Research report

Study of provincial and territorial measures to support official languages in libraries in Canada

Part 1: overview

Alain Roy

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A Word from the Librarian and Archivist of Canada

Libraries – public, university or community – reach communities across Canada and play an active role in community growth by providing access to culture, memory and knowledge, and by supporting literacy. It is not surprising, then, that libraries are increasingly referred to as a third place where community members gather.

In Canada, diversity is recognized as a value and a component of national identity. Historically, official language minority communities (OLMCs) have been part of this diversity. Libraries have a particularly important role in supporting the vitality of the English linguistic minority community in Quebec and the French linguistic minority communities elsewhere in Canada.

This situation—and Library and Archives Canada's (LAC) obligation to support the development of these communities under the *Official Languages Act*—prompted LAC to establish the OLMC libraries network in fall 2019. The purpose of the network is to build contacts, exchange ideas and share expertise among libraries that serve these communities. The network quickly agreed that a record of the legislative, regulatory and policy measures governing official languages in libraries across Canada would greatly enhance best practices.

This report is the result of that research. It provides an overview of the measures in effect in the 13 provinces and territories at the time of the survey. Since libraries are under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, this report does not impose any direction. However, since it was produced at the request of the network and validated by a panel of experts, it provides a basis for reflection and suggests courses of action to ensure that libraries can make a significant contribution to the vitality of OLMCs.

This is our most sincere wish. We heartily encourage you to read it and disseminate it as widely as possible.

Leslie Weir
Librarian and Archivist of Canada

Executive Summary

- The research focused on official languages measures in libraries in Canada. It consisted of a literature review and a survey of the legislative, regulatory and policy measures adopted by the provinces and territories to govern public libraries and language practices. It also looked at the contribution of university libraries, on the one hand, and that of community libraries and book fairs, on the other, to the vitality of official language minority communities (OLMCs).[1]
- The report consists of two documents: one provides an overview of the situation, and the other presents the profile of each province and territory.
- The literature review showed that the issue of official languages in libraries is poorly covered in research. There is no comprehensive picture. Furthermore, of the few studies that exist, most focus on a single province or a small set of provinces. The majority of studies call for further discussion, the development of practices, and a more in-depth look, specifically by implementing policies and programs to properly support library services and collections in official language minority communities. Those calls, however, have not produced as much action as one might have hoped.
- Particular attention was paid to measures governing official languages in public libraries:
    - Legislative framework: Both library legislation and official languages legislation make little or no specific mention of libraries.
    - Regulations: Only two provinces have regulations made under their library legislation that provide additional funding: Nova Scotia (for services) and Manitoba (for collections). A proposal to expand support for services in Nova Scotia was not pursued. Only two provinces have specific provisions for library services in regulations made under their language legislation (New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island).
    - Policy instruments: Three provinces have policy instruments that provide more detailed direction (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario).
    - Strategic planning documents: As early as the 1980s, studies were conducted on the needs of
      Francophone minorities in Ontario and Alberta, but there does not appear to have been any follow-up. More recent planning documents (Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba) all have suggested either increased support or better intraprovincial or interprovincial coordination. The need for better support is also recognized in official languages planning documents in Alberta and Nunavut.
    - The panel of experts consulted in connection with this study noted the weakness of the official languages legal and policy frameworks and recommended the adoption of policy statements. The panel suggested that attention be paid to such matters as acquisition policies, community engagement and electronic resources.
- University libraries play an important role in supporting the vitality of OLMCs, first by giving them access to collections and services, and second by digitizing collections relevant to OLMCs.
- Community libraries and book fairs play a complementary role.
- Other courses of action suggested to the library community as a whole include strengthening networking, disseminating this report and pursuing research along the lines suggested by the experts consulted.

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[1] Defined as English-speaking communities in Quebec and French-speaking communities in the rest of Canada.

Introduction

As part of its obligations under Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, Library and Archives Canada (LAC) has a mandate to enhance the vitality of OLMCs as well as to support and to assist their development. A network of partners from the library community was therefore created in 2019. Research on official languages policies and regulations in libraries across Canada was identified as a priority action.

At the second network meeting, in January 2020, a presentation by Professor Richard Russo, who has published on this topic,[2] allowed for further discussion. An important element of common interest emerged: to address legislative, regulatory and policy measures as well as other good practices covering acquisition, description and in-library services for OLMCs.

To this end, a study was conducted in May 2020. The main objectives of the study were to produce a profile of the libraries that serve OLMCs in each province and territory, to have the profile validated by the members of the network, and to present it in different forums.

Methodology and process

There were three steps in the research process.

Step 1 was a review of measures arising from legislation, regulations and policies governing libraries.

As there are almost no studies on this subject, it was decided to carry out an initial search for relevant documents. The search was performed by Harrison Dustan, a student employed by LAC's Strategic Research and Policy Division, from May to July 2020. The search focused not only on provincial and territorial legislation and policies but also on measures in place in public, university and community libraries. A total of more than 1,000 websites were searched.

A fact sheet in Word format was created for each identified instrument (statute, regulation, policy or program), from which basic information was extracted and entered in an Excel file. Since libraries are generally under provincial jurisdiction, the data were grouped by province / territory. Each document included a name, an approval date and a brief description.

A preliminary report was prepared for each province and territory. Each report contains a brief description of the provincial system and the division of responsibilities; an overview of legislation, regulations, policies, procedures, programs and strategies; and any other relevant information. These documents were validated by network members from the provinces and territories concerned.

This initial web-based research had some limitations, particularly because online resources are more readily available in urban areas than in rural or northern areas. In any case, this initial survey clearly demonstrated the complexity of such an inventory resulting from the diversity of provincial and territorial frameworks. The survey also made it clear that the structure of a province's / territory's library system plays a significant role in the development and implementation of legislative, regulatory

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2. Richard A. Russo (2019). "French-Language Books in a Minority Setting: A Report from Rural Saskatchewan," *Minorités linguistiques et société / Linguistic Minorities and Society* (11), 52–73. https://doi.org/10.7202/1065212ar

and policy frameworks governing official languages for public libraries. Not surprisingly, provinces and territories with greater administrative centralization appear to have more developed policy frameworks than those that have a decentralized approach and rely on municipal governments.

However, the picture was still incomplete. For a more realistic picture, it was felt that the official languages legislation and policy dimensions needed to be included (**Step 2**). This complementary step centred not only on the provinces' and territories' legislative and policy frameworks for official languages but also on the structure of library services in each province and territory and other available information on libraries in minority communities or serving OLMCs. This research, also limited to online resources, provided a more complete picture of the official languages situation in libraries across Canada.

The result was a 100-page draft report dated April 2021. The report consisted of the following:
- a description of official languages measures in libraries in each province and territory, including the following:
  - an overview of the library network and its characteristics;
  - a review of the measures (laws, regulations and policies) governing public libraries, whether they flow from library legislation and policies or official languages legislation and policies;
  - an overview of the situation for university and community libraries serving OLMCs;
- a series of preliminary findings about the various governing measures.

Step 3 was to have the report validated. In view of the breadth, diversity and significance of the information collected, it was felt that, before the report was disseminated, its scientific validity should be assessed. To that end, a panel of experts (for the list of participants, see Appendix 1) was formed to validate the draft report. This was a collaborative effort between Library and Archives Canada and the Association des bibliothèques de l'Ontario-Franco (ABO-Franco). The experts were asked to provide a general assessment and make recommendations. Their response was very positive. They identified corrections to be made in the draft report and suggested various follow-up actions, which were incorporated into this report.

Report

This report describes the results of the research validated by the expert panel. It has two parts:

Part 1 (this document) provides an overview of official languages measures in libraries across Canada.

Section 1 ("Official languages measures in libraries in Canada's provinces and territories") deals with the provincial and territorial frameworks for language issues in public libraries. A review of each jurisdiction's measures by type (laws, regulations, policies, etc.) is followed by a synopsis covering three areas:

- Observations on the various measures adopted
- Comments submitted by experts during validation
- Some best practices

The next sections (sections 2 to 5) discuss public libraries, university libraries, community libraries and book fairs, and provide other observations from the research.

A final section (section 6, "Suggested courses of action") presents courses of action suggested by the expert panel.

This is followed by three appendices:

- A list of the experts consulted
- A summary table of the overall legislative framework
- A brief bibliography, prepared in response to a recommendation made during report validation

Part 2 (the document titled *Part 2. Portrait by province and territory*) provides a portrait of the situation in each province and territory.

Official languages measures in libraries in Canada's provinces and territories

In 2002, Roch Carrier, then head of the National Library of Canada, embarked on a tour of Canadian libraries in minority communities. These visits left few traces, but his stay in Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories was reported in the local newspaper, *L'Aquilon*. The goal of Carrier's visit was to [translation] "meet with the Francophone community to determine their needs for French-language offerings in NWT public libraries and to make National Library services accessible to the entire population, including Francophones."[3]

Many suggestions were made, including involving the community in promoting French-language works, acquiring new works (800 were acquired in 2001—a first in eight years—with funding provided by Canadian Heritage), better disseminating catalogues and hiring a French-speaking librarian.

Current research does not detail any follow-up from that tour or whether any recommendations emerged from it for either the National Library or the Northwest Territories. However, in keeping with this approach, the present research has shown that voices have been raised across the country more recently to draw attention to the issue of language barriers, and more specifically to official language minority communities.

1. Literature review: Calls to address the issue of official languages in libraries

This section takes stock of research on the issue of official languages in libraries, including services, collections and strategic approaches. Four dimensions are addressed:
- Research in library science or the sociology of books
- Strategic planning studies
- OLMC vitality survey reports
- Studies on, or inventories of, official languages legislative or policy measures

The first component relates to **academic research**. Two very recent studies have shed light on the issue of official languages in libraries.

In British Columbia, Librarian Ean Henninger, formerly of Simon Fraser University, looked at language barriers in libraries. His article, published in 2020, concludes by proposing several ways to "counter neoliberalism and exclusionary language ideologies and work towards better linguistic access, equity, diversity, and inclusion."[4] Examples of potential options include:
- Proposing collections, awareness activities and programs that consider principles, research and perspectives related to language issues; and
- Integrating language barrier issues into policies, procedures and infrastructure, considering that "documents such as collections policies and instructional plans inform action and

3. Simon Bérubé, "Bibliothèque en français : Il faut faire connaître les ressources," *L'Aquilon*, June 7, 2002. https://aquilon.nt.ca/Article/Il-faut-faire-connaitre-les-ressources-18448903615/default.aspx.
4. Ean Henninger, "Multilingualism, Neoliberalism, and Language Ideologies in Libraries," In the Library with the Lead Pipe, April 29, 2020, http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2020/multilingualism-in-libraries/.

promote accountability, and if language about languages is not in them, then there is less cause to be active and accountable."[5]

Richard A. Russo's research in Saskatchewan echoes this. In his 2019 paper, Russo demonstrates the need for such policies. He also recommends that:

> the Fransaskois community, in order to achieve full cultural benefits from their public libraries, have more engagement in the decision-making process of acquiring French-language books and other print/textual media, with a focus on providing resources for adults to encourage the lifelong maintenance of French-language use. Francophones can also join their public library boards to be more involved in local policy-making.[6]

The second component, **Official reports** also mention the need to enhance collections.

For example, in Manitoba, the 2017 network planning document specifies the following:

> 4.2.3.2 French-English Bilingual Communities
> French is the primary language of more than 42,000 Manitobans. Bilingual communities face unique challenges in maintaining their language and culture. Even where French language services are available, they are typically more expensive. Many bilingual libraries and their Francophone users raise concerns about the lack of French language resources available through public libraries. Bilingual libraries rely heavily on interlibrary loans to meet the needs of their users. Other Canadian jurisdictions are in similar situations and collaboration may provide an opportunity to address these issues.[7]

This concern is also echoed in Ontario. For example, in 2008, Wendy Newman's report on future library prospects identified policy and resource needs for official language minorities. She writes:

> Diversity: It will be a partner in developing and providing services for high-priority populations like new immigrants, multicultural groups, the elderly, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples, and official language minorities. These high-priority populations will have increased in the Ontario of 2020, and the library will help enable their full participation in the life and benefits of this country.[8]

> Diversity: Diversity is growing in Ontario. It has many dimensions, including multiculturalism and official language minorities. Meeting diverse needs requires policy development regarding collections and services. It will also require some intergovernmental policy collaboration.[9]

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5. Ibid.
6. Richard A. Russo, "French-Language Books in a Minority Setting: A Report from Rural Saskatchewan," *Linguistic Minorities and Society / Minorités linguistiques et société*, (11), 2019, p. 66. https://doi.org/10.7202/1065212ar.
7. Public Library Services Branch, *Uniting Perspectives: Library Development in Manitoba,* 2017, p. 15, https://digitalcollection.gov.mb.ca/awweb/pdfopener?smd=1&did=25484&md=1.
8. Wendy Newman, Third Generation Public Libraries. Visionary Thinking and Service Development in Public Libraries (to 2020) and Potential Application in Ontario. Report for the Ontario Ministry of Culture, 2008, p. 20. http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/publications/third_gen_libraries.pdf.
9. Ibid., p. 33.

More support was also envisaged in Nova Scotia. In 2008, the Library Funding Task Force proposed amending the regulations that provide additional grants for French-language services and applying them to all regional boards, which clearly was not implemented. The task force report reads as follows:

> The final funding component extends a French-language grant to all regions, based on the number of French speaking Nova Scotians as counted in the 2006 census. A per capita rate of $8.41 was developed from the last funding model, and this same rate is extended in this formula to all library regions. This funding will allow libraries to build French-language services in all Nova Scotia library regions.[10]

The third component examines **studies on the vitality of OLMCs**. In the wake of the amendments to the *Official Languages Act*, various research projects were initiated to assess the vitality of those communities. Of the several-dozen studies carried out, only two mention the role that libraries can play.

These findings also apply to the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut. In a study on the vitality of Francophone communities in the North, the authors consider that [translation] "access to books, comics, videos or DVDs in French remains a problem, despite the efforts of some municipal libraries and community organizations" and recommend that:

> [Translation] a program to access a French-language video library or library that is more developed than what currently exists through French-language associations or municipal libraries and schools should be encouraged both by governments and community organizations.[11]

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Another study focused on the English-speaking community of Beaconsfield, Quebec. The report indicates that the Beaconsfield library is a local hub and is essential to the community's cultural and historical vitality.[12]

In short, the issue of official languages is poorly covered in research, as evidenced by the small number of studies. In addition, there is no comprehensive overview, with most studies focusing on just one province (Manitoba or Ontario) or on a small set of jurisdictions, such as the northern territories. That said, although these issues have been rather poorly understood, several reports call for further discussion, development of practices and a more in-depth look. Some argue that there is a need for

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10. Nova Scotia Provincial Library, *Report of the Library Funding Task Force,*
https://library.novascotia.ca/sites/default/files/inline/documents/library_funding_task_force_report.pdf, 2008, p. 20.
11. Anne Robineau, Christophe Traisnel, Éric Forgues, Josée Guignard Noël, and Rodrigue Landry, *La Francophonie boréale : la vitalité des communautés francophones dans les territoires*, Moncton, Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities / Institut canadien de recherche sur les minorités linguistiques, Université de Moncton, 2010, p. 357.
https://icrml.ca/fr/recherches-et-publications/publications-de-l-icrml/download/120/8436/58.
12. Prairie research Associates, *Horizontal Evaluation of the Roadmap for Linguistic Duality 2008–2013: Acting for the Future. Technical Report: Case Study on the Vitality of OMLCs*. Beaconsfield, Quebec, July 17, 2012 [unpublished report], p. 6.

policies and programs to properly support library services and collections in official language minority communities. Those calls, however, have not produced as much action as one might have hoped.

The final component concerns official languages legislative and policy measures. Initially, only the regulations under Nova Scotia's *Library Act* were identified.[13] This investigation has shown that the situation is much more complex that what was known, especially in light of the convergence of the legislative frameworks for libraries and official languages. In addition, the research focused on various governing documents, including laws, regulations, programs, policy instruments and strategic planning documents. Clearly, there is a wide variety of approaches, structures and measures for libraries in the provinces and territories.

2. Measures for public libraries

It is certainly a challenge to profile the guidance and support measures adopted by the provinces and territories to provide services and maintain collections in the minority official language. The diversity of structures, legislative and regulatory measures, and policies (relating to both library and official languages legislation) is remarkable, as shown in the table in Appendix 1.

2.1 Few considerations

A few considerations must be taken into account.

The first consideration is **governance**, marked by great diversity and significant devolution to local authorities. Nearly all the provinces and territories have a public library service or support program. However, accountability to legislatures is rendered through various ministries and departments: five are culture, six are education, one is municipal affairs and one is community services.

Moreover, the role of provincial and territorial structures is generally limited to providing direction and supporting programs, with libraries most often being the responsibility of local authorities, except in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, where services fall under the public service, and in Newfoundland and Labrador, which also has a centralized system, but within a delegated public corporation. Local library authorities[14] are supported by a multitude of networks or intermediary organizations whose mandate to coordinate libraries may be broad or restrictive. The presence or absence of official language guidance or support measures on the part of the provinces and territories clearly reflects current interests and practices.

The second consideration relates to **legislative and regulatory frameworks** that can impact official languages in libraries. Our initial research focused solely on measures taken under library legislation. All the provinces have passed legislation dealing specifically with libraries, except for Quebec, where legislative provisions are incorporated into the legislation establishing the Quebec Ministère de la Culture et des Communications [Department of Culture and Communications]. However, during our analysis, it became clear that language provisions adopted by the provinces and territories should also be considered. Most provinces have introduced legislation or policies governing language use in the

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14. In most provinces and territories, public libraries are established at the municipal level and are overseen by boards, with the exception of Quebec, where their management is integrated into municipal administration.

province, many of which directly affect libraries. For this reason, the following analysis considers these two legal frameworks, whose implementation is sometimes inextricably linked.

In addition, to fully grasp the reality of this official languages guidance and support, various dimensions must be considered for each of the legislated areas (libraries and official languages). The categories are as follows:

- Legislation or regulations: Means provisions adopted or resulting from an act passed by the provincial or territorial legislature.
- Policy: This term encompasses policy instruments, that is, policies, directives, standards or guides written by the provincial or territorial government providing instruction or direction to local public libraries.
- Strategic document: Under this category fall discussion papers and planning and guidance documents.
- Program: Support programs or funding that can be or have been used to develop services and collections.

Of course, only those directly related to language practices were included.

The third consideration concerns **the effectiveness of policies as a reflection of practices.** The various policy provisions are, admittedly, excellent indicators of the directions adopted or perspectives entertained. The same is true of strategic documents. However, actual practices can sometimes differ. A difficult part of this research was to paint an accurate picture of what is happening on the ground. The few surveys conducted of public library catalogues, whether in Montreal, Gatineau or Vancouver, have shown substantial English or French collections without an explicit policy reflecting this desire to provide services or collections in the language of the official language minority community (OLMC).

The final consideration is the **digital offering.** The development of information technologies has increased access to both catalogues and e-books. This offering is important and improves accessibility, through dedicated services, which used to be difficult to access, particularly in remote areas. However, we were unable to give it the attention it deserves in this study.

On a final note, the library sector is fragile generally speaking and could be subject to significant cuts due to restructuring. However, as demonstrated by the debates in Saskatchewan in 2017 and in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2016, local communities are tremendously attached to these cultural facilities that are critical to social connection.

The analysis that follows focuses on provincial and territorial government guidance and support measures. Similar research on all policies, directions and practices in local libraries, whether public, university or community, would require another considerable research project. Some examples are included to the provincial / territorial profiles.

2.2 Overhall picture

The table below aims to summarize the various means used to support and guide official languages issues in libraries.

Summary table of provincial and territorial guidance and support measures specifically addressing official languages issues in libraries									
Legal Framework – Libraries					**Legal Framework – OL**				
A	**R**	**PI**	**SD**	**P**	**A**	**R**	**PI**	**SD**	**P**
Atlantic									
NS		X	X	X	X					
NB			X			X	X	X		
PEI						X	X			X
NL										
Central									
ON	X		X	X						
QC										X
West									
AB				X					X	
BC	X									X
MN		X		X	X			X		
SK										
North									
Nunavut									X	
NWT										
Yukon										

Legend: value of the abbreviations: A: act; R: regulation; PI: policy instrument; SD: strategic document; P: program.

2.2 Legislative and regulatory measures

2.2.1 Stemming from legislation on libraries

Although all provinces and territories have a legislative framework that provides some sort of guidance for libraries, there are almost no legislative or regulatory provisions on official languages in libraries.

The only legislation that specifically refers to services is Ontario's. Subsection 20(b) of the *Public Libraries Act* stipulates that library boards "shall seek to provide library services in the French language, where appropriate," without any direction as to the level of services. This provision also excludes libraries from the *French Language Services Act*—an exception that the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario (AFO) requested be lifted in 2017 (see below). In British Columbia, the *Library Act* states that a library board may enter into a written agreement with a Francophone education authority to cooperate in the provision of library services.[15]

Two provinces have introduced regulations under their respective library acts that establish specific support programs for services and acquisitions of works in the language of the OLMC.

In Nova Scotia, under the *Libraries Act Funding Regulations*, an operating grant is provided each fiscal year to assist any regional library board serving a population that is more than 10% French-speaking

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15. Paragraph 48(1)(e.1), *Library Act*.

in the provision of French-language library services.[16] Two out of the nine regional boards receive the grant; a recommendation to extend it to all boards went unheeded. In 2018, the Library Funding Task Force[17] proposed amending the regulations to do just that, but the proposal was clearly not implemented. The Task Force stated the following in its report:

> The final funding component extends a French-language grant to all regions, based on the number of French speaking Nova Scotians as counted in the 2006 census. A per capita rate of $8.41 was developed from the last funding model, and this same rate is extended in this formula to all library regions. This funding will allow libraries to build French-language services in all Nova Scotia library regions.[18]

In Manitoba, the *Public Libraries Allocation of Grants Regulation* (1987)[19] contains a provision in subsection 3(3) concerning the acquisition of works, which increases grants to designated bilingual libraries. With respect to this provision, the Public Library Services Branch states that:

> This annual grant of $5,500 for each service point supports collection development. Libraries located in designated French-English bilingual service areas or north of the 53rd parallel receive an additional $1,000. The grant requires that libraries participate in interlibrary loan and maintain a minimum of 10 operating hours at each service point.[20]

In short, legislative and regulatory measures include almost no mention of services and collections for OLMCs under legislation governing libraries: two grant programs are regulated, while references in library legislation are very limited, even going so far as to exclude libraries from Ontario's *French Language Services Act*.

2.2.2 Stemming from legislation on language issues

Two provinces have legislative or regulatory provisions relating to library services and collections.

In New Brunswick, the *Official Languages Act*[21] was first drafted in 1973. It is accompanied by five regulations, including *General Regulation* 2015-67,[22] which defines "public service" pursuant to the Act and as it pertains to libraries.

Similarly, in Prince Edward Island, the *French Language Services Act* (2013) requires that designated services be identified and defines where and how an active offer is made. For example, under the *French Language Services Act General Regulations,* three libraries are designated for in-person bilingual services: Bibliothèque publique d'Abram-Village, Abram-Village; Bibliothèque publique Dr. J.-

19. https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/current/_pdf-regs.php?reg=279/87.
20. Public Library Services Branch, *Uniting Perspectives: Library Development in Manitoba*, 2017, pp. 6–7, https://digitalcollection.gov.mb.ca/awweb/pdfopener?smd=1&did=25484&md=1.
21. https://www.canlii.org/en/nb/laws/stat/snb-2002-c-o-0.5/latest/snb-2002-c-o-0.5.html.
22. https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ag-pg/PDF/RegulationsReglements/2015/2015-67.pdf.

Edmond-Arsenault, Charlottetown; and Bibliothèque publique J.-Henri-Blanchard, Summerside, while four online services are designated bilingual.[23]

Note that the Ontario *French Language Services Act* does not apply to libraries, as "[t]he provision in the *Library Act* takes precedence."[24] However, this situation has been the subject of many claims, particularly in 1980 (Desjardins et al. report) and in 2010,[25] and then again in 2017 by the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario.[26]

2.2.3 From other legislation

There are also references in other statutes. This is the case with the *City of Winnipeg Charter* and with the regulations under the Northwest Territories' *Education Act*.

2.3 Policy instruments

2.3.1 Stemming from legislation on libraries

There are also few provincial and territorial government policy instruments in support of official languages related to the library legislative framework.

In New Brunswick, the network is integrated into public administration and the province has declared itself bilingual. Unsurprisingly, the policies adopted by the New Brunswick Public Library Service (NBPLS), which are applied to all libraries in the province, openly address these issues.

For example, *Policy 1041 – Collection Standards* stipulates that the Service shall endeavour to "provide equitable access to quality library materials in both official languages." It states that:

> As market availability and resources permit, NBPLS collects materials to promote the cultural, economic, educational, and social development of the official linguistic communities in New Brunswick. However, NBPLS will not limit the resources it makes available to one linguistic community simply because the same or similar resource is not available to the other linguistic community.[27]

Similarly, the language of service policy states that staff must ensure that services are offered in both official languages and provided in the official language of choice of the person receiving those services. The community development role is supported by another policy, *Policy 1063 – Programs to Promote the Two Official Linguistic Communities*. It states that the NBPLS intends to develop "French

23. *French Language Services Act General Regulations*, p. 11.
https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/f15-2g-french_language_services_act_general_regulations_1.pdf.
24. http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/act_q_a.shtml#FrenchLanguageServices.
25. Lucie Hotte, Caroline G. Boudreau, Emir Delic, Jennifer Dumoulin, Martine Noël, *La chaîne du livre en Ontario français. Un état des lieux*. Research Chair on Francophone Cultures and Literatures in Canada, June 2010, 96 p. https://aaof.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/La-cha%C3%AEne-du-livre-en-Ontario-fran%C3%A7ais-Un-%C3%A9tat-des-lieux.pdf.
26. Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario, Les arts et la culture francophones en Ontario, Livre blanc, June 2017, 44 p. https://monassemblee.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/LivreBlancAC_FR_2018-01-24.pdf.
27. https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/nbpl-sbpnb/pdf/politiques-policies/1041_CollectionStandards.pdf.

programs to promote the cultural, economic, educational, and social development of the French linguistic community." To do this, managers:

> will consider community needs and requests, availability of resources at the library and in the community, and the linguistic make-up of the intended audience to develop and deliver programs to promote the cultural, economic, educational, and social development of the official linguistic communities.
> To ensure that the needs of both official linguistic communities are appropriately addressed through library programs, Library Managers/Directors will focus outreach efforts on both linguistic communities.[28]

In Nova Scotia, the *Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries* (2001) provide details on levels of service and collections in French:

- French Language Collections: In regions where the Francophone population is 10 percent or more of the total population, the collection should include a minimum of two items per capita of the French-speaking population. The size of French language collections should be calculated on a regional basis and be in addition to the English language collections. These materials will serve as a resource collection for all public libraries in the province.[29]
- Specialized and Professional Staff members: Bilingual staff members should be available when the French-speaking population reaches 10 percent of the total population.[30]
- Institution size: Libraries that provide services in both official languages will require sufficient space to house collections in English and French.[31]

In Ontario, two documents or approaches could be mentioned. The report noted that the *Ontario Public Library Guidelines*[32] program was the basis for an accreditation process. Although managed by an independent body, the Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council, the voluntary standards are of particular interest. A previous version of the guidelines, published in 2013,[33] indicated that official languages should be considered in a variety of areas, including exterior signage, library layout, advertising, staffing, collection, labelling, reference, adolescent support and local history.

In addition, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport mandated the Ottawa Public Library (OPL) to develop a toolkit from a local emulation perspective. The document entitled *Destination Biblio. Toolkit for Planning, Promoting and Working with Francophones and Francophiles in Your Community* was developed in 2013 for Ontario public libraries serving Francophone and Francophile communities.[34]

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28. https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/nbpl-sbpnb/pdf/politiques-policies/1063_ProgramsPromoteTwoOfficialLinguisticCommunities.pdf.
29. *Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries* (2001), p. 10, http://0-nsleg-edeposit.gov.ns.ca.legcat.gov.ns.ca/deposit/b10087424.pdf.
30. Ibid.*, p. 16.
31. Ibid.*, p. 24.
32. "Ontario Public Library Guidelines, 7th Edition." https://ontariopubliclibraryguidelines.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/7th-Edition-Flyer.pdf.
33. Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council, Ontario Public Library, *Guidelines For Municipal and County Public Libraries,* Sixth Edition w/ Amendments August 2013, 48 p. https://www.otosoumon.library.on.ca/uploads/3/9/3/4/39345331/opl_guidelines-full_6th_ed..pdf.
34. *Destination Biblio. Toolkit for Planning, Promoting and Working with Francophones and Francophiles in Your Community*, 2013, 37 p. https://biblioottawalibrary.ca/sites/default/files/PDFs/Trousse-EN%202%20FINAL-s.pdf.

2.3.2 Stemming from legislation on language issues

In New Brunswick, *An Act Recognizing the Equality of the Two Official Linguistic Communities in New Brunswick* (2011)[35] also supports French services. While the Act recognizes the equality of status and the equal rights and privileges of both communities and encourages, through positive measures, the cultural, economic, educational and social development of official language communities, it is supported by the *Official Languages – Language of Service Policy and Guidelines*,[36] which emphasizes actively offering and providing services.

Similarly, the many policies adopted by the NBPLS, particularly regarding collections, services and programming, provide guidance and support that stand out from other provinces and territories.

The same is true in Manitoba, where the legislative and political framework for French-language services is also impressive. In 2017, the province adopted a revamped version of the *French-Language Services Policy*,[37] the first version of which dates back to 1989, under which departments and various government and para-governmental agencies are to provide services in French in designated bilingual regions. However, libraries are not specifically named. Under this framework, bilingual service centres offer a range of government programs and services in both English and French in six regions of Manitoba where there is a great degree of French-language vitality.[38]

Under this policy, the Francophone Affairs Secretariat produced a manual in 2017 that notably supports the role of libraries in disseminizing information. It states the following, among other things:

> How can public bodies ensure the Francophone population is aware of existing bilingual information? How is this information best made accessible to Francophones? When possible, make use of the various networks and institutions of the Francophone community, e.g. schools, caisses populaires, banks, post offices, libraries and community centres in designated areas.[39]

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the *French Language Services Policy*[40] sets service objectives, "to have a more consistent and coordinated approach to French services throughout the provincial government."[41] However, given that libraries are excluded from provincial administration, libraries—which are centralized—are excluded from the policy.

2.4 Strategic planning documents

35. http://laws.gnb.ca/en/ShowPdf/cs/2011-c.198.pdf.
36. https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/finance/human_resources/content/policies_and_guidelines/language_service.html.
37. The current version is dated 2017: https://www.gov.mb.ca/fls-slf/pdf/fls_policy_en20170908.pdf.
38. See *The Bilingual Service Centres Act*, https://www.canlii.org/en/mb/laws/stat/ccsm-c-b37/latest/ccsm-c-b37.html.
39. Government of Manitoba, Francophone Affairs Secretariat, *Guidelines Manual for the Implementation of French Language Services Based on Government of Manitoba Policy*, IV, pp. 6–7; https://www.gov.mb.ca/fls-slf/part4_partie4_092017.pdf.
40. *French Language Services Policy*, 2 p., no date, https://www.gov.nl.ca/dgsnl/files/frenchservices-english-french-languages-services-policy-eng.pdf.
41. "Office of French Services," https://www.gov.nl.ca/dgsnl/frenchservices/english/.

2.4.1 Stemming from legislation on libraries

In Nova Scotia, the Library Funding Task Force proposed in 2008 to amend this funding regulation and extend the grant to all regional boards, which obviously has not been implemented. (see below)

In Ontario, strategic discussion on Francophone library services and collections started back in the early 1980s with a report by Louis Desjardins and Evelyn Gagné. The investigation revealed many shortcomings and proposed 22 recommendations, the main ones being to amend the legislation to guarantee services, define standards and appoint provincial coordination.[42] More needs and services reports followed, including in 1988 and 1990.[43]

In Manitoba as well, various strategic planning documents have been produced. In 2006, a committee reviewed the library system.[44] In its 2017 report, the Public Library Services Branch states the following about bilingual communities (see below) [45].

Some of these documents are older. This is particularly true in Alberta, with the Resources Management Consultants study on the library needs of Francophones, conducted in 1984.[46]

2.4.2 Stemming from legislation on language issues

Two provinces/territories have strategic planning documents on official languages that refer to libraries.

In Alberta, the *French Policy* is accompanied by a *2018–2021 Action Plan*[47] adopted in December 2018. Among the "Priority Initiatives for 2018-21," the plan sets out to "work [in 2019–2020] with public library stakeholders to promote available French-language content and potentially expand it."[48]

The 2020–2023 version of the plan confirms this willingness. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs, which is responsible for libraries, states in this document that:

> A key ministry focus in supporting Alberta's French Policy is to contribute to the vitality of Alberta's French-speaking communities by supporting public libraries with operating grants

42. Jean-Guy Desroches, Report of [Desjardins, Louis and Gagné, Evelyn. *Les services en langue française dans les bibliothèques publiques de l'Ontario*. Toronto, Ministry of Culture and Recreation, 1980. 101 p.], *Documentation et bibliothèques*, 26 (4), 1980, 221–224. https://doi.org/10.7202/1054221ar.

43. Larry Eshleman, "Library Service to the Francophone Community in Ontario: Some Observations and Suggestions," Ontario. Libraries and Community Information Branch, 1988, 18 p.; Goss, Gilroy & Associates Ltd, "French Public Libraries Study," Toronto MCC, Dec. 1990.

44. Reaching Our Vision. Providing High Quality, Sustainable Public Library Services for All Manitobans, 2006, 32 p., https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/pls/pdf/reaching_our_vision30may06.pdf.

45. Public Library Services Branch, *Uniting Perspectives: Library Development in Manitoba*, 2017, p. 15, https://digitalcollection.gov.mb.ca/awweb/pdfopener?smd=1&did=25484&md=1.

46. Resources Management Consultants (Alberta). "Library needs of the francophone community in Alberta," for Multilingual Biblioservice, Alberta Culture, 1984, 53 p.

47. Francophone Secretariat, Culture and Tourism, Government of Alberta, *French Policy. 2018-21 Action Plan*, December 2018, 28 p., https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/57df6963-7de2-440e-967a-1b29da01f438/resource/bd5c0317-a097-409f-b142-1cf385988a97/download/final-french-policy-action-plan-12202018-en.pdf.

48. Ibid., p. 25.

that help those in francophone communities develop collections to meet local needs. The ministry also manages the network of municipal and library system boards that provides province-wide access to public library services for all Albertans. This includes facilitating access to French-language print and electronic materials.[49]

In Nunavut, a survey on the need for French-language services was conducted in 2015, and improving French-language library services was seen as a priority (7th out of 10).[50]

2.5 Programs

2.5.1 Stemming from legislation on libraries

The only programs related to the library legislative framework are those governed by the regulations of Nova Scotia and Manitoba.

2.5.2 Stemming from legislation on language issues

Programs and grants under official languages provisions are probably the most widely used measures. In Prince Edward Island, the province received a 2016–2017 Canada Council grant to promote reading in French.[51]

In Quebec, the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise [Secretariat for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers] has a funding program called "Strengthening Community Vitality." According to the document entitled *Funding Program Strengthening Community Vitality. Overview of the 2018–2019 Financial Year*, there was no specific support for libraries in 2018–2019, but there is no reason why this did not or could not happen in the future, as with the Eastern Townships Resource Centre, which did receive funding that year.

In British Columbia, an initiative for access to electronic publications was implemented in 2018–2019 by the British Columbia Francophone Affairs Program. Entitled "Provincial French E-books and Audio Books Public Library Collection" with a budget of $42,000 (equally funded by B.C. and Canada), the initiative yielded the following results:

> A total of 61 small to medium-sized public libraries spread across British Columbia were supported. By partnering with the B.C. Libraries Cooperative instead of individual libraries, the funding was used for the purchase of collectively owned French e-resources. The program provides 950,000+ people with free access to over 70,000 electronic books and electronic

49. Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women, Government of Alberta, *French Policy. 2020-23 Action Plan*, October 2020, p. 26, https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/96f8b5e5-7bf3-433b-832b-285dfff9da82/resource/cf497bed-18e4-4c14-a7b1-346063c92a51/download/cmsw-french-policy-action-plan-2020-23.pdf.
50. *Priorities of the Francophone Community of Nunavut Regarding French Services*, March 2015, 36 p. https://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/ch_frenchservicesreport_eng_0.pdf.
51. "Service des bibliothèques publiques de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard. Promoting Reading in French," https://statsandstories.canadacouncil.ca/story-eng.asp?province=2&category=0&year=2016&story=455, https://statsandstories.canadacouncil.ca/index-eng.asp?year=2016&province=2&category=0.

audiobooks that can be borrowed from the Library2go website or from a mobile device application.[52]

This program received some media coverage.[53]

In Nunavut, the Iqaluit Centennial Library received funding in 2018 through an official languages program to hire a new assistant librarian to assist with French programming. It also hopes to add e-book services in French.[54]

2.6 Synopsis

2.6.1 Observations

This exercise has led to important observations.

With regard to the **legislative framework**, it is clear that the issue of official languages in libraries is virtually unaddressed.
- Ontario has a specific provision for official languages in its legislation governing public libraries. However, it essentially delegates to local library boards the power to determine the acceptable level of service ("where appropriate"), and it exempts libraries from the *French Language Services Act*. There have been repeated calls for changes that would see the Act applied to public libraries (Desjardins 1980; Hotte 2010; Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario 2017).
- British Columbia has a similar provision, though this provision is more limited in scope (the possibility of agreement between library boards and school boards).
- Moreover, the legislation covering language issues does not specifically mention libraries.

In short, the legislative support is weak, since the provision of services and collections to OLMCs is virtually absent from legislative measures, whether they relate to the library framework or to official languages.

Rather, support comes from **regulatory provisions**.

Some regulations are made under library acts and are intended to provide financial support to libraries:

52. *Final Report on Results and Actual Expenditures. Canada - British Columbia Agreement on French Language Services 2018-2019 to 2022-2023. Fiscal Year 2018-2019*, p. 15, https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/organizational-structure/office-of-the-premier/intergovernmental-relations-secretariat/francophone-affairs-program/bc-francophone-affairs-program-annual-report-en.pdf.
53. "British Columbians Benefit from Increased Access to French Resources in Libraries," news release, https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2019IGRS0051-000904; "B.C. Government Marks Francophone Day with More Money for Services," *CBC*, March 20, 2018, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/francophone-day-services-funding-bc-federal-1.4584477; Saïda Ouchaou, "Des livres numériques en français accessibles en ligne à travers la C.-B.," *ICI Colombie-Britannique–Yukon*, May 10, 2019, https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1169147/ouvrages-internet-francais-bibliotheques-litterature.
54. Nunavut Library Association, *Meeting Notes & Action Minutes*, NLA Fall Meeting Teleconference, December 6, 2018, 5 p., https://nunavutlibraryassociation.files.wordpress.com/2019/06/nla-meeting-minutes2018dec6.pdf.

- In Nova Scotia, assistance is provided to improve services through a grant to regional boards that serve a population consisting of at least 10% Francophones. The per capita grant was $8.41 in 2008. However, a 2017 proposal to extend that funding was not acted upon.
- In Manitoba, the regulations have to do with collection development. They provide an additional contribution of $5,500 per service point.

In New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, the regulations made under French language legislation define the provision of services in French.

In both cases, there is a strong signal, involving either financial support for differentiated service or rules for the provision of bilingual services.

Policy instruments also support the implementation of guidance and support measures. There are a variety of approaches in this regard.

First, we note that the following are supported by the legislative framework for libraries:
- in New Brunswick, where service is integrated into the public administration, the set of policies in place offers a fairly well-defined framework;
- in Nova Scotia, standards set specific guidelines for services, in particular the scope of the collection, staffing, and the size of the facilities;
- in Ontario, there tend to be emulation tools, i.e., guidelines or a toolkit.

It should also be noted that, in Ontario, which has a library certification program, a previous version of the certification guidelines included criteria for French-language services. However, the status of the current version of these guidelines is unclear.

Second, with regard to the legislative framework for official languages, it is important to note that, under its French-Language Services Policy, Manitoba has designated bilingual regions. This has an impact on libraries, even though they are not specifically mentioned (except in one manual).

In short, only three provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Manitoba) have policy instruments that provide more clear and detailed direction. The clearest case is New Brunswick, probably because of its "provincialized" structure. The policies established by the Public Library Service cover a number of dimensions and are more detailed. Similarly, Nova Scotia's standards affect collections, staffing and library size.

Strategic or planning documents are another aspect of guidance and support. It should be noted at the outset that, as early as the 1980s, studies were conducted on the needs of Francophone minorities in Ontario (Desjardins 1980; Eshleman 1988; Goss and Gilroy 1990) and Alberta (Resources Management 1984). However, they are more than 30 years old and do not seem to have been acted upon.

More recent planning documents in Nova Scotia (Library Funding Task Force 2008), Ontario (Newman 2008), and Manitoba (Étude sur les services 2006; *Uniting perspectives...* 2017) have pointed either to enhanced support or to a more coordinated intraprovincial or interprovincial approach. This observation also applies to official languages planning documents

- in Alberta, which intends to "contribute to the vitality of [its] French-speaking communities by supporting public libraries with operating grants" (2020-23 Action Plan); and
- in Nunavut (needs survey, 2015), which ranks libraries as the seventh-highest priority service out of ten for the Francophone community.

In short, four provinces and one territory plan to provide more support for French-language services. At the same time, major restructuring proposals in Newfoundland and Labrador (2016) and Saskatchewan (2017), which would have had a pivotal effect on those services, both generated strong public reaction, demonstrating the communities' interest in libraries.

Lastly, there is the **programs** aspect. While programs are more flexible, they can also be more easily affected by budget tightening. That said, at least four provinces/territories have programs in place (Prince Edward Island, Quebec, British Columbia and Nunavut).

2.6.2 Comments from the expert panel

Among the comments received from the experts consulted, a number of observations pertain to official languages measures in public libraries.

In their comments, the experts noted substantial differences in provinces' approaches to library services, ranging from provincially coordinated library services, as in New Brunswick, to decentralized services under municipal jurisdiction with varying degrees of ministerial coordination, as in Alberta. That said, despite their stated goals, many provinces and territories could do more to promote services to OLMCs, as the resources acquired in the minority official language are often insignificant compared with those in the majority official language.

The experts also observed that legal and policy frameworks are often insufficient to maintain positive momentum in the promotion of minority official language materials. It might be appropriate to establish such frameworks. In addition, policy statements on the importance of the two official languages in enhancing the cultural and linguistic vitality of OLMCs and libraries could be drafted and applied to policies governing areas such as collection development and services.

The experts noted that public library manuals and best practices guides often lack specifics regarding policies on the development of minority official language collections. The absence of firm policies could make it impossible to address the needs of official language minority populations.

Correcting the situation also requires better support for local communities, since libraries that enjoy strong public support and have resources for promoting and supporting services seem to be more successful in offering and maintaining resources in the minority official language. Accordingly, it would make sense to fund grassroots organizations interested in boosting access to or acquisition of library materials (e.g., book fairs, independent libraries).

In addition, the development of electronic resources is undoubtedly an effective way to provide better resources in the minority language and to reach small, remote communities.

2.6.3 A few best practices

Note: Some best practices were identified in the course of this research. The following list is not exhaustive, but it points to possible avenues of development. It is provided for information only.

Identification of bilingual services
- Prince Edward Island: Under the *French Language Services Act* (2013) and associated regulations, the identification of designated bilingual services is mandatory. The requirement affects three libraries with in-person services and four online services.

Financial support
- Nova Scotia: Under the *Libraries Act Funding Regulations*, an operating grant is given to regional boards that provide French-language library services. The grant is awarded where the Francophone population exceeds 10% of the total population.
- Manitoba: Under the *Public Libraries Allocation of Grants Regulation*, collection development support is provided to recognized bilingual communities in the form of an annual grant of $5,500 per service point.

Support for OLMC development
- New Brunswick: The New Brunswick Public Library Service (NBPLS) has a policy entitled "Programs to Promote the Two Official Linguistic Communities," which makes libraries cultural agents.
- Manitoba: Under the *Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act*, libraries are required to develop a multi-year strategic plan for French-language services.

Service standards
- Nova Scotia: The Standards for Nova Scotia Regional Public Libraries (2001) set out criteria for the collections, staffing and size of libraries serving a population that is more than 10% Francophone.
- Ontario: The guidelines provide some official languages criteria for library certification.
- British Columbia: A public library accountability framework provides guidance for local management (although it does not have an official languages dimension).
- Manitoba: The Municipal and Regional Public Library Standards and Guidelines provide guidance, including signage rules.

Guides and other documents
- Newfoundland and Labrador: A bibliography of materials available at the St. John's library on the Francophone presence in Newfoundland and Labrador is available.

Programs
- British Columbia: The Francophone Affairs Program created a program to promote the development of a provincial collection of French-language e-books and audio books for public libraries.

Statistical data

- Several provinces (including Quebec and Ontario) keep detailed statistics, and some have collected language data on either their collections or their services (notably New Brunswick and Manitoba).

Networking

- Ontario: Regroupement des bibliothécaires francophones within the Francophone Division of the Ontario Library Association (Association des bibliothèques de l'Ontario-Franco) (ABO-Franco).
- Manitoba: Fédération des bibliothèques des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba.
- Saskatchewan: Networking efforts are supported through the *Libraries Co-Operation Act*.

3. The contribution of university libraries

A few university libraries play an important role in supporting the vitality of OLMCs. Two dimensions were identified during the survey.

3.1 Services to the community

A number of universities have libraries that make their collections and services available to the community.

In New Brunswick, Bibliothèque Champlain's *Plan stratégique 2015-2020*[55] [2015–2020 strategic plan] indicates that it intends to [translation] "contribute research, education, creation and service to the community in order to support community development and foster a better understanding of the issues of Acadian society."

In Nova Scotia, the Francophone hub is situated at Université Sainte-Anne, which houses Bibliothèque Louis-R.-Comeau.[56] This library is [translation] "open to professors, students and employees of the institution as well as to members of the general public," offering "87,000 print documents and audiovisual and other materials, in addition to an extensive collection of electronic resources."

In Manitoba, Bibliothèque Alfred-Monnin, at Université de Saint-Boniface,[57] maintains a collection of 88,000 titles available for loan. It has the oldest and largest French-language collection in Manitoba and Western Canada. One form of community engagement organized here is book fairs. This practice began in 2004 with the collaboration of the *Boutique du Livre*,[58] and expanded in 2013 with the *Expo-Livre Manitoba*, an annual gathering that goes beyond the university framework to [translation] "offer a wider range of literary genres for the French-speaking community, giving people the opportunity to meet with famous authors." As one official commented, [translation] "[t]his fair is an attempt to meet a need, to create a French book culture. If offers participants a role to play in the community."[59]

In Saskatchewan, the Cité universitaire francophone at the University of Regina[60] has two documentary resources. For the university community, the Archer Library manages the collection of the University of Regina's French-language books, articles and other resources; a French librarian service is available there for all students enrolled in French programs. In addition, *La Rotonde*, defined as "the Hub for Student Life in French," has substantial documentary resources available to borrow free of charge. This service is offered to everyone: "Whether it's for school or fun, students, profs and the general public alike are invited to check out the collection."[61]

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55. To consult the annual reports, action plans and strategic plans, see https://www.umoncton.ca/umcm-bibliotheque-champlain/rapports-annuels-plan-action.
56. https://www.usainteanne.ca/bibliotheque/.
57. https://ustboniface.ca/biblio/en.
58. "Des écrivains de renommée à l'Université de Saint-Boniface," *La Coupole*, September 23, 2014, https://ustboniface.ca/carrefour_page176.
59. "Créer une culture du livre en français," September 23, 2014, https://cdem.com/fr/publications/culture-du-livre-en-fran-ais.
60. https://lacite.uregina.ca/en/uni/campus/library.
61. https://lacite.uregina.ca/en/uni/campus/rotonde, https://lacite.uregina.ca/en/uni/campus/library.

Bibliothèque Saint-Jean at the University of Alberta[62] serves not only the institution's Francophones and Francophiles, but also the broader Francophone community. The collection is not solely academic, and includes many works of fiction for children, teens and adults, as well as films, CDs and comic books. The website states that [translation] "users of Bibliothèque Saint-Jean can take advantage of, among other things, the vast French-language holdings of University of Alberta libraries in both print and electronic format, which amount to about half a million titles."[63] There is also a detailed page on Wikipedia.[64] There have been various papers and articles about Bibliothèque Saint-Jean and its role in the community.[65]

3.2 Digitization
University libraries also make an important contribution by making documentary heritage available through digitization programs.

In Ontario, the University of Ottawa Library has facilitated access to Francophone documentary heritage owing to federal funding through the Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) – Department of Canadian Heritage,[66] which has made it possible to digitize and make accessible on the Archive website over 20,000 works published before 1923.[67]

In Alberta, Bibliothèque Saint-Jean has also digitized a large number of resources for the community, which can be consulted on the *Peel's Prairie Provinces* website.[68] This permits access, for example, to the digitized versions of newspapers such as *La Survivance, L'Union, La Liberté* and *Le Patriote de l'Ouest*.[69]

4. Community libraries and book fairs: An essential component

Community libraries also provide access to documentary heritage. However, this practice remains uneven among the provinces and territories.

In Prince Edward Island, each of the six Acadian and Francophone regions has its own school and community centre, offering services such as libraries; however, the presence of such libraries remains to be confirmed.

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62. https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-saint-jean/services/bibliotheque-saint-jean.html.
63. https://www.library.ualberta.ca/locations/bsj.
64. https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblioth%C3%A8que_Saint-Jean.
65. Usova, T., C. Vézina and D. Boisvert, "Bibliothèque Saint-Jean de l'Université de l'Alberta," *Documentation et bibliothèques*, 59(2), 2013, pp. 120–123, https://doi.org/10.7202/1033224ar; Usova, Tatiana, "Preservation of Francophone Heritage Materials at the University of Alberta," Paper presented at: World Library and Information Congress of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA-WLIC), Wroclaw, Poland, 2017, http://library.ifla.org/id/eprint/1802; Usova, T., "Bibliothèque Saint-Jean, U of A, Collaborates with the Provincial Archives of Alberta," Partnership: *The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*, 3(2), 2008, https://doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v3i2.828.
66. http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/amenagement/ententeAgreementEd.pdf. The Library receives annual funding from the COA to purchase French-language books and resources.
67. https://archive.org/details/universityofottawa.
68. http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/index.html?locale=en.
69. Tatiana Usova, "Preservation of Francophone Heritage Materials at the University of Alberta," paper presented at: IFLA WLIC 2017 – Wroclaw, Poland – Libraries. Solidarity. Society in Session S08 - Satellite Meeting: Preservation and Conservation Section joint with the Association International Francophone des Bibliothécaires et Documentalistes (AIFBD) in collaboration with the Médiathèque Valais, p. 4. http://library.ifla.org/id/eprint/1802.

In St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, the library of the Centre scolaire et communautaire des Grands-Vents, under the responsibility of the Association communautaire francophone de St. John's, serves both the school and the community. Opened in 2004, it closed for renovations in April 2019 and then reopened on October 18, 2019.

In Quebec, the lack of comprehensive data makes it difficult to understand the whole dynamic around Anglophone community libraries, although we have identified over 10 of them. Many of them have played an important historical role in the establishment of public libraries in Quebec. Some are partially integrated into the public system (via access to their catalogue), but they seem relatively isolated, while some have encountered major difficulties, notably the Fraser-Hickson Institute Library.

Alberta also has a few community libraries, which serve diverse publics. The library of the Institut Guy-Lacombe de la famille, which serves Edmonton and the north, has a collection of books, magazines and DVDs totalling over 17,000 items.[70] The Alliance Française de Calgary has the largest French multimedia library in Alberta. According to its website (which is in English), the library has 9,000 resources, including 3,000 novels, 650 essays, 1,500 resources in the youth collection, 900 DVDs and 600 French-Canadian resources.[71] The Centre d'appui familial – Sud de l'Alberta offers library service in the areas of parental support and child development through to age 18.[72] The Grande Prairie French Language Resource Centre, an initiative launched in 2004, offers resources for teaching in French. The result of a consortium of numerous partners, the Centre has adopted the mission of developing bilingualism in northwestern Alberta. In 2015, it had no fewer than 18,000 documents.[73] In 2013, it won the Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta Prix Impact[74] [impact award], and the extent of the partnerships in place was even the subject of a study.[75] Lastly, the Médiathèque de Lethbridge is housed on the first floor of the Lethbridge Francophone cultural community centre.[76] It is the French-language public library of reference serving Lethbridge and the surrounding area. Its books, audiobooks, DVDs and CDs are all in French. The Médiathèque is affiliated with the Chinook Arch Regional Library System.[77] After going through some difficult years, it was developed with the support of grants in 2017 and 2018.[78]

In Manitoba, the Centre du patrimoine houses a reference library of close to 13,000 titles. It also has a large collection of family histories and histories of the parishes of Manitoba and Western Canada, not to mention many periodicals. Its website reads as follows:

70. http://institutguylacombe.ca/bibliotheque/index.php/bilbiotheque-francais/.
71. https://www.afcalgary.ca/library/general-information/. See also Audrey Neveu, "La bibliothèque de l'Alliance française de Calgary: 8000 titres à découvrir," *ICI Alberta*, August 29, 2020; https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1729656/livres-francais-calgary-bibliotheque-alliance-francaise.
72. https://centredappuifamilial.ca/en/.
73. "Un centre de ressources unique en Alberta," *Le Franco*, February 19, 2015.
74. https://www.acfa.ab.ca/Documents/reconnais/2013_PrixImpact.pdf.
75. Lesley Doell, "Strength Together: A Cooperative Venture into the World of French Resources," *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*, 3(1), 2008, https://doi.org/10.21083/partnership.v3i1.469.
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> [Translation] In addition to a reference and rare book library of close to 8,000 titles, the SHSB [Société historique de Saint-Boniface] has also acquired the Bibliothèque nationale de l'Archevêché de Saint-Boniface, one of the largest collections of books (about 30,000 titles) and brochures on the history of western Francophones. There are many documents on the schools issue. There are also a number of records on caisses populaires and *Action catholique.* This collection features many periodicals and newspapers, such as *Le Manitoba* and *Le Métis,* as well as important genealogical resources.[79]

In Saskatchewan, Le Lien is both a school and a community library. As a component of Collège Mathieu, it serves not only the college student community, but also all the Francophone and immersion schools of Saskatchewan and the adjoining provinces. Since Collège Mathieu is over a hundred years old, Le Lien contains invaluable resources often sought by researchers interested in the history of French-language education in Western Canada.

Furthermore, Le Lien defines itself as the Franco-Saskatchewan centre for cultural and educational resources. It also has a community component, serving the Francophones and Francophiles of Saskatchewan and Western Canada. This presence is supported in particular by the *Rés-O Lien* project, which provides free access to French-language cultural and educational resources in various regions across Saskatchewan through a network of around 10 repositories generally located in the province's Francophone community cultural centres or schools.

In British Columbia, the Centre culturel francophone de Vancouver has a collection of close to 7,000 books in French, making it one of the largest in British Columbia. The collection includes literature, the social sciences, reference works (dictionaries, atlases, etc.) and books for young readers.[80]

In Iqaluit, Nunavut, the École des Trois-Soleils library also serves the community; as mentioned on its website, it:

> [Translation] fosters the growth of the Francophone community by offering books for all ages, from youngest to oldest. It is the only family and community library in Iqaluit that offers educational and cultural activities from time to time. You can find French-language books there for all ages as well as music albums and even films.[81]

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79. "La recherche," Centre du patrimoine, https://shsb.mb.ca/test-page-in-french/.
80. https://www.lecentreculturel.com/en/books-dvds.
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5. Other conclusions

5.1 Coordination with educational services

The contribution of educational services and school libraries to the development of and access to documentary heritage cannot be overlooked. While this aspect is deserving of more specific examination, a few preliminary elements can be mentioned now.

Close to half of library services fall under education ministries or departments. The British Columbia *Library Act* even provides for the possibility of collaboration agreements between library boards and Francophone school boards.

This collaboration is also evident in the case of community libraries, since certain libraries also serve the surrounding community.

The assistance of certain support services should also be noted. In Nova Scotia, the Centre provincial de ressources pédagogiques (CPRP)[82] supports Nova Scotia teaching staff working in French-language schools and French immersion programs. Since August 2008, it has been part of the educational services sector of the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP).[83] The CPRP has always been mandated to offer the following services:

- A library with more than 70,000 resources of all types for kindergarten to Grade 12
- Training and counselling
- Publications
- Computerization of the CSAP's school libraries
- Services

Similarly, in Manitoba, the Direction des ressources éducatives françaises plays an important support role:

> The Direction des ressources éducatives françaises (DREF) is a library for Manitoba teachers; it offers educational resources to support kindergarten to Grade 12 educators in the Français and French Immersion programs as well as in the French courses, English Program.[84]

5.2 Networking to be developed

In the course of this research, it also became apparent that there are networking possibilities to be explored.

5.2.1 Libraries and Librarians

Libraries are not isolated institutions; they work in networks and consortia, especially in the development and management of digital collections. Many networks already exist. However, the

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82. https://sites.google.com/sepne.ca/moncprp/historique.
83. https://csap.ca/.
84. https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/french/sites.html; see also
https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/biblio/index.html.

community networking of libraries serving OLMCs could be strengthened, particularly around shared digital services and collections and in their relations with provincial and national authorities to support their priorities.

There was an association of French-Canadian librarians until 1972, but it disappeared in the wake of the transformation of the French-Canadian identity, as their communities defined themselves on a provincial basis rather than as French Canadians.

In Alberta, there was a community of practice for Francophone librarians from 2011 to 2014, at least,[85] but it now seems to be inactive.

Two associations are holding strong. The first is the Association des bibliothèques de l'Ontario-Franco (ABO-franco), whose mission is [translation] "to work actively for the development of services in French in provincial librarian communities, to see that libraries receive all relevant information in French, and to see to the marketing of French services."[86] ABO-Franco holds its annual general meeting and conference as part of the Ontario Library Association (OLA) Super Conference in Toronto. This is the most popular conference in Canada, attracting more than just Ontario librarians. In 2019, the Francophone Division held its first one-day conference outside the OLA's annual conference; it took place in Ottawa.

The second is the Fédération des bibliothèques des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba, incorporated in 1995.[87] The website of the Jolys Regional Library (whose central library is in St-Pierre-Jolys), which is a member of the federation, reads as follows:

> This Federation was formed in 1995 with the purpose of promoting the French language and heritage in our communities. The FBMB is subsidized by the Association of Bilingual Municipalities and is presently composed of 12 bilingual libraries. French resources in the form of CDs and DVDs are exchanged three times a year.[88]

Similarly, LAC's network of OLMC libraries was created in 2019 to share information within this community of interest.

5.2.2 Book fairs

Lastly, on a different note that is not strictly part of this research, it is worth pointing out that such networking between the various book fairs held in minority communities would undoubtedly be useful for their consolidation. About a dozen such events are held across Canada. They play an important role in disseminating documentary heritage within OLMCs.

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85. "La communauté de pratique de bibliothèques albertaines. Services de bibliothèque en langue française de l'Alberta," https://bibliofrancoalberta.wordpress.com/.

86. By-Law No. 7 specific to ABO-Franco, https://accessola.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/By-Law-7-ABO.pdf.

87. http://www.fbmb.ca/en/home/.

88. http://www.jrlibrary.mb.ca/en/services/.

List of book fairs in official language minority communities

New Brunswick
- Acadian Peninsula (Shippagan)
- Dieppe
- Edmundston

Newfoundland and Labrador
- Festival du livre, St. John's, since 2008

Ontario
- Hearst Book Fair
- Toronto French Book Fair
- BookFest Windsor
- Salon du livre du Grand Sudbury
- Niagara Francophone Book Fair

Manitoba
- Manitoba Book Fair (Winnipeg)

British Columbia
- Salon du livre de Vancouver

Yukon
- Salon du livre en français (Whitehorse)

6. Suggested courses of action

The courses of action suggested here are drawn from the assessment reports of the experts consulted. The reports call on Library and Archives Canada (LAC), its partners and the entire library community to provide better guidance on official languages in libraries across Canada in order to support the development of official language minority communities (OLMCs).

6.1 Dissemination of the report

The expert panel suggested various measures for disseminating the final report.

First, the report should be permanently available on the Internet, including on the LAC website. Since permanent availability of a document on a website can be problematic, access via a variety of repositories was recommended.

Because libraries are under provincial / territorial jurisdiction, it was suggested that discussions be held with the Provincial and Territorial Public Library Council to present the report and determine whether a global or concerted strategy would be possible in view of the pan-Canadian nature of the issue.

It was also proposed that LAC and its partners disseminate the report widely, including to
- the institutional network of the Canadian Francophonie and English-speaking Quebecers (national, provincial and regional organizations);
- researchers interested in these communities or in library development;
- provincial and territorial governments;
- municipalities, especially those with OLMCs;
- heads of public, university and community libraries;
- the eight library and information science schools in Canada;
- professional library associations, including the Canadian Federation of Library Associations, which includes most of the library and librarian associations in Canada and has Francophone representation on its board.

It was also suggested that a bilingual presentation or summary document be prepared and circulated to provincial and territorial library associations. This document would be intended for community leaders and library executives and would clearly identify best practices.

6.2 Further research

In their reports, the external evaluators identified a number of avenues for further research by library community stakeholders.

6.2.1 Report update and additional data collection

First, there was interest in having this report updated on a regular basis, perhaps every two or three years. That would make this environmental scan a must for anyone interested in these issues, and it would not be necessary to start from scratch in the future.

Second, establishing a publicly accessible database documenting programs and practices designed to serve OLMCs might compensate for the lack of data and be useful to the communities.

The database would provide access to very detailed annual statistics. The experts consulted noted the lack of data on the services in libraries that OLMCs need (English services in Quebec and French services in the rest of Canada).

There is a push to collect more statistics and data in this regard. These could take the form of
- an inventory of resources (number of books, documentaries, magazines, etc.) available in English in Quebec and in French in the rest of Canada;
- a comparison of provincial / territorial budget envelopes over the last 10, 15, 20 or 25 years;
- data on investments by governments and public and university libraries to facilitate Internet access to information resources; or
- indicators on access to library resources based on OLMC regions, demographics and geographic distribution in each province and territory.

6.2.2 Effectiveness of systems and practices

The experts consulted pointed out that it would be useful to compare, with due respect for jurisdiction, the various forms of public library guidance so that the most effective model for providing library services to OLMCs could be identified. There is a lack of information about the effectiveness of current practices. In order to be able to say that one practice is better than another, we need to better understand the indicators of success.

The report contains helpful food for thought for readers wishing to develop better practices to serve their OLMCs, but more systematic research would be beneficial.

6.2.3 Community engagement

A complementary line of research might focus on the needs and perspectives of OLMCs. For example, a national survey of library users would provide valuable information. It could be included in the questions asked every five years in the Census. Statistics Canada would have to be involved in such an undertaking.

In general, better information sharing between communities might lead to more widespread adoption of best practices.

6.2.4 Further analysis

The researchers consulted identified several topics for further research:
- A more detailed analysis could be carried out on the practices specific to each region. Similarly, an effort could be made to achieve greater granularity in describing the state of libraries (e.g., the range of existing policies).
- A survey could be conducted on networking issues, including interlibrary loan (ILL) services and their impact on OLMCs. The ILL system is often governed by provincial and territorial legislation and regulations. This system could be an essential anchor for access to minority

official language collections and services in libraries. It also includes university, college, specialized, government and other libraries, as well as LAC if the institution has a "last copy." However, electronic resources, including digital collections, are not available for ILL. As a result, access to the collections will decrease as more resources are created in digital form only.

- A series of studies would be useful to provide a better understanding of the situation of bilingual specialized and professional staff and what they need (training, collection development resources, etc.) to serve the phone population.

- Very few libraries explicitly promote their French-language collections. It would be helpful to look at the needs, resources and skills of specialized staff in the selection and promotion of French-language collections. Similarly, the report suggests that there is a lack of surveys on the needs and practices of OLMC audiences. In particular, the diversity of the needs of those audiences (newcomers, rural or urban residents, age groups, whether they are in an immersion situation) is a key element to be surveyed and studied in a future update of this study.

- Networking and support: It is clear from the report that there is a lack of dialogue spaces and a need for a national network for information professionals (librarians, researchers, administrators, etc.) interested in OLMC libraries. It may be time to establish a task force and an annual conference on these issues.

- A survey of library services in Indigenous languages could be conducted to complement this report.

- Lastly, the linkage with government depository libraries and bilingual government publications, for example in New Brunswick and Ontario, could also be examined.

Appendix 1: List of experts consulted

Michael Afar, Librarian, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

Alison Bullock, Acting Director General, Published Heritage, Library and Archives Canada

Nadia Caidi, Full Professor, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto

Hélène Carrier, Associate Librarian, University of Ottawa; Francophone representative, Canadian Federation of Library Associations; and President, Association des bibliothèques de l'Ontario-Franco (a division of the Ontario Library Association)

Mary Cavanagh, Associate Professor and Director of the School of Information Studies, University of Ottawa

Marcel Martel, Professor, Department of History, York University; Avie Bennett, Historica Canada Chair in Canadian History

Philippe Mongeon, Assistant Professor, School of Information Management, Dalhousie University

Robert Talbot, Manager, Research, Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages

Annie Wolfe, Senior Librarian, Library and Archives Canada

Appendix 2:
Summary Table. Official languages policy and regulatory framework in libraries across Canada[89]

P/T	Public												University	Community
	Dept.	Struc-ture	Legal Framework – Libraries				Legal Framework – OL				Stats (OL) [90]	Other programs		
			Act	Reg.	Other	OL clause	Act	Reg.	Other	Library clause				
Atlantic														
NS	C	D	X	X	X	X	X					Teaching centre	Ste-Anne	
													Novanet (provincial network)	
NB	E	P	X	X	X		XX	X	X	X	X	Promotion	Champlain (U de Moncton)	3 book fairs
PEI	E	P	X		X		X	X		X				6 centres
NL	E	PS	X					X				Promotion		Centre scolaire et communautaire des Grands-Vents
Central														
ON	C	D	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X[91]	X	Networks	Ottawa Laurentian Glendon	4 book fairs
QC	C	D	X[92]		X		X	X					McGill Concordia Bishop's	11 libraries (partial data)
West														
AB	M	D	X	X	X			X	X			Budgets	Biblio Saint-Jean	5 centres

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89. Definitions of abbreviations: Column Dept. (Department): C: Culture; E: Education; M: Municipal; S: Services. Column Structure: D: Decentralized; P: Provincial; PS: Public society. Others: OL Clause: contains a clause related to Official Languages; OL Stats the province holds statistics on OL collection and services in libraries.

90. Detailed data by library.

91. Exclusion.

92. Quebec has no parent legislation on libraries, but the *Act respecting the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications* contains a chapter on the subject.

P/T	Dept.	Struc-ture	Legal Framework – Libraries				Legal Framework – OL				Stats (OL)[90]	Other programs	University	Community
			Act	Reg.	Other	OL clause	Act	Reg.	Other	Library clause				
BC	E	D	X	X					X	X				1 Centre Book fair
MB	C	D	X	X		X	XX	X	X	X	X	Teaching centre	Alfred-Monnin (U St-Boniface)	Centre du patrimoine Book fair
SK	E	D	X	X			X						Rotonde Archer, Cité universitaire francophone	• Le Lien • Rés O-Lien (9 centres)
North														
Nunavut	C	D	X				X		X	X		Story time		2 centres
NWT	E	D	X	X	X		X	X	X					
Yukon	S	D	X	X			X							Salon du livre

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