed at recognizing and increasing the visibility of Francophone staff. French-speaking wildland firefighters and fire management staff can now wear patches and pins on their uniforms bearing the colours of the Franco-Ontarian flag.

These initiatives demonstrate a coordinated commitment to recognizing and showcasing Ontario's Francophonie.

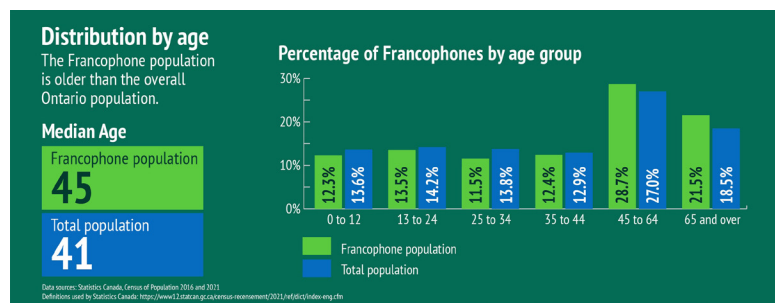
## Youth at the Heart of the Francophone Community

Franco-Ontarian Day brought together more than 47,000 Francophone participants across Ontario, including 3,000 participants at Queen's Park and in Sudbury.

At the same time, the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO) received funding to implement a micro-grants fund to support at least 50 local initiatives led by Francophone organizations as part of the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag. Many young people took part in these activities organized in schools, in universities and in community organizations, discovering the culture, history and talents of Ontario's Francophonie through 101 creative workshops, performances and inspiring encounters. Other Francophone schools also joined in, including the catholic and public elementary schools of Embrun, which brought together students to celebrate this event.

These initiatives helped thousands of people get involved, students, seniors, families, newcomers, entrepreneurs and artists, by creating spaces to meet and celebrate across the province.

It should be noted that young Francophones aged 0 to 24 represent 25.8% of the province's Francophone population or approximately 168,000 people. This significant proportion illustrates the key role of new generations in the vitality and continuity of Ontario's Francophonie.



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population and Demography, 2021

## The Ministry of Francophone Affairs' Investment in Community-Based Celebrations

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To celebrate the Francophonie and the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarian flag, the province invested more than \$1 million to support initiatives promoting the diversity, creativity and vigour of Francophone communities across Ontario. This investment supported a wide range of activities, reflecting the government's commitment to supporting a strong, inclusive Francophonie present across all areas of the province.

### **1. Creation of French-Language Cultural Content: Project Led by the Lieutenant Governor and the Alliance culturelle de l'Ontario**

This initiative supports the creation of a collection of works and cultural content developed in collaboration with Francophone artists and communities from across the province. These creations will be featured in a travelling exhibition in 2026 and will strengthen the discovery of Franco-Ontarian artists at provincial, national and international levels.

### **2. Educational Magazine: Printing and Distribution to All Schools in Ontario**

Funding was provided for the printing and distribution of a special edition of the French educational magazine *Minimag*, with expanded distribution to English-language school boards providing French immersion programs.

This special edition explored the history, key milestones and symbols of Ontario's Francophonie to support identity development and raise awareness among all students in Ontario.

### **3. Promotion and Visibility Initiatives for Ontario's Francophonie**

The government is setting up a set of tools to enhance Ontario's presence on national and international stages, particularly in the lead up to the province's participation in the Francophonie Summit to be held in Cambodia in November 2026.

The initiatives related to this project confirm that Ontario's Francophonie represents both a cultural asset and an economic driver for the province.

#### 4. Cultural Symposium on the Future of the Franco-Ontarian Arts and Cultural Sector

The organization of a two-day provincial symposium brought together cultural stakeholders from various disciplines to reflect on the state of the Francophone cultural sector in Ontario. The event provided an opportunity to assess the state of the sector, analyze its challenges and opportunities, and discuss concrete steps to strengthen the visibility and discoverability of French-language cultural content.



The Minister of Francophone Affairs, the Honourable Caroline Mulroney, moderated a panel at the symposium on the discoverability of artistic and cultural products from Ontario's Francophonie. The panelists also examined the challenges facing access to the French-language content in a minority context, given the ever-changing digital environment.

#### 5. Export Hub: Supporting Francophone Economic Development - Fédération des gens d'affaires de l'Ontario (FGA)

The government invested in an export hub aimed at offering a support and training framework to Francophone businesses in Ontario to help them develop their markets in Canada and abroad. The project includes several tangible components: personalized business diagnostics, audits to identify barriers to trade, and workshops focused on provincial and territorial markets.

A portal supporting interprovincial expansion has been created, and assistance will be provided through Francophone trade missions in order to maximize business opportunities. The objective of these initiatives is to support the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises while strengthening the presence of the economic Francophonie in Ontario.

## Minister of Francophone Affairs Award

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Another significant event of the year was the presentation of the Minister of Francophone Affairs Award, formerly known as the Ontario Francophonie Awards. This award recognizes outstanding contributions to the Ontario Francophonie. In 2025, it was awarded to Fété Ngira-Batware Kimpiobi, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Solidarité des femmes immigrantes francophones du Niagara (SOFIFRAN).

“To me, this award represents more than individual recognition. It symbolizes the result of a collective effort by a Francophone immigrant community that welcomed me, recognized me and honoured me with its trust. I dedicate this award to that community, to everyone who day by day weaves the living fabric of our Ontario Francophonie.”

- Fété Ngira-Batware Kimpiobi.



The award was presented in person by the Minister of Francophone Affairs, the Honourable Caroline Mulroney, at the Annual Meeting of the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO) in October 2025.

“Mama Fété has been working for nearly twenty years to empower Francophone immigrant women and families in the Niagara region. Her leadership has helped create spaces for learning and trust where everyone can be heard. Mama Fété is a quiet force, a builder and a source of inspiration for everyone who believes in the power of the French language as a unifying force.” - The Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Francophone Affairs

## International Recognition of the Minister

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Among the highlights of the year was the appointment of the Minister of Francophone Affairs, the Honourable Caroline Mulroney, as a Knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honour, France's highest order of merit.

His Excellency Michel Miraillet, the French Ambassador to Canada, bestowed her this honour in October 2025. It underscores Minister Mulroney's sustained commitment to promoting the French language and Francophone culture in Ontario.



# French-Language Services

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The delivery of French-language services remains a priority for the government. Launched in 2021, the Ontario French Language Services Strategy, aims to improve access to, the quality and the availability of French-language services across the province. It is structured around three pillars:

- Modernizing the legislative framework, including the *French Language Services Act*.
- Growing a skilled and bilingual workforce.
- Optimizing the planning and delivery of French-language services.

## Modernizing, Expanding and Reinforcing Access to French-Language Services

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Access to government services in French remains a priority for the Government of Ontario. Against this backdrop, the Ministry of Francophone Affairs has continued implementing the Ontario French Language Services Strategy to improve the accessibility, quality and visibility of services provided to Francophone communities across the province.

December 9, 2025 marked the fourth anniversary of the modernization of the *French Language Services Act*. This milestone continues to guide the development of French-language services in Ontario. This modernization strengthened accountability mechanisms, clarified the roles and obligations of entities subject to the act, and supported sustainable planning.

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## Expanding Designated Areas

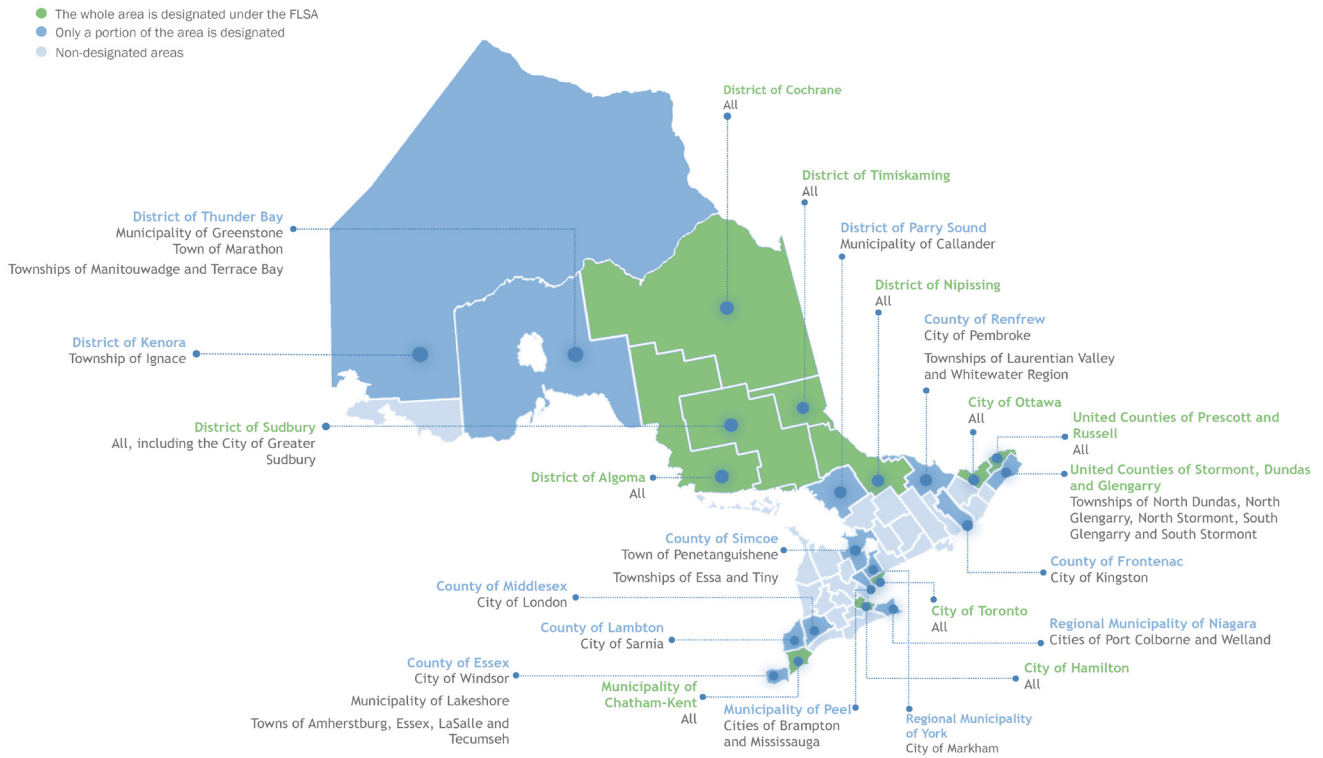
In this context, a major announcement was made regarding the expansion of designated areas in Ontario. Six areas were expanded to reflect current municipal boundaries established by the [Ontario Regulation 180/03, Division of Ontario into geographic areas](#), issued under the [Territorial Division Act, 2002](#).

The expansion of designated areas will take effect on January 1, 2029, following a three-year implementation period, which will allow provincial ministries, agencies and third-party service providers to strengthen their capacity to deliver French-language services.

This expansion will provide access to government services in French to more than 7,700 additional Francophones across an additional area of 6,326 km<sup>2</sup>.

Formerly listed in the <i>French Language Services Act</i> , now in Ontario Regulation 272/25: <b>DESIGNATION OF AREAS</b>	<b>Effective on January 1, 2029</b>
County of Dundas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Township of Winchester</li> </ul>	Full designation of the Township of North Dundas in the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (SDG). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The designation of SDG already includes the City of Cornwall as well as the Townships of North Glengarry, North Stormont, South Glengarry and South Stormont.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County of Glengarry</li> <li>• County of Stormont</li> </ul>	
County of Essex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes the City of Windsor, the Towns of Belle River and Tecumseh, as well as the Townships of Anderdon, Colchester North, Maidstone, Sandwich-South, Sandwich-West, Tilbury West, Tilbury North and Rochester</li> </ul>	Full designation of the Towns of Amherstburg and Essex in the County of Essex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The designation of the County of Essex already includes the City of Windsor, the Municipality of Lakeshore as well as the Towns of LaSalle and Tecumseh.</li> </ul>
City of Hamilton <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As at December 31, 2000</li> </ul>	Full designation of the area comprising five neighbouring municipalities that were amalgamated with Hamilton in January 2001.
County of Kent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town of Tilbury</li> <li>• Townships of Dover and Tilbury East</li> </ul>	Full designation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent
County of Renfrew <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Pembroke</li> <li>• Townships of Stafford and Westmeath</li> </ul>	Full designation of the Townships of Laurentian Valley and Whitewater Region in the County of Renfrew <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The designation already includes the City of Pembroke</li> </ul>
District of Thunder Bay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Towns of Geraldton, Longlac and Marathon</li> <li>• Townships of Manitouwadge, Beardmore, Nakina and Terrace Bay</li> </ul>	Full designation of the Municipality of Greenstone in the District of Thunder Bay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The designation already includes the Town of Marathon as well as the Townships of Manitouwadge and Terrace Bay</li> </ul>

Map of designated area under the *French Language Services Act* as of January 1st 2029



Moreover, as part of this exercise, the government updated the names of four areas to reflect their current names:

- United Counties of Prescott and Russell: name update to reflect the unified governance structure (effective on January 1, 2026).
- City of Sarnia: clarification of the designation to distinguish between Lambton County and the City of Sarnia (effective on January 1, 2026).
- City of Greater Sudbury and Sudbury District: removal of a redundant reference, as the city is geographically an integral part of the district (effective on January 1, 2026).
- United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry: official name update following the amalgamation of the three counties, with an effective date scheduled in January 2029.

In January 2026, the Government of Ontario incorporated the schedule listing designated areas into a new regulation made under the *French Language Services Act*. This new regulation also includes updates to several designated areas to reflect the commonly used names of municipalities, as well as the expansion of six designated areas to align them with current municipal boundaries.

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## Updates to Ontario Regulation 398/93

Since 1994, agencies that are fully or partially subsidized by the province and provide direct services to the public may apply for an official designation to confirm their commitment to offering French-language services. This designation may be full or partial. Full designation means that all of the agency's services and programs funded by the province are provided in French. A partial designation means that some specific services or programs funded by the Government of Ontario are available in French.

With the addition of two newly designated agencies as of January 1, 2026, Ontario Regulation 398/93 includes 258 designated agencies under the *French Language Services Act*:

- Centre d'Accueil Champlain, full designation for services and programs delivered on behalf of the Ministry of Long-Term Care.
- Pembroke Regional Hospital, partial designation for the Diagnostic Imaging Department and Radiology Unit delivered on behalf of the Ministry of Health.

In collaboration with its partner ministries and the legal services involved, the Ministry of Francophone Affairs has launched a systematic review of the entire list to support its progressive update.

In 2025, the Ministry of Francophone Affairs made 11 updates regarding previously designated agencies, bringing the total number of updates made since 2023 to over 143.

Following designation, agencies are listed in [Ontario Regulation 398/93: Designation of public service agencies](#), which formalizes their status as French-language service provider in accordance with the Act.

The Ministry of Health continued to update the list of agencies providing French-language public services and designated under Ontario Regulation 398/93, representing an in-depth review, the most complete since 1994. This exercise, which took into account mergers, program and service transfers, name changes, as well as the expansion of certain services, led to changes affecting agencies in the health and long-term care sectors, thereby improving the accuracy, compliance and transparency of French-language services.

## Visual Identity for Designated Agencies

To enhance the visibility of French-language services, the Ministry launched a distinct visual identity for designated agencies under the *French Language Services Act*. This initiative aims to help users more easily identify agencies that provide services in French, which helps ensure clearer access to these services.



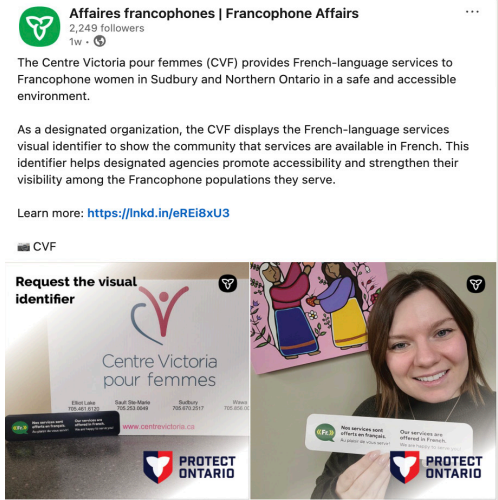
**Nos services sont  
offerts en français.**  
Au plaisir de vous servir!

**Our services are  
offered in French.**  
We are happy to serve you!

The official presentation of the first stickers marked an important symbolic milestone. The Centre d'Accueil Héritage in Toronto became the first designated agency to receive this visual identifier at the Annual Meeting of the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario in October 2025.



The Ministry of Francophone Affairs launched a promotional campaign on social media in March 2026 to extend the reach of this initiative. This campaign showcases the visual identifier through testimonials from designated agencies. It helps increase the visibility of French-language services, promotes best practices and encourages other agencies to adopt the identifier.



## Recruiting and Retaining Bilingual Talent

The quality of French-language services also depends on the availability of a skilled bilingual workforce.

In this context, the Ministry of Francophone Affairs is working closely with its partners to explore mechanisms that encourage the hiring of Francophones, including through programs targeting students and recent graduates.

### Treasury Board Secretariat

Some of the measures aimed at attracting bilingual candidates include the Ontario Internship Program (OIP) and the Summer Employment Opportunities Program (SEO), which now offer bilingual placements.

- The OIP offers extended eligibility for bilingual candidates, enabling them to apply up to five years post-graduation, compared with the two-year post-graduation general eligibility requirement.
- The SEO and OIP programs use targeted promotional strategies to better recruit and retain bilingual talent at the start of their careers in the public service.
- Between 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, the number of bilingual candidates for the SEO program rose by 121%, while the number of candidates who self-identified as bilingual for OIP doubled, from 121 to 242.

## Language Proficiency Courses for Staff

In accordance with the *French Language Services Act*, each ministry of the Government of Ontario designates a French-Language Services Coordinator tasked with guiding and supporting ministry teams in implementing their language obligations. They play a key role in promoting active offer, ensuring compliance with the Act and ongoing improvement of the quality of French-language services.

During the year, a language training initiative was organized by the French-Language Services Education and Community Services Cluster. This training, provided by a vendor of record designated by the Government of Ontario, was targeted at government staff wishing to strengthen their French-language skills from the following seven client ministries:

- Children, Community and Social Services
- Education
- Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security
- Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Tourism, Culture and Gaming
- Sport
- Seniors and Accessibility

The goal of this initiative was to improve language proficiency among staff, help them maintain their skills and facilitate professional mobility within designated bilingual positions. In doing so, it contributed to more effective compliance with legislative and operational requirements related to French-language services.

More than 18 training sessions were offered through this initiative, enabling 127 employees to benefit from the program. The project exceeded its participation goals and impact targets, and significantly helped retain bilingual staff and sustain French-language services within the cluster.

Participant testimonials:

*"I really appreciated the opportunity to learn French every week. My French communication skills have largely improved as a result of the weekly classes. I hope that this opportunity will be offered again in the future. Thank you!"*

*"A really great session, I learned a lot and really enjoyed taking part. I hope there will be more sessions like this in the future. Thank you!"*

## The Ministry of Francophone Affairs as a Driving Force

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The actions undertaken relating to French-language services form part of a broader vision aimed at Protecting Ontario. By acting as a driving force with other ministries, by providing expertise, coordination and support, the Ministry of Francophone Affairs helps position de Francophonie as a lever for social cohesion and institutional capacity across the province.

### Ministry of Health

The French Language Health Planning Centre opened its doors in September 2025 and is tasked with improving health care services for Francophones. Developed in partnership with Ontario Health, the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario and Hôpital Montfort, the Centre aims to better meet the needs of Francophone communities and facilitate Francophones' access to French-language health care services.

### Ministry of Long-Term Care

In August 2025, the province announced the sale of land in Aurora for the construction of a new 160-bed long-term care home to be run by the Communauté du Trille blanc. As part of the government's strategy to repurpose surplus land to meet the population's priority needs, the Communauté du Trille blanc will be developing a long-term care home, together with a broader plan that includes a "Francophone village" designed to better meet the needs of Ontario's Francophone seniors.

In October 2025, the Ministry of Long-Term Care announced the addition of 128 beds at Foyer Richelieu in Welland, marking an important milestone in the expansion of this facility, which plays a vital role for the Francophone community. As a result, this project offers a safe, welcoming and fully Francophone living environment to more seniors, thus helping to meet an essential need for high quality care that respects language and culture.



## Ministry of Sport

Through the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund, the Ministry of Sport invested \$15.75 million in a new Francophone recreational centre for the Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans (MIFO).

This modern and environmentally friendly facility will replace the current building and include a gymnasium, running track, multipurpose rooms, meeting spaces and administrative offices. The project will improve access to recreational services in French for residents of the National Capital Region and Eastern Ontario. The MIFO was established more than 40 years ago. It is a multidisciplinary centre that offers a wide range of artistic, cultural and community services and plays a key role in the Francophone cultural vitality of Orléans.



The ministry awarded \$1.073 million to the Coaches Association of Ontario for the 2025-2026 year to support the development of amateur coaches. This funding helps improve access to training and education sessions, including all multisport modules of the National Coaching Certification Program, available in English and French across Ontario. This support contributes to reinforcing Francophone capacity in the sport sector and the growth of a skilled bilingual workforce.

In 2024-2025, 185 Francophone coaches received training in French. These measures also helped 11 learning facilitators deliver French courses throughout the province.

## **Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming**

Each year, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming provides \$4.9 million in operating support to 166 community museums across the province. In 2024-25, these community museums delivered French programs and/or activities for more than 25,000 people.

Through the Experience Ontario program, \$130,000 was also invested to support five Francophone festivals. In addition, the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund supported the promotion of several major events, such as the Temiskaming Art Gallery.

The ministry's agencies also paid considerable attention to Francophone culture. The Ontario Trillium Foundation allocated more than \$4.5 million to 29 projects aimed at Francophone communities, while the Ontario Arts Council invested \$4 million through 157 grants to Francophone artists and 105 grants to organizations, reaching 46 communities across the province.

## **Ministry of Colleges and Universities. Excellence in Research and Security**

At the postsecondary level, significant progress has been made to strengthen access to high-quality French-language education. Following the 2024 announcement of a partnership between Université de Sudbury and the University of Ottawa to jointly offer undergraduate programs, the government invested \$10.8 million in 2025 to support the renewal of French-language programs at Université de Sudbury, in partnership with the University of Ottawa.

This investment expanded access to quality French-language postsecondary education in Northern Ontario thanks to 33 programs in the fields of arts, social sciences, management and commerce, and health sciences. These programs help better meet labour market needs and broaden postsecondary study opportunities in Northern Ontario.

The government continues to support the development of Université de l'Ontario français (UOF) as an autonomous French-language university governed by, for, and with Ontario's Francophone community. The institution has launched new programs, including a Bachelor of Mental Health in September 2025. UOF has also obtained the necessary approvals to offer a Bachelor of Social Work, a concurrent Bachelor of Education, and a Bachelor of Arts beginning in September 2026.

## Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness

The Ministry is continuing to implement its project in the framework of the [Canada-Ontario Agreement](#) on Services in the Minority Language 2023-2024 to 2027-2028, which aims to increase the visibility of the "Foodland Ontario" program among Francophones across the province. The project includes the translation of existing documents, the creation of educational resources in French for Francophone consumers and businesses, and increasing francophone followers and engagement on social media channels year-over-year. During the 2024-2025 year, these activities significantly increased the visibility of Ontario foods through bilingual resources and targeted awareness activities.



As part of the modernization of the *French Language Services Act*, the regulation on active offer requires agencies subject to the act to implement the active offer of services in French. This requires integrating the offer of French-language services from the first point of contact with Ontarians. Provincial service providers are consequently responsible for clearly signalling the availability of French-language services and ensuring proactive access to them.

## Ministry of Transportation

The Ministry of Transportation expanded active the offer in the transportation sector by designing or by updating nearly 200 bilingual road signs between April 2024 and March 2025, including signs indicating the closure of roads that were previously unilingual.

To continue to better serve the Francophone community, the Ministry of Transportation is also developing bilingual pictogram signage for variable message signs. Following the implementation of this initiative, Ontario will become the first jurisdiction in North America to provide complex traffic management information in a bilingual format.



### Did you know?

The Ministry of Natural Resources is committed to making technical guides for geospatial data available in French. Ontario's geospatial team now translates support documents to provide users with bilingual information on how to effectively access, understand, and use basic geospatial data such as roads, aerial imagery, water bodies, and terrain elevation. These guides make mapping, location-based analysis, and decision-making easier for all users.

# Francophone Economic Development

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Francophone economic development is an important lever for the vitality and sustainability of Ontario's Francophone communities. By recognizing the strategic role of French as a driver of growth, innovation and attractiveness, the Government of Ontario is continuing to invest to support Francophone businesses, organizations and talent in all areas of the province.

This action rests on three complementary pillars:

- Supporting Francophone entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Developing a skilled bilingual workforce.
- Promoting Francophonie as an economic asset.

Inspired by the Francophone Economic Development Strategy, the initiatives implemented in 2025 aim to develop a favourable ecosystem for entrepreneurship, job creation, and increased participation of Francophones in Ontario's economy. This approach forms part of a long-term vision that views the Francophonie as a competitive advantage for Ontario, both at the national and international levels.

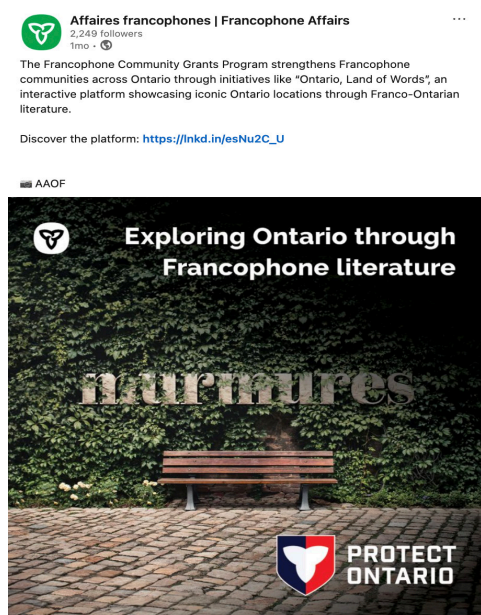
## Francophone Community Grants Program

The Francophone Community Grants Program (FCGP) supports the cultural, social and economic vitality of Ontario's Francophone communities. It funds projects run by Francophone organizations and businesses that help improve frontline services and promote the French language.

For the 2025-2026 edition, the FCGP received total funding of \$3 million for a second consecutive year, of which \$1 million was provided under the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Services in the Minority Language, 2023-2024 to 2027-2028.

- The 2025-2026 edition received 170 applications.
- 71 projects were funded, amounting to a total of \$3 million.
  - Economic development stream: 9 projects
  - Community and culture stream: 62 projects
- The geographical breakdown was as follows:
  - 18 projects in the North (26 %)
  - 28 projects in the East (39 %)
  - 17 projects in the Centre (24 %)
  - 8 projects in the West (11 %)

The FCGP plays a key role in the development and visibility of Francophone communities. To improve the program's visibility among Francophone organizations, encourage new applications and demonstrate its contribution to community vitality through concrete examples, a targeted social media campaign has been implemented since March 2026 to promote projects funded in 2024-2025.



- Among the projects funded by the FCGP in 2025-2026: Akwaba Connect organized the Akwaba Excellence Award, as part of the first Black Excellence Symposium held by Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir, which brought together more than 115 students aged 7 to 14 around the theme "Engaged youth: let's raise our voices". This project sought to recognize and celebrate the talents, academic success and community engagement of young people from the Francophone Black community across three age groups. After the symposium, participants were supported by facilitators and advisors to share the knowledge gained in their schools and implement concrete action plans.
- The Centre for ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) Awareness launched an online group coaching program for Francophone youth aged 16 to 24 in the province who are living with ADHD. The program, run over ten weeks and led by a certified facilitator, aimed to help participants gain a better understanding of their condition. It also helped reinforce their time management and emotional regulation skills, while developing their self-advocacy abilities and their peer support network. The initial results were very encouraging and demonstrated the importance of this type of initiative to support the well-being, resilience and success of Francophone youth.

*"As a 23-year-old Franco-Ontarian living with ADHD and working in the field, I am extremely proud to be part of this project. It represents growth, support and opportunities, not only for me but also for other young people who deserve access to educational resources and guidance that can truly change the course of their lives. During the consultation meetings, I was impressed by the quality and depth of the program, a view also shared by several community partners and educators who highlighted its importance in their communities.*

*I am deeply grateful to contribute, as a community partner, to an initiative that generates real and lasting change. "*

– Tamyra Nurse

## The Government's Economic Commitment to the Francophonie

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The Government of Ontario is working to promote Francophonie as a driver of economic growth, in collaboration with several ministries and partner organizations. Through targeted investments, it supports Francophone initiatives that stimulate innovation, strengthen community capacity and contribute to sustainable growth across the province.

### **Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade**

The government supports Francophone entrepreneurship through small business enterprise centres. More than 420 consultations in French were offered to small businesses, enabling Francophone entrepreneurs to start, develop and grow their businesses.

### **Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development**

According to open data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), 169,670 permanent residents had settled in Ontario by December 31, 2025. They included 19,405 Francophone immigrants, representing 11.4% of all newcomers in the province in 2025.

In April 2025, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development granted funding, under the Ontario Bridge Training Program, to five projects provided in French to support the labour market integration of skilled Francophone immigrants. These programs offered specialized training adapted to specific professions, as well as support in obtaining professional licences, enabling newcomers to access jobs in line with their international qualifications. The projects targeted high-demand sectors, including healthcare, STEM, skilled trades and education.

These projects included:

- The Bridge training program for Francophone newcomers in the Greater Toronto Area, offered by the Centre francophone du Grand Toronto in the field of early childhood education.
- The Bridge training program in supply chain management, offered by Collège Boréal in the supply chain sector.

## Government Partners

### **Fédération des gens d'affaires francophones de l'Ontario**

As a leading player in the Francophone economic ecosystem, the Fédération des gens d'affaires francophones (FGA) mobilizes and equips entrepreneurs to foster the emergence of strong, innovative Francophone businesses that are well connected at the provincial level. With the government's support in 2025, it expanded its activities and implemented a strategic project focusing on visibility, cooperation and economic vitality.

The \$150,000 investment by the government was structured around three focus areas: optimizing the Quartier d'affaires B2B portal, organizing the 2026 Franco-Ontarian Business Forum and hosting seven regional networking events. These initiatives collectively aimed to increase use of the portal, boost economic cooperation, and better connect Francophone businesses with business opportunities across Ontario.

### **Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario**

The AFO brings together, supports and represents the voice of Francophone organizations and communities to strengthen their vitality, influence and development across the province.

The government granted \$25,000 in funding to the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO) to offer training bursaries to managers and officers of Francophone not-for-profits in Ontario. The 60 bursaries granted enabled 42 organizations to have access to specialized micro-programs developed in collaboration with the Leadership and Governance Academy at the University of Sudbury.

This initiative addressed the needs identified during the AFO's sector consultations, including through the États généraux and FORCES Franco processes, by targeting gaps in access to French-language continuing education within the Francophone community sector.

## **Impact ON**

Strengthening entrepreneurship is one of the Ministry of Francophone Affairs' priorities. In this regard, \$215,000 in funding was granted to the EntreFemmes – Élan au féminin project, implemented by Impact ON. This project aimed to support economic empowerment for Francophone women in Ontario through comprehensive entrepreneurial support.

Through individualized support, a series of five thematic mini-training modules, and an intensive four-week business incubation program, the project supported participants at every stage of the process, from exploring their entrepreneurial potential to starting their business.

## **Festival Franco-Ontarien**

To mark the 50th anniversary of the Franco-Ontarien flag, the Ministry of Francophone Affairs supported the 2025 edition of the Franco-Ontarian festival, a flagship event, which has been contributing to the cultural and economic vitality of Ontario's Francophone community since 1976.

This funding supported promotional activities aimed at increasing the visibility of the festival. The goal was to strengthen the reach of the event, reach a broader audience, including tourists, and thereby stimulate economic benefits for the Francophone community.

# Ontario within the National and International Francophonie

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## Affirming Ontario's Leadership in the Francophone World

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Ontario's Francophone community forms a vast and dynamic network that reaches far beyond the borders of the province. Through its active participation in national and international forums, Ontario affirms its role within the Francophonie while creating strategic opportunities for economic, cultural and institutional collaboration.

### Active Presence within the Canadian Francophonie

#### Ministers' Council on the Canadian Francophonie

The annual meeting of the Minister's Council on the Canadian Francophonie (MCCF), held in June 2025 in Yellowknife, brought together federal, provincial and territorial ministers to discuss priority issues affecting Francophone communities in a changing economic environment.

On this occasion, Ontario reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the Francophonie and its willingness to work closely with the Government of Canada and its provincial and territorial partners.

During this meeting, the Ministry of Francophone Affairs presented its Economic Development Strategy within the scope of the Protect Ontario plan and highlighted its Francophone perspective, thereby contributing to a shared understanding of the economic issues and opportunities specific to Ontario's Francophone communities.

Ontario stressed the importance of the federal government's efforts to support official languages, while reaffirming its commitment to ongoing collaboration to increase Francophone immigration.

## Toronto Global Forum

The Minister of Francophone Affairs co-chaired a round table with the Honourable Jean-Claude D'Amours, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour for New Brunswick, responsible for Military Affairs, responsible for Immigration, and responsible for the Research and Productivity Council for New Brunswick.

Discussions focused on a range of issues, including sectors with the strongest potential within Francophone and Commonwealth markets, the levers available to Francophone businesses, with or without government support, to facilitate access to these markets, as well as the conditions required to generate concrete and sustainable economic benefits.

Government representatives also attended a panel on economic relations between Canada and French-speaking Africa, which highlighted the key role of African markets in current opportunities and their ties with the Canadian Francophonie. Discussions identified several key trends, including the strategic importance of growing African economies, the role of the diaspora in developing business opportunities, and the ways in which Francophone networks can encourage the formation of sustainable partnerships.



Participating in the Toronto Global Forum positioned Ontario as a government open to the world, able to leverage its linguistic duality to attract investment, boost partnerships and promote its talent.

## Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)

Since its creation, the Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) has promoted solidarity among its member states and governments. As an observer member, Ontario participates in this dynamic and contributes to the creation of a Francophone economic area that promotes growth, employment, and stronger social and commercial exchanges with the global Francophonie. These goals are in line with Ontario's Francophone Economic Development Strategy.

In 2025, Ontario strengthened its collaboration with the OIF by taking part in several strategic meetings, including the Conference of Ministers of Culture of the Francophonie from OIF member states held in May 2025 in Québec City. Focused on the discoverability of Francophone cultural products, this conference provided an opportunity for Ontario to reaffirm its interest in sharing perspectives on cultural policies in the digital age. The province also emphasized that the discoverability of Francophone content is an important lever for supporting the growth of its creative economy, while promoting equitable access to a wide and diverse range of cultural content in French.

In October 2025, Ontario participated in the Forum économique de la francophonie des Amériques, a major platform for dialogue and collaboration among Francophone economic stakeholders across the continent. On the theme of "Economic Francophonie: a Catalyst for Future Partnerships", this participation showcased the strengths of Ontario's economy and encouraged promising partnerships in various sectors, including innovation, entrepreneurship and trade.

### Francophonie around the world:

**90**  
member states and  
governments within the OIF.

French is the **4<sup>e</sup>**  
most-used language on the  
Internet.

**396 million**  
French speakers.

**4<sup>th</sup>**  
most spoken language in  
the world.

More than **170 million**  
students study French or  
study in French.

[Source: Organisation internationale de la Francophonie](#)

## Ontario's Francophonie Looking Ahead to 2026 and Beyond

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By consolidating its presence within the national and international Francophonie, Ontario positions itself as a committed actor, contributing to the important discussions shaping the future of the Francophone world.

### **Strategic Agreements and Cooperation**

The Ministry of Francophone Affairs is continuing to pursue and strengthen cooperation agreements with key partners at the national and international levels to strengthen the economic presence of the Francophonie, facilitate access to a skilled bilingual workforce, and support the expansion of Francophone businesses into new markets.

Within the scope of the Francophone Economic Development Strategy, Ontario is building on a network of strategic agreements and cooperation with Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Québec, Wallonia-Brussels Federation (Belgium), France and Louisiana. These partnerships have already led to concrete initiatives, including exchanges among Francophone entrepreneurs, joint higher education and research projects, and networking and market development efforts.

#### **Ontario-Québec:**

Under the *Cooperation and Exchange Agreement between the government of Québec and the government of Ontario with respect to the Francophonie*, Ontario and Quebec have agreed to invest up to \$300,000 annually to support projects developed jointly by Francophone organizations from the two provinces.

The 2025-2026 edition of the Ontario-Quebec program, launched on June 26, 2025, received 44 applications. A total of 21 projects were approved.

### **Ontario-Wallonia-Brussels:**

The Ministry of Francophone Affairs signed a memorandum of understanding with the French community of Belgium (Wallonia-Brussels) with respect to the Francophonie on November 20, 2022 and is continuing to implement it. For 2025-2026, \$50,000 in funding was approved to support five projects. One of these projects brought together 30 students from OCAD University in Toronto and Arts2 in Mons (Belgium) to take part in an ambitious artistic collaboration. An innovative projection artwork was presented at the Mons en Lumières festival in late January 2026 and will also be presented at the Canada Malting Silos in Toronto in October 2026. This first artistic initiative between the two post-secondary institutions aims to enhance cultural and educational exchanges between the two Francophone regions.

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### **Ontario-France:**

The Ministry of Francophone Affairs signed a cooperation agreement with the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs on October 6, 2025. A working group was formed with representatives from Ontario and France to identify potential projects.



### **Ontario-New Brunswick:**

Ontario signed a joint statement of cooperation with New Brunswick on April 3, 2024 to strengthen intergovernmental cooperation relating to Francophonie. A bilateral working group was formed with partner ministries for the purpose of developing a cooperation agreement relating to the Francophonie.



**Ontario-Nova Scotia:**

The Ministry of Francophone Affairs signed a joint statement of cooperation relating to Francophonie with Nova Scotia in August 2025. The two partners are working to draw up a future memorandum of understanding.

**Ontario-Louisiana:**

The Ministry of Francophone Affairs signed a joint statement of cooperation relating to the Francophonie with the State of Louisiana in November 2025. Ontario is continuing its cooperation with this state with a view to developing a future memorandum of understanding.



## Conclusion

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In 2025, Ontario's Francophonie continued to develop and expand its reach in Ontario, throughout Canada and internationally. This past year's progress reflects a sustained commitment to a strong, inclusive Francophonie, focused on the future.

As recalled by Fété Ngira-Batware Kimpiobi, the first recipient of the Minister of Francophone Affairs Award: "Seniors and adults (...) must chart the course. Young people must redefine, reinvent and revitalize the Francophonie for their generation."

This call for intergenerational cooperation guides our action. Through education, culture, services and entrepreneurship, Ontario supports the growth and well-being of its Francophone population and contributes to Protecting Ontario.

This report highlights the commitment of public institutions, civil society, communities, and partners to advancing the vitality, visibility, and contribution of Franco-Ontarian society, both at home and beyond.

**Report on Francophone Affairs**  
Ministry of Francophone Affairs  
Government of Ontario  
**2026**