



Review on Official Languages

2014-2015

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Department of Justice Canada



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Developing and enhancing the vitality of official language minority communities
and promoting the use of English and French in Canadian society
(Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*)

TANGIBLE RESULTS

1. If your institution had to highlight three key initiatives or more in relation to the **development of official-language minority communities**, what would those be?

The Department continues to provide financial support to projects and activities of official language minority community organizations as well as organizations dedicated to promoting the use of English and French in Canadian society. From the success of these initiatives, the Department can say that it is achieving its intended strategic outcomes, including ensuring that Canada continues to be a just and law-abiding society with an accessible, efficient and fair system of justice.

Here are a few examples of key initiatives:

Justice Information Hubs

Better access to justice is reflected primarily in the justice system's ability to handle requests for legal information in both official languages and in the emergence of a legally enabled citizenry - that is, a citizenry that is aware of its rights and responsibilities when legal problems arise. There is a need to make Canadians more knowledgeable about their rights and obligations and to better prepare them to deal with the legal issues of day-to-day life, in the official language of their choice.

The establishment of new service models is necessary to improve the quality, relevance and efficiency of the justice system. The Department encourages the increased use of new technologies, innovative approaches to legal information and information materials developed in collaboration with users, in order to make sure they meet the needs of users of the justice system.

Through the *Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund*, the vehicle for implementing the *Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018: Education, Immigration, Communities*, the Department was able to provide four provincial associations a total of \$1 193 165 in funding for 2014-2015 so they could establish justice information hubs. The four associations are the Association des juristes d'expression française de la Nouvelle-Écosse, the Association des juristes d'expression française de l'Ontario (AJEFO), the Association des juristes d'expression française de la Saskatchewan and the Association des juristes d'expression française de l'Alberta.

These projects result from a new approach that focuses on providing services, support and referrals to help people better understand their actual or potential legal challenges and be better equipped to deal with them. In addition to online legal information, in-person services are now being provided in four provinces: these provide direct

personal contact, with or without an appointment, at no charge and, above all, in the minority official language. Whatever the legal problem, individuals can receive information, guidance and support.

Réseau national de formation en justice (National Justice Training Network)

The *Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund* provided the *Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne* (AUFC) with \$350 219 in funding for 2014-2015 to support the operation of the *Réseau national de formation en justice* (*National Justice Training Network*) (RNFJ) and its initiatives.

The ultimate goal of the RNFJ is to increase the capacity of the justice system and its stakeholders to provide services in both official languages. Simply put, the project aims to improve access to justice in French across the country by increasing the number of bilingual individuals for the purposes of their jobs in the justice sector.

The RNFJ has 14 members across the country. They are legal training specialists from the government, the community and post-secondary institutions. The RNFJ's national secretariat will coordinate the implementation of various initiatives by RNFJ members to address identified needs. The RNFJ's goal is to maximize efficiency in training stakeholders in the justice system.

This current phase of the project aims to strengthen the RNFJ and expand collaboration among its members, with a view to developing a detailed training activity plan through 2018.

Families in Transition: Information for Youth

Funding of \$46,427 for 2014-2015 was provided by the Policy Sector's *Supporting Families Fund* to the Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland (PLIAN), for a proposed multi-year project aimed at young people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. The project will provide young people with accessible, easy-to-understand information about divorce or separation of their parents, and will enhance their knowledge of family law issues such as the law related to custody and access or visitation arrangements, child support, child protection laws and procedures, the legal definition of "divorce," emergency protection orders, and court procedures to deal with family law matters.

The first part of the project intends to deliver approximately 9 workshops over two years in various locations in Newfoundland and Labrador, focusing specifically on rural and Aboriginal communities. Overall, the project is aimed at youth between 11 and 16 years of age. The workshops and multimedia materials will be geared towards this age group and will be produced in an accessible, interactive and entertaining format.

The organization has held a workshop in French directly aimed at the Francophone community in Newfoundland and Labrador. The organization has developed this workshop in consultation with the *Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et du*

Labrador, adapting the curriculum as required to address the specific needs of Francophone youth in the province. The organization has also provided French materials and translated the existing “My Parents Live Apart” publication into French.

2. If your institution had to highlight three key initiatives or more in relation to the **promotion of English and French in Canadian society** what would those be?

Legal Information Portals

The Department supports organizations who develop official language minority communities via resources and tools that maintain acquired knowledge and make greater use of new information technologies. Initiatives of this kind are funded by the Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund.

Three legal information portals have resulted from the concerted efforts of various stakeholders in the legal community. The Department of Justice sees these portals as innovations in communicating and collaborating with official language minority communities. Through the use of information technology, official language minority communities can receive updated legal information in their own language, without having to consider geographical boundaries.

From this perspective, the Department continues to support the three portals: CliquezJustice, Jurisource and Éducaloi.

Jurisource.ca

The Department provided AJEFO with \$230,000 in funding for 2014-2015 to continue managing and maintaining a Web portal of legal and jurilinguistic resources for justice professionals working in Canada's French-speaking minority communities.

Jurisource.ca is presented as a virtual library with a search engine capable of identifying thousands of documents such as statutes, court decisions, studies, research, procedural templates, glossaries, etc. The portal also offers a platform for collaboration and exchanges for distance learning. It offers a direct service to legal professionals who work in official language minority communities.

There currently exists a multitude of legal and jurilinguistic resources, but they are scattered and often difficult to find. The aim of this project is to consolidate these resources while improving access to them. French-speaking jurists who practice or teach law will have better access to the resources they need to practice their profession in French across Canada.

Educaloi.qc.ca

The Department provided \$554,000 in financial support for 2014-2015 to Éducaloi, an organization whose mission is to inform Quebecers of their rights and obligations by providing them with quality legal information, made available in simple and accessible language.

The organization's objective is to improve access to justice in Quebec through public legal education and information. The Department has provided support to this organization for a few years to develop a Web site that brings together legal information for Quebec's Anglophone community. Project managers do more than provide translations of existing resources and tools; they adapt their content so it reflects cultural references of the Anglophone community. The project also involves the development of new information materials. Éducaloi therefore reaches not only Quebec's Anglophone community but also the Allophone community whose first official language spoken is English.

Cliquezjustice.ca

The Department of Justice provided AJEFO with \$507,000 in funding for the maintenance and development of the CliquezJustice legal information portal.

CliquezJustice is a portal that provides legal information in French for the general public. It addresses the needs of the French-speaking population of Ontario, but also the needs of Francophones elsewhere in the country, by sharing information with various stakeholders from other provinces.

One component of the Web site is aimed specifically for elementary (ages 8 to 11) and secondary (Grades 7 to 12) students as well as their teachers and advisors. Students will find educational resources and games, while their teachers have access to a variety of legal resources and a search engine designed for them.

Linguistic Duality Day

On September 11, 2014, the Department marked Linguistic Duality Day by organizing several activities, both in the National Capital Region and at its regional offices.

In Ottawa, Department employees listened with interest to presentations by Elisabeth Eid, Official Languages Co-Champion, and Hubert Lussier, Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Canadian Heritage. Three short videos by Department employees were presented to mark the 45th anniversary of the first *Official Languages Act*. The videos were followed by a game featuring various idiomatic expressions, which was very popular with the audience.

Regional offices also helped promote linguistic duality by organizing various cultural and educational activities and games. For example, employees in the Yellowknife office welcomed Jean de Dieu Tuyishime, executive director of the Fédération franco-ténoise, who gave a speech entitled "Bilinguisme – Témoignage de tolérance et de respect envers les minorité."

The success of Linguistic Duality Day 2014 is largely due to the considerable and enthusiastic support of the regions: some three-quarters of the employees and community guests who participated in the celebrations were from the regions. In

addition to being emblematic of the commitment of Department employees across Canada, this also shows that linguistic duality is at the heart of our departmental values.

Jurilinguistic Centres

The Department of Justice has been providing financial support to four jurilinguistic centres for several years now. The funding is used, among other things, for the production of lexicons, including the standardization of common law terminology in French, and the production of language and legal tools designed specifically for Anglophone jurists in Quebec.

Cumulative funding totalling \$765,514 for 2014-2015 was provided to the four centres, namely the Centre de traduction et de terminologie juridiques in Moncton, the Centre for legal translation and documentation in Ottawa, Université de Saint-Boniface (Division de l'éducation permanente et service de perfectionnement linguistique) and the Paul-André Crépeau Centre for Private and Comparative Law of McGill University.

The jurilinguistic tools developed by the centres are used by law professors, lawyers and legislative drafters at various government levels, who have access to terminology in both official languages and from both legal traditions of Canada for the purposes of their research work, their pleadings or the laws and regulations they draft. The four centres collaborate with one another within the Network of Jurilinguistic Centres.

3. What “key achievement” with a **regional impact** would your institution like to highlight?

La Passerelle – Intégration et développement économique de Toronto

A project that deserves special mention is the awareness and information project for young French-speaking immigrants and their parents introduced by the community organization La Passerelle – Intégration et développement économique de Toronto (La Passerelle).

La Passerelle undertook to present 18 workshops for French-speaking immigrants on various themes, such as the Canadian justice system, vandalism at school and in the community, interaction with the police, language rights, family violence, and dropping out of school. The workshops were held in nine large cities in five provinces: Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia. An innovative aspect of the project is the fact that training is co-facilitated by students enrolled in Collège Boréal’s legal assistant program in Sudbury and Toronto who are members of ethnocultural communities and racial minorities. The project relies on the synergy between expertise in the legal field and the expertise of organizations specializing in immigrant integration. The project was made possible by the close collaboration that developed between AJEFO and the Fédération des associations de juristes d’expression française de common law inc. (FAJEF).

This project is guided by the vision of a French-speaking immigrant population whose access to justice in French in its community, where it is a minority, is one more sign that its members are participating fully in their new society. The real success of this initiative lies in the creation of ties among various local community organizations from official language minority communities. Their shared vision gives them a common goal, namely educating young immigrants and their parents about their language rights and, more generally, about the workings of the Canadian justice system.

The Department provided La Passerelle with \$106,325 in funding for 2014-2015.

Community Consultations

The Department of Justice Canada signed a memorandum of understanding on child support with the Yukon Department of Justice in summer 2015. Pursuant to this memorandum of understanding, the Yukon government will be able to offer a new service to adjust child support without having to go to court to have the support amount varied.

The Department of Justice Canada and the Yukon Department of Justice consulted the Territory’s Francophone community to obtain input from its members on the content of the official languages clause to be included in the federal-territorial memorandum of understanding. The consultations made it possible to define the services that will be offered in French to the population of Yukon. Francophones will not only have access to a Web site that deals with child support issues in both official

languages but will also have a registration and enrolment form they can complete in French.