



Office of the  
Commissioner of  
Official Languages

Commissariat  
aux langues  
officielles

**Managing Language of Work: Survey of federal public service supervisors on their familiarity with the *Official Languages Act*, Part V – Language of Work, and on their experiences and needs - 2025**

**Methodological and analytical report**

Prepared for the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada

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*Ce rapport est également disponible en français*

# **Managing Language of Work: Survey of federal public service supervisors on their familiarity with the *Official Languages Act*, Part V – Language of Work, and on their experiences and needs - 2025**

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This report presents the methodological and analytical details of the present research project, Managing Language of Work: Survey of federal public service supervisors on their familiarity with the *Official Languages Act*, Part V – Language of Work, as well as their experiences and needs – 2025 conducted by Advanis Inc. with the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada. The survey was conducted among 4,235 supervisors of employees in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes, between February 11 and March 10, 2025.

Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Gérer la langue de travail : Sondage auprès de superviseurs de la fonction publique fédérale sur leur familiarité avec la *Loi sur les langues officielles*, Partie V — Langue de travail, ainsi que sur leurs expériences et besoins – 2025.

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# 1. Summary

## 1.1 Background

The Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada deemed it appropriate to commission a new study on Part V of the *Official Languages Act* – Language of Work, considering, on the one hand, the observation, according to various sources, of persistent issues related to this part of the Act and, on the other hand, the adoption, in June 2023, of a modernized *Official Languages Act* that includes provisions that strengthen the language rights of employees in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes. In addition, the *Directive on Official Languages for People Management* (revised, June 2025) raises the language profile of positions responsible for supervising these employees from BBB to CBC.

## 1.2 Immediate objectives and ultimate goal of the research

This quantitative research project, conducted via an online survey, was exploratory in nature. Its immediate objective was to explore whether employee supervisors “are familiar with” / “aware of” Part V of the *Act*, including:

- a) The rights of employees in regions designated as bilingual to use either official language in their workplace and to be supervised in the official language of their choice;
- b) The obligations of federal institutions to ensure that the workplace is conducive to the effective use of both official languages;
- c) The responsibilities of managers and supervisors to enforce these rights and implement these obligations.

In particular, it sought to explore the hypothesis that familiarity with these rights, obligations, and responsibilities is necessary for supervisors to be able to fulfill their responsibility to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice and to exercise their own rights as employees. This research also explored various factors that could facilitate or hinder this ability. In addition, it sought to identify experiences and needs related to training and resources, as well as perceptions of leadership, information, and support received in this area. Its goal was to obtain a general overview of the current situation, rather than to measure or evaluate individual knowledge or abilities. The Commissioner mandated the firm Advanis to carry out this project with his office’s research team.

The Office of the Commissioner oversaw the design of the draft questionnaire and was responsible for sending the invitations to participate in the survey. Advanis was responsible for the sampling, then the collection and analysis of the results of the survey conducted among a segment of the target population, namely supervisors within the federal public service who are responsible for employees working in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The project was led by Nicolas Toutant of Advanis and Véronique Boudreau of the Office of the Commissioner. Other contributors included Julie Simard, Dominic Pelletier, and Brian Caveny of Advanis, and Robert Talbot, Robert Gendreau, and Jean-François Labelle of the Office of the Commissioner.

## 1.3 Brief description of the methodology used

In order to obtain a general overview of the situation, the aim was to reach as many potential respondents as possible within the target population, ideally using a probability sample.<sup>2</sup> However, complete lists of our entire target population being unavailable, publicly accessible Government Electronic Directory Services were used as the sampling frame for the selection of 23,711 public servants registered in 47 federal institutions<sup>3</sup> (as of January 2025), based on whether they were likely to supervise employees given their specified job titles and whether their contact information included an email address.

Data collection took place from February 11 to March 10, 2025. Of the 23,711 public servants sampled and invited to participate by email, 4,235 completed the survey. The Office of the Commissioner's Information Technology team was responsible for sending out invitations and reminders.

Although the response rate was higher than expected, at over 20%, this research, given its scope and methodological limitations, was exploratory in nature. Furthermore, this survey is based on a partial sample of the target population; therefore, the results cannot be statistically extrapolated to the entire target population, with a known sampling margin of error.

## 1.4 Key findings

Here are the main observations we have drawn from the analyses performed as part of the study:

- The level of familiarity reported by respondents with general provisions regarding the language of work appears to be generally high and, despite disparities between Anglophones and Francophones, most reported that they are always or often able to fulfill their responsibilities toward their employees.
- Despite a generally high level of reported familiarity with language of work provisions, however, it should be noted that the application of best practices is relatively lower.
  - There appear to be different factors linked to this relatively lower application of best practices, despite awareness of them. These potential factors are presented in summary tables throughout the report.
  - Some respondents, particularly Francophones, report that their language rights do not always seem to be respected.
  - We also observe little sharing of resources on language of work and a fairly low proportion of respondents who have received related training from the Canada School of Public Service.
- The application of certain best practices by respondents, in their capacity as supervisors, encourages their employees to implement them as well, demonstrating the importance of leadership at all levels.
- Although other factors may come into play, having better reported abilities in the second official language appears to be a key factor in favour of:
  - A better understanding of rights, obligations, and responsibilities with regard to language of work;

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<sup>2</sup> A non-probability sample using the snowball method had also been planned but was not deemed necessary given the higher-than-expected participation from the sampling drawn from the Government Electronic Directory Services.

<sup>3</sup> The list of institutions represented in the sample is available in Appendix I.

- A better respect for responsibilities with regard to language of work;
  - A better implementation of best practices.
- Respect for the responsibility to supervise employees in the official language of their choice is primarily promoted through sufficient knowledge of employees' language rights. Among Anglophones, the importance of having sufficient French language skills is also key.
- The majority of respondents agree on the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work, both among Anglophones and Francophones, although there is greater agreement among Francophones.

## 1.5 Contract value

The contract value for this study was \$68,660.77 (including GST and QST).

## 1.6 Political Neutrality Requirement

I hereby certify as a Senior Administrator of Advanis, that the deliverables are in full compliance with the Government of Canada's political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity and the Procedures for Planning and Contracting for Public Opinion Research Services.

Specifically, the deliverables do not contain any reference to electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leader.



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## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Background: Policy framework and research question

#### 2.1.1 Policy framework

*The Official Languages Act* (hereinafter the Act), adopted in 1969 and strengthened in 1988, was modernized with the [Act respecting the status and use of the official languages of Canada](#) (June 20, 2023).

Part V of the Act gives employees the right to work in either official language in [regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes](#). To this end, federal institutions are required to ensure that the workplace is conducive to the effective use of both official languages, while allowing their employees to use either one, and managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that these rights and obligations are respected. Below are more details on the rights of employees, the obligations of institutions, and the responsibilities of managers and supervisors under Part V of the Act and the [Directive on Official Languages for People Management](#) (2012, revised June 2025).

#### 2.1.2 Rights of employees

Employees who work in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes have the right<sup>4</sup>: to receive personal and central services in the official language of their choice; to access commonly and widely used work tools and computer systems in the official language of their choice; to be supervised in the official language of their choice; to express themselves, insofar as possible, in the official language of their choice for all oral and written communication; to use, insofar as possible, the official language of their choice during meetings and to receive training in the official language of their choice.

#### 2.1.3 Obligations of institutions

Federal institutions have an obligation to ensure a workplace that respects the above-mentioned rights.<sup>5</sup> Among other things, they must ensure that employees working in designated regions are supervised by their managers and supervisors in the official language of their choice, regardless of the linguistic identification of their positions. While the Commissioner has always interpreted the Act in this way, it is now part of the modernized Act. Institutions must also ensure that senior management is able to function in both official languages and take all other possible measures to create and maintain a workplace conducive to the effective use of both official languages, while allowing their employees to use either language. In short, institutions must support supervisors to ensure that they can fulfill their responsibilities.

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<sup>4</sup> [Official Languages Act](#), Part V – Language of Work

[Directive on Official Languages for People Management](#) (2012, revised in 2025)

Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, Language rights in the federal public service, [Language of work](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Official Languages Act](#), Part V – Language of Work

It should be noted that Part V of the modernized Act also states that every person appointed by the Governor in Council to a position of deputy minister or associate deputy minister—or to a position of equivalent level—in a department listed in Schedule I of the [Financial Administration Act](#) is required, upon appointment, to undergo language training to be able to speak and understand both official languages clearly. In addition, the [Policy on Official Languages](#) (2012) specifies the language of work requirements regarding the responsibilities of institutions, their deputy heads, and their senior management.

## 2.1.4 Responsibilities of managers and supervisors

Whether or not they work in a designated bilingual region or report to an office located in one of these regions, managers and supervisors who have employees working there are responsible for enforcing measures that ensure respect for their employees' language rights.<sup>6</sup> Among other things, they must: supervise these employees in the official language of their choice, regardless of the language designation of their positions; provide them with [work tools in the official language of their choice](#); take all necessary measures to enable these employees to use the official language of their choice during meetings; ensure that training is available in the official language of their choice; allow their employees to conduct annual performance reviews in the official language of their choice; and determine the language designation of positions, ensuring that it reflects the duties and tasks related to the position, before beginning the staffing process.

The modernized Act specifies that all employees in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes have the right to be supervised in the official language of their choice, regardless of the language designation of their position. Holders of supervisory positions of employees in bilingual regions must be bilingual in order to respect the rights of employees and the principle of substantive equality. In addition, with the revision of the *Directive on Official Languages for People Management* (June 2025), the language profile for all bilingual supervisory positions of employees is raised from an intermediate level (BBB) to a superior level (CBC). These new language requirements apply to new appointments to supervisory positions, as well as to supervisory positions that become vacant.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2 Research question

For decades, persistent issues have been identified with regard to the language of work, particularly in the Public Service Employee Survey and the Treasury Board Secretariat's Annual Reports on Official Languages, as well as in studies and annual reports by the Commissioner of Official Languages. As demonstrated by research conducted by the Library of Parliament, various sources have documented the fact that French remains underused in the workplace in the federal public service. Moreover, it is stated that:

*"Federal institutions have a poor track record for allowing employees to use their preferred official language with supervisors, when drafting documents or during meetings. [...] Improving employees' language skills, strengthening official language capacity in federal institutions and showing clear and sustained leadership are some of the approaches put forward to ensure equitable treatment of both official languages in the workplace. [...] The 2023 legislative amendments have raised hopes for improving the standing of French in the workplace."<sup>8</sup>*

In connection with this publication and the possibility of using the official language of one's choice with one's supervisor, Helaina Gaspard argues that, over time, gaps have widened between language policies and practices regarding language of work, which has resulted in placing the responsibility of creating and promoting a culture of bilingualism on the shoulders of middle managers.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the implementation of these policies has become largely dependent on their knowledge, behaviour and commitment.

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<sup>6</sup> [Directive on Official Languages for People Management](#) (2012, revised 2025).

<sup>7</sup> Treasury Board Secretariat, Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, Language Requirements for Bilingual Supervisory Positions of Employees in Bilingual Regions, May 2025, [https://wiki.gcollab.ca/images/2/23/Winter\\_2025\\_-\\_Updated\\_FAQ\\_on\\_CBC.pdf](https://wiki.gcollab.ca/images/2/23/Winter_2025_-_Updated_FAQ_on_CBC.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Library of Parliament, [Official Languages in the Federal Public Service](#), by Marie-Ève Hudon, October 10, 2023. She cites, among other sources, the studies and annual reports of the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Treasury Board Secretariat (Annual Reports on Official Languages; Public Service Employee Surveys), Statistics Canada (Population Censuses), and Borbey-Mendelsohn ([The next level: Normalizing a culture of inclusive linguistic duality in the Federal Public Service workplace](#), 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Helaina Gaspard, *Canada's Official Languages: Policy versus Work Practice in the Federal Public Service*, 2019.

For its part, the Office of the Commissioner published a qualitative study in 2011 on managers' leadership behaviours, focusing on the use of official languages and the importance placed on them by managers, including senior management. This study included key leadership behaviours in official languages.<sup>10</sup> The Office also published two studies, in 2021 and 2023, on linguistic insecurity, including a survey and a follow-up qualitative study on the language of work in the context of telework and hybrid work. The first highlighted, among other things, the challenge of being supervised in one's language, particularly due to a lack of fluency in that language among their supervisors, as well as the importance of promoting equality between the two official languages by senior management and supervisors. In focus groups held in the second study, supervisors reported that leadership in language of work rested largely on their shoulders. That study emphasized the need for better leadership from senior management.<sup>11</sup>

In short, issues remain regarding language of work at various levels.

## 3. Detailed methodology

### 3.1 Immediate objectives and ultimate goal of the research

This research, conducted via an online survey, first sought to ask supervisors of employees working in designated bilingual regions about their "familiarity" / "knowledge" regarding the rights of these employees, the obligations of institutions, and their responsibilities as supervisors with regard to language of work. It was based on the hypothesis that this familiarity/knowledge would be a necessary factor in their ability to exercise their responsibilities as supervisors and their own rights as employees. It also explored various factors that could facilitate or hinder this ability. Finally, it aimed to understand supervisors' experiences and needs in terms of training and resources, and then to understand their perception of the leadership, information, and support received from their superiors and their institutions. Thus, its ultimate goal was to obtain a general overview of the state of the situation, rather than to measure or evaluate individual knowledge or abilities.

### 3.2 Methodological approach

The sample was compiled from publicly available lists of federal public servants, but these lists only partially cover our target population in terms of institutions, employees, and email addresses. We used two lists from the Government Electronic Directory Services ([GEDS - Government of Canada Employee Contact Information](#)) on the Open Government website and online at [geds-sage.gc.ca](#)). This allowed us to sample a total of 23,711 potential supervisors, of whom 4,235 responded to the survey.<sup>12</sup>

### 3.3 Questionnaire and pilot test

A draft questionnaire was first provided by the Office of the Commissioner's research team and then fine-tuned by Advanis. The questionnaire sought to explore the following themes:

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<sup>10</sup> Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, [Beyond Bilingual Meetings: Leadership Behaviours for Managers](#) (2011)

<sup>11</sup> Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, [Linguistic \(in\) security at work – Exploratory survey on official languages among federal government employees in Canada](#) (2021); Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, [Follow-up exploratory study on linguistic insecurity in the telework and hybrid work environment in the federal public service – Summary report](#) (2023)

<sup>12</sup> A non-probability sample using the snowball method had also been planned but was not deemed necessary given the success of the first sampling.

- I. Familiarity with general provisions of the Act, with subjective self-assessment questions, and knowledge of more specific provisions regarding language of work, through objective questions on applicable statements;
- II. Application of best practices;
- III. The ability (self-assessed) to fulfill their responsibilities as supervisors, as well as factors that facilitate or hinder this ability, and the ability to exercise their rights as employees;
- IV. Experiences and needs in terms of training and resources;
- V. Perception of leadership, information, and support from the institution, senior management, superiors, and immediate supervisor.

The pilot test, conducted with 20 employees of the Office of the Commissioner and employees of other departments, was held on February 5 and 6, 2025 to verify the clarity and comprehensibility of the questionnaire in terms of its structure, the wording of the questions, and the response categories in both official languages.

Following this pilot test, some changes were made to the questions. The survey was programmed using SurveyBuilder, a software developed by Advanis. It could be completed online and took an average of about 20 minutes to complete.

### 3.4 Planning and sample building

Since we did not have access to a complete and up-to-date list of our entire target population (federal public servants who supervise employees reporting to offices located in regions designated bilingual for language of work purposes),<sup>13</sup> including a list of email addresses, we used publicly available electronic government directory services, namely: GCdirectory/GCannuaire on the geds-sage.gc.ca website and the Government Electronic Directory Services ([GEDS - Government of Canada Employee Contact Information](#)) on the open government website.

These two lists do not contain all federal employees. Furthermore, not all federal institutions are included, and among those that are, not all employees are listed or have an email address.

Using the partial lists contained therein, we sought to build a sample from our target population. We used GCdirectory rather than its French version, GCannuaire, as the English version appeared to be more complete, with more entries. The job titles and functions listed in GEDS and GCdirectory enabled us to identify, among the public servants listed, those who were likely to supervise employees. We selected all the titles that were likely to involve employee supervision, which included more than 300 designations.

The sample was created in January. At that time, the GEDS - [Government of Canada Employee Contact Information](#) contained 22,876 potential supervisors with email addresses. The GCdirectory contained 10,172 entries under the same headings and with email addresses. After purging the two lists to exclude duplicates, a consolidated list was created. This list contained a total of 23,711 email addresses.

### 3.5 Pretest and data collection

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<sup>13</sup> For example, the lists contained in the Public Service Performance Management application (PSPM).

Invitations and reminders were sent by email by the Office of the Commissioner’s IT team. This was done using a PowerShell script that matched the invitation and reminder text to the samples provided by Advanis in Excel format. Each questionnaire had a unique number embedded in the hyperlink to eliminate the possibility of duplicate responses from the same participant.

An external technical pretest was conducted on the first day by sending out 200 initial invitations to ensure that the systems were functioning properly. The survey also allowed the first 200 respondents to provide additional feedback on the questionnaire.

After all initial invitations were sent, a reminder message was sent one week later to candidates who had not responded to the survey, excluding those who had attempted to respond but were not eligible because they were not supervisors with employees in the regions designated according to their responses to the initial screening questions included in the survey. The following table presents the results according to the final status of the participants.

*Table 1 — Status of all cases*

	Total
Total sample	23,711
Invalid emails	705
No employees	489
No employees in designated regions	827
Dropouts	1,156
Completed questionnaires	4,235

Project administrative data

The overall response rate was 24.1%.<sup>14</sup> Had this study been carried out using purely random sampling of the entire target population, the overall margin of error would have been 1.2% with a 95% confidence interval. If applicable, such a margin of error would vary according to the breakdowns carried out and the number of respondents. However, since we did not have access to complete lists of our target population, i.e., supervisors of employees in regions designated bilingual for language-of-work purposes, and since we did not draw a purely random sample among them, a margin of error cannot be applied to the present survey.

## 4. Notes to readers

### 4.1 Main notes on the analysis

In this report, data are presented and analyzed in a descriptive manner, under each section, first according to the respondents’ first official language, then according to other characteristics and results that appear in boxed text, in order to facilitate analysis and synthesis. Each box presents an element of our analytical framework, meaning the results for a key variable. A note is included below each box to describe how the key variable was defined. These boxes help to draw certain trends relating to other demographic characteristics and survey results according to various categories of respondents.

<sup>14</sup> Response rate POR: (R) 4,235 respondents + 1,316 non-eligible/(U) 16,299 + (IS) 1,156 + (R) 4,235 respondents + 1,316 non-eligible.

Results with a base of fewer than 30 respondents should be interpreted with caution, and results with a base of fewer than 10 respondents should not be reported, which explains why results with a base of fewer than 10 are not presented in this report.

In the absence of data on the target population, the data are not weighted in the tables and report.

As a general rule, the results shown in the tables and analysis exclude those for the “I don’t know/I don’t remember” category and the “I prefer not to answer” category. However, when these results reach 5% or more, they are included or mentioned. In some cases, and where appropriate, these results are included, for example for questions on knowledge of specific provisions regarding language of work.

Results may not sum up to exactly 100% due to rounding or when multiple answers were possible. When this report refers to aggregated categories, the percentage may vary by +/- 1% due to rounding.

For each population group and survey question, the banners contain the following cross-tabulation tables:

- Table 1: First official language; mother tongue; self-assessment of writing skills; self-assessment of speaking skills; management category (senior or middle management); number of years as a supervisor; age group; gender; language spoken with the supervisor; preferred language for supervision; whether the supervisor asked for the preferred language for supervision.
- Table 2: General familiarity with the Act; knowledge of specific provisions; asking employees about their preferred language for supervision; informing employees of their language rights; obtaining training from the CSPS; consulting resources; suggesting that their employees consult resources; level of agreement regarding leadership, support, and information from various levels of management; usefulness of mandatory government-wide training; frequency with which respondents consider themselves able to fulfill their responsibilities as supervisors; frequency with which respondents consider themselves able to exercise their rights as employees.
- Table 3: Bilingual regions where their employees’ offices are located; non-designated and designated regions where respondents’ offices are located.

## 4.2 Scope and limitations of the study

There are a few limitations that must be taken into account when analyzing the data in this study.

Although the use of these two sources (GEDS and GCdirectory) did not allow for the calculation of a participation rate and margin of error relative to the entire target population or to infer results, it did at least allow for the calculation of a participation rate based on the number of invitations sent to our target subpopulation with email addresses.

Non-response bias occurs when non-respondents differ significantly from respondents, and this difference has an impact on the responses collected. It is difficult to assess the presence of non-response bias, as the reasons why non-respondents did not participate are generally not available. That said, one way to assess the potential impact of nonresponse bias is to determine whether the sample is representative by comparing the characteristics of respondents and checking whether they reflect the known characteristics of the population.

Where possible, we check the distribution of respondents across different demographic (e.g., age and gender), geographic, and linguistic categories and compare these distributions with known characteristics of the population. If the variation is relatively small and we have no reason to believe that other factors are influencing respondents' willingness to participate, we can conclude that the likelihood of non-response bias impacting the study results is low. In this study, we cannot comment on the potential for non-response bias.

## 5. Key demographic characteristics and key findings

This section includes key demographic characteristics among French-speaking and English-speaking respondents, based on their self-reported first official language in response to the following question: "Which language do you consider to be your first official language, independently of any other languages you speak?".

This variable is commonly used in the federal public service, including for information collected for human resources and the Public Service Employee Survey. Regardless of their mother tongue, individuals may identify either official language as their first official language.

It should be noted that these characteristics and results may vary according to other characteristics, including linguistic ones, such as mother tongue or self-reported proficiency in the second official language. Thus, each of the following sections presents the results according to the first official language and then, in boxes, according to other demographic characteristics and other survey results. It should also be noted that we did not include separate analyses by region, as the number of respondents in each language group was insufficient in some cases.

## 5.1 Key demographic and linguistic characteristics

The survey participants included 4,235 supervisors who had employees in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes. For the remainder of this report, we will refer to them as “respondents,” considering that the results cannot be statistically extrapolated to the entire target population, given the sampling method used. This method does not guarantee that the sample represents the entire target population with a known sampling margin of error.

Respondents who indicated French as their first official language (Francophones) or English (Anglophones) showed similarities in their distribution across different age groups. The same proportion of Francophones and Anglophones, at 51%, was found in the 45 to 54 age group.

*Table 2 — Age groups*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Less than 45 years	30%	28%
45 to 54 years	51%	51%
55+years	18%	21%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,222</b>	<b>1,880</b>

Q65 — How old are you?

More women participated in this survey. Among French speakers, women accounted for 57% of respondents, and among English speakers, they accounted for 65%. Men accounted for 43% of French-speaking respondents and 35% of English-speaking respondents. The number of people who reported their gender as “other” was less than 10, meaning these are not reported, as indicated in the notes to the reader.<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that we did not observe any significant differences in survey responses based on gender.

*Table 3 — Gender of respondents*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Women+	57%	65%
Men+	43%	35%
Other (less than 10)	---	---
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,209</b>	<b>1,862</b>

Q66 — What is your gender?

Among French speakers, 92% of respondents had French as their mother tongue, 5% had English, and 8% had another mother tongue. Among English speakers, 78% had English as their mother tongue, 18% had a language other than French or English, and 9% had French as their mother tongue. It should be noted that, when examining the data by mother tongue, among respondents who indicated that they had a mother tongue other than French or English, 33% indicated that French was their first official language, while 67% indicated that English was their first official language.

<sup>15</sup> Note that almost or less than 5% of respondents have indicated “I prefer not to answer”.

*Table 4 — Mother tongue*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
French	92%	9%
English	5%	78%
Another language	8%	18%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,271</b>	<b>1,940</b>

Q68 — What is your mother tongue - the first language you learned as a child and still understand?

Approximately three-quarters (76%) of Francophones and approximately two-thirds (67%) of Anglophones who responded to the survey held middle management positions, i.e., manager, supervisor, or team leader positions. Senior managers, i.e., those in positions such as deputy minister, assistant deputy minister, director general, executive director, or director, accounted for 24% of Francophones and 33% of Anglophones.

*Table 5 — Management level*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Senior management (Deputy Minister or Assistant Deputy Minister; Director General; Executive Director; Director).	24%	33%
Middle management (Manager; Supervisor; Team leader).	76%	67%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>1,959</b>

Q62 — To which category does your management role belong?

The number of years spent in a position with employee supervision was similar for Francophones and Anglophones.

*Table 6 — Number of years supervising employees*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Less than 5 years	32%	34%
5 to 10 years	28%	26%
More than 10 years	40%	40%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>1,959</b>

Q63 — How long have you been responsible for supervising employees in the federal public service?

The vast majority of respondents had been employed in the federal public service for more than ten years, namely 84% of Francophones and 82% of Anglophones.

*Table 7 — Number of years in federal public service*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Less than 5 years	6%	6%
5 to 10 years	10%	11%
10+years	84%	82%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>1,959</b>

Q64 — How long have you been a federal public servant?

Depending on the first official language, there are noticeable disparities in self-assessed skills, both written and oral, in the second official language.<sup>16</sup> In fact, while a very high proportion of French-speaking respondents (94%) reported good writing skills in their second official language, less than half (47%) of English-speaking respondents reported good writing skills. Another 38% of Anglophones reported average writing skills, and 15% reported poor or non-existent skills.

*Table 8 – Writing skills in the second official language*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Non-existent or poor	1%	15%
Average	5%	38%
Good	94%	47%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>1,949</b>

Q70 - On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you personally rate your writing skills in your second official language?

In terms of oral skills, 92% of French-speaking respondents reported having good skills, 8% reported having average skills, and 1% reported having poor or no skills. Among English speakers, 56% reported having good oral skills, 29% reported having average skills, and 15% reported having poor or no skills. Among English speakers, more respondents reported having good oral skills (56%) than the proportion reporting good writing skills (47%).

*Table 9 – Oral skills in the second official language*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Non-existent or poor	1%	15%
Average	8%	29%
Good	92%	56%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>1,949</b>

Q71 - On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you personally rate your speaking skills in your second official language?

## 5.2 “Familiarity with” and “knowledge of” general provisions of the Act and specific provisions regarding language of work

The questionnaire contained three subjective self-assessment questions regarding “familiarity with” general provisions of the Act that could be considered basic. These questions focused on regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes, followed by the rights of employees and the obligations of institutions toward employees working in these regions. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were familiar with these provisions (“Very,” “Somewhat,” “Not very,” “Not at all” familiar).

This was followed by thirteen objective questions about “knowledge of” more specific provisions contained in the Act, as well as in the *Directive on Official Languages for People Management*. These thirteen questions contained statements for which respondents had to choose a correct or best answer.

<sup>16</sup> Respondents were asked to rate their skills on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represented non-existent skills and 5 represented excellent skills. Non-existent or weak skills are grouped here under levels 1 and 2, average skills correspond to level 3, while good skills are grouped under levels 4 and 5.

While many of these questions can also be considered basic, some of them can be considered to have a higher level of complexity.

The provisions they were asked about concerned the rights of employees, in designated bilingual regions, to work and be supervised in the official language of their choice; the obligations of federal institutions to create a work environment conducive to the effective use of both official languages while allowing their employees to use either one; and the responsibilities of supervisors with regard to respecting and enforcing these rights among their employees.

### 5.2.1 Familiarity with general provisions of the Act according to the first official language and other characteristics and results

The responses to the three subjective self-assessment questions relating to general provisions of the Act were similar among French-speaking and English-speaking respondents (based on their first official language), with differences between the two groups not exceeding 4 percentage points when combining those who said they were “very” or “somewhat” familiar on the one hand (i.e., those who were “familiar”) and those who said they were “not very” or “not at all” familiar on the other (i.e., those who were “not familiar”).

However, between the three questions, we observe differences of 5 percentage points or more, and up to 10 percentage points in terms of the proportion of respondents who say they are “familiar” with employee rights on the one hand (90% to 95%) and those who say they are “familiar” with regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes on the other (80% to 84%).

As supervisors of employees who report to offices located in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes, respondents felt very or somewhat familiar with these employees’ language of work rights, with 93% of Francophones and 95% of Anglophones expressing this view. More specifically, 38% of Francophones said they were very familiar and more than half, or 55%, said they were somewhat familiar, while among Anglophones 47% said they were very familiar and 48% said they were somewhat familiar.

*Table 10 — Familiarity with employee rights regarding language of work*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Very familiar	38%	47%
Somewhat familiar	55%	48%
Not very familiar	7%	4%
Not at all familiar	1%	1%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,274</b>	<b>1,952</b>

Q6 — With employees reporting to you from offices in bilingual regions, how familiar are you with the rights of these employees in terms of language of work?

When it comes to federal institutions’ language obligations regarding the language of work, Francophones and Anglophones considered themselves very or somewhat familiar, in proportions near 90%. However, Anglophones rated themselves as very familiar in greater proportions, at 39% compared to 31% of Francophones. The majority of Francophones (58%) said they were somewhat familiar, while a smaller proportion of Anglophones (51%) said the same.

Among those with less familiarity, 10% of Francophones and 9% of Anglophones said they were not very familiar, and 1% of Francophones and Anglophones said they were not familiar at all.

*Table 11 — Familiarity with federal institutions' work language obligations*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Very familiar	31%	39%
Somewhat familiar	58%	51%
Not very familiar	10%	9%
Not at all familiar	1%	1%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2272</b>	<b>1955</b>

Q8 — With employees reporting to you from offices in bilingual regions, how familiar are you with federal institutions' language of work obligations?

When asked about regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes, a smaller proportion of respondents indicated that they were familiar. Overall, 80% of Francophones and 84% of Anglophones said they were “very” or “somewhat” familiar with regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes before they began responding to the survey.

It should be noted that the question about familiarity with regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes<sup>17</sup> followed a screening question for survey eligibility that identified these regions.<sup>18</sup> This may have influenced their self-assessment on this question. However, despite having access to this information beforehand, the results were lower for this question than for the other two self-assessment questions.

*Table 12 — Familiarity with regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Very familiar	24%	25%
Somewhat familiar	56%	59%
Not very familiar	17%	13%
Not at all familiar	3%	4%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,274</b>	<b>1,958</b>

Q5 — Before you began taking this survey, how familiar were you with regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes?

<sup>17</sup> Before you began taking this survey, how familiar were you with regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes? (Q5)

<sup>18</sup> Do any of your employees report to offices located in the following regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes? (Q4)

### *Familiarity with general provisions of the Act<sup>19</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

#### **Characteristics of respondents who were “less familiar” according to their familiarity with three general provisions of the Act (subjective self-assessment questions):**

- Respondents who were middle managers were more likely (27%) to be less familiar than those who were senior managers (16%);
- Respondents who had been supervising employees for 10 years or less were more likely (28%) to be less familiar than those who had been in such a position for more than 10 years (17%);
- Younger respondents were more likely (28%) to be less familiar than older respondents (22%).

#### **Respondents who were “less familiar” were proportionally fewer than their “more familiar” counterparts about the general provisions of the Act to:**

- Answer the 13 objective questions on specific language of work provisions correctly (24% vs. 37%);
- Ask their employees which official language they prefer to be supervised in (78% vs. 87%);
- Inform their employees of their language of work rights (69% vs. 87%);
- Have received training from the Canada School of Public Service on language of work (52% vs. 69%);
- Have consulted resources on language of work (13% vs. 42%);
- Suggest resources on language of work to their employees (15% vs. 37%);
- Show a higher level of agreement with the leadership, information and support they receive from their supervisors, managers, senior management and institution (20% vs. 36%).

## 5.2.2 Knowledge of specific provisions regarding language of work based on first official language and other characteristics and results

In order to objectively examine respondents’ knowledge of specific provisions regarding language of work,<sup>20</sup> they were presented with thirteen statements. For each statement respondents had to complete a sentence by choosing the correct or best answer.

It should be noted that among the statements, the rates of correct answers varied between 61% and 99%. Although in majority both French-speaking and English-speaking respondents answered all questions correctly overall, French-speaking respondents scored slightly higher than English-speaking respondents.

We note that relatively fewer respondents answered the following questions correctly:

- Fewer respondents knew that it was their responsibility to take all possible measures to create and maintain a workplace that allows employees to use the official language of their choice, whether as their first or second official language, for all oral and written communication. Francophones were more likely (81%) to identify the correct answer than Anglophones (76%).

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<sup>19</sup> Respondents categorized as “more familiar” are those who said they were “very” or “somewhat familiar” in response to each of the three subjective questions on general provisions of the Act (designated bilingual regions, employee rights, institutions’ obligations). This was the case for 3,240 respondents, or 77% of the total 4,235 respondents. **Those categorized as “less familiar” are those who said they were “not very familiar” or “not at all familiar” in response to at least one of these three questions. This was the case for 995 respondents, or 23% of all respondents.**

<sup>20</sup> Modernized Official Languages Act, [Act respecting the status and use of the official languages of Canada](#) (June 20, 2023) [Directive on Official Languages for People Management](#) (2012, revised 2025)

- Fewer respondents knew that employees who report to offices located in designated bilingual regions have the right to be supervised in the official language of their choice, regardless of the language designation of their position. Francophones and Anglophones had almost identical proportions of respondents who identified the correct answer (76% and 75%).
- Only two thirds knew that supervisors are responsible for taking all necessary measures to enable employees to use the official language of their choice, whether as their first or second official language, during meetings with their colleagues. Sixty-six percent (66%) of Francophones identified the correct answer, compared to 61% of Anglophones.

*Table 13 — Correct answers to the objective knowledge questions*

<b>To the best of your knowledge, in regions designated as bilingual for the purposes of language of work, federal institutions have an obligation to...</b>	First official language — French — Correct answer	First official language — English — Correct answer
Q14 ... ensure that the workplace is conducive to the effective use of both official languages, while allowing their employees to use one or the other.	97%	98%
Q15 ... provide their employees with the services intended for them as well as regularly used documentation and work instruments in both official languages.	98%	97%
Q16 ... ensure that employee supervisors are able to communicate with employees in both official languages when performing their responsibilities as supervisors.	98%	96%
Q17 ... ensure that senior management is able to function in both official languages.	98%	98%
<b>To the best of your knowledge, in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes, supervisors have a responsibility to their employees to...</b>	First official language — French — Correct answer	First official language — English — Correct answer
Q20 ... take all necessary measures to enable employees to use, during meetings with colleagues, the official language of their choice, whether English or French, as their first or second official language.	66%	61%
Q21 ... ensure that they are assessed in the employee's official language of choice.	99%	97%
Q22 ... ensure that training and professional development are available in the official language of the employee's choice.	98%	98%
Q23 ... take every possible measure to create and maintain a work environment that allows employees to use, for all oral or written communication, the official language of their choice, whether English or French as first or second official language.	81%	76%
Q24 ... determine the language designation of positions making sure it reflects the duties and tasks of the position.	91%	87%
Q25 ... proceed with the language designation of the position to be filled before starting the staffing process.	98%	96%
Q26 ... fill bilingual positions with candidates who meet the language requirements of the position at the time of their appointment.	90%	83%
<b>To the best of your knowledge, employees reporting to offices located in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes have the right to...</b>	First official language — French — Correct answer	First official language — English — Correct answer
Q18 ... be supervised in the official language of their choice regardless of the office location to which their direct supervisor reports.	83%	83%
Q19 ... be supervised in the official language of their choice regardless of the language designation of their job.	76%	75%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,277</b>	<b>1,960</b>

The following table summarizes the results for all thirteen questions according to the number of correct answers. It can be noted that French speakers had slightly higher results than English speakers. A more detailed analysis of the variables that coincide with lower results is presented in the summary box after the table below.

*Table 14 — Number of correct answers for all objective questions on knowledge of specific provisions regarding language of work*

<b>Number of correct answers for all objective questions on knowledge of specific provisions regarding language of work (Q14 to Q26)</b>	<b>First official language — French</b>	<b>First official language — English</b>
13 correct answers	36%	31%
11 or 12 correct answers	48%	46%
10 correct answers or less	16%	23%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>1,959</b>

*Knowledge of specific provisions regarding language of work<sup>21</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

**Characteristics of respondents with more incorrect answers (10 correct answers or fewer) to the thirteen objective questions on their knowledge:**

- Respondents whose first official language is English had more incorrect answers (23%), compared to 16% of incorrect answers among French speakers;
- Respondents with a lower self-assessment of their writing skills in their second official language were proportionally more likely (27%) to have more incorrect answers than those who rated their skills higher (16%);
- Respondents with a lower self-assessment of their oral skills in their second official language were proportionally more likely (27%) to have more incorrect answers than those who rated their skills higher (17%);
- Respondents who were middle managers were proportionally more likely (21%) to have more incorrect answers than those who were senior managers (15%);
- Respondents who preferred to be supervised mainly in English were proportionally more likely (24%) to have more incorrect answers than those who preferred to be supervised equally in both official languages (18%) or mainly in French (13%).

**Respondents with more incorrect answers were proportionally fewer than their counterparts with only correct answers to:**

- Say they were “very” or “somewhat” familiar in response to three subjective questions about general provisions of the Act (65% vs. 83%);
- Ask their employees in which official language they prefer to be supervised (77% vs. 90%);
- Inform their employees of their language of work rights (75% vs. 86%);
- Have received training from the Canada School of Public Service on language of work (57% vs. 69%);
- Consult resources on language of work (25% vs. 43%).

<sup>21</sup> Respondents categorized as having “only correct answers” were those who obtained only correct answers to the 13 objective questions on knowledge of specific language of work provisions. This was the case for 1,434 respondents, or 34% of all 4,235 respondents. Those categorized as having “almost only correct answers” were those who obtained 11 or 12 correct answers. This was the case for 1,983 respondents, or 47% of all respondents. Those categorized as having “more incorrect answers” were those who obtained 10 or fewer correct answers. This was the case for 818 respondents, or 19% of all respondents.

## 5.3 Application of best practices and provisions regarding language of work

Some questions addressed the application of best practices and provisions regarding language of work by respondents. They dealt with specific actions reported by respondents as examples of measures taken to ensure respect of their employees' rights.

These questions focused on supervisors' knowledge of their employees' preferred official language, how they inquire about this preference, and how they communicate their employees' language of work rights to them. One question also addressed the timing of communicating these rights, including the key moment of hiring and the required annual employee performance review.

Almost all respondents indicated that, as supervisors, they knew the preferred official language of all their employees, both among Francophones (98%) and Anglophones (96%). In addition, some respondents indicated that they knew the preferred language of some of their employees (2% and 3%, respectively).

*Table 15 — Supervisors' knowledge of their employees' preferred language*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Yes, for all my employees.	98%	96%
Yes, for some of my employees.	2%	3%
No	0%	1%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>1,959</b>

Q27 — As a supervisor, for your employees located in regions designated as bilingual, do you know the official language(s) in which they prefer to be supervised?

While almost all respondents, both French-speaking and English-speaking, said they knew the language preference of all employees under their supervision, fewer indicated that they implemented best practices and provisions to respect employees' rights regarding language of work. In fact, among respondents, 83% of French speakers and 87% of English speakers indicated that, as supervisors, they learned about their employees' language preferences by asking them directly. Furthermore, 78% of Francophones and 74% of Anglophones indicated that they communicate their employees' language of work rights to them. It should be noted that 7% of Francophones and 10% of Anglophones responded "I don't know/I don't remember".

*Table 16 — Main way supervisors find out their employees' preferred language*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
I ask them	83%	87%
I already know their first official language	7%	6%
I notice the language they use when they talk to me	5%	4%
I already know their mother tongue	3%	1%
I listen to them speak with others	0%	1%
Other	2%	2%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,272</b>	<b>1,940</b>

Q28 — What is the main way you find out which language(s) your employees prefer to be supervised in?

*Table 17 — Communicating language of work rights to their employees*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Yes	78%	74%
No	15%	16%
I don't know/I can't remember	7%	10%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,115</b>	<b>1,771</b>

Q31 — Do you inform your employees of their rights with regard to language of work?

Among other best practices identified by respondents is informing employees of their language of work rights upon hiring and reminding them regularly afterwards. In particular, the time of hiring is a key moment for communicating this information, while the annual performance review is linked to the obligation, for supervisors, to conduct these reviews with their employees in the official language of their choice. This must be attested to in the performance review signature form.

However, we observe that when it comes to communicating this information at the key moment of hiring, slightly less than two-thirds of respondents, or 58% of Francophones and 60% of Anglophones, indicated that they do so. When it comes to communicating these rights to employees annually, for example at the time of their performance review, less than half indicated that they do so, namely 46% of Francophones and 48% of Anglophones. Thus, this is observed among both Francophones and Anglophones.

Furthermore, with regard to the best practice of communicating these rights to their employees on a regular basis, slightly less than one-third indicated that they do so monthly among Francophones (30%) and Anglophones (31%). More than one-third of Francophones (39%) and less than one-third of Anglophones (28%) indicated that they do so weekly.

*Table 18 — Moment when their employees are informed of their rights regarding language of work*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
At the time they were first hired	58%	60%
Annually, e.g. during their performance review	46%	48%
Monthly, e.g. during team meetings	30%	31%
Weekly or more frequently, e.g. during team meetings	39%	28%
Other	15%	18%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1,763</b>	<b>1,427</b>

Q32 — When do you inform your employees of their rights with regard to language of work?

*Main way respondents learn about their employees' preferred official language(s) for supervision<sup>22</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

**Characteristics of respondents who do not ask their employees about their preferred official language(s) for supervision:**

- Respondents who were middle managers were more likely (17%) not to ask their employees this question than those who were senior managers (11%);
- Male respondents were more likely (19%) not to ask their employees this question than female respondents (12%);
- Respondents whose immediate supervisor had not asked them which official language they preferred to be supervised in were more likely (19%) not to ask their employees the question than respondents whose immediate supervisor had asked them the question (10%).

**Respondents who did not ask their employees were proportionally less likely than their counterparts who did to:**

- Say they were “very” or “somewhat” aware in response to three subjective questions about general provisions of the Act (67% vs. 78%);
- Correctly answer the 13 objective questions on specific language of work provisions (22% vs. 36%);
- Inform their employees of their rights regarding language of work (65% vs. 87%);
- Have received training from the Canada School of Public Service on language of work (59% vs. 66%);
- Have consulted resources on language of work (25% vs. 37%);
- Suggest resources on language of work to their employees (26% vs. 33%).

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<sup>22</sup> Respondents categorized as “asking the question” are those who selected “I ask them” in response to the question about the main way supervisors find out which language(s) their employees prefer to be supervised in. This was the case for 3,571 respondents, or 85% of the 4,212 respondents who provided an answer to this question. **Those categorized as “not asking the question” are those who did not select “I ask them.” This was the case for 641 respondents, or 15% of the 4,212 respondents who provided an answer to this question.**

### *Communication to employees regarding their language of work rights* <sup>23</sup>- *Other characteristics and results*

#### **Characteristics of respondents who do not inform their employees of their rights regarding language of work:**

- Respondents with a lower self-assessment of their writing skills in their second official language were more likely (19%) not to inform their employees of their rights than those who rated their skills higher (14%);
- Respondents with a lower self-assessment of their oral skills in their second official language were more likely (20%) not to inform their employees of their rights than those who rated their skills higher (14%);
- Respondents who spoke mainly English or mainly French with their immediate supervisor were more likely (17% English, 17% French) not to inform their employees of their rights than those who spoke both languages equally (10%);
- Respondents whose immediate supervisor had not asked them which official language they preferred to be supervised in were more likely (22%) not to inform their employees of their rights than respondents whose immediate supervisor had asked them the question (7%).<sup>24</sup>

#### **Respondents who do not inform their employees of their language of work rights were proportionally fewer than their counterparts who do inform their employees of their rights to:**

- Say they were “very” or “somewhat” aware in response to three subjective questions about general provisions of the Act (60% versus 81%);
- Ask their employees which official language they prefer to be supervised in (69% vs. 89%);
- Have consulted resources on language of work (20% vs. 40%);
- Suggest resources on language of work to their employees (11% vs. 38%);
- Express a higher level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive from their superiors and their institution (16% vs. 37%);
- Agree on the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work (64% vs. 73%).

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<sup>23</sup> Respondents categorized as those “who inform their employees of their language of work rights” are those who answered “Yes” to the question asking whether they inform their employees of their language of work rights. This was the case for 3,225 respondents, or 83% of the 3,886 respondents who provided an answer to this question. **Those categorized as “not informing their employees of their language of work rights” are those who answered “No” to this question. This was the case for 661 respondents, or 17% of the 3,886 respondents who provided an answer to this question.**

<sup>24</sup> Note that 13% responded “I don’t know/I don’t remember”.

## 6. Training and resources

### 6.1 Training received by respondents

Some training courses offered by the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) include, in whole or in part, components on language of work (Canada School of Public Service, [Learning Catalogue](#)). They may be aimed at different audiences, including employees, managers, and supervisors. As indicated below, four training courses address language of work.

- The *Authority Delegation Training: Managing People Effectively* provides managers at all levels with the basic knowledge necessary to carry out their human resources (HR) responsibilities in the public service. Among the five topics covered are compliance with official language rights and responsibilities, job classification, human resources planning and staffing, responsibilities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and labour relations management.
- *Respecting official languages in the public service* provides an overview of the *Official Languages Act*, including the parts of the Act, the roles of the main federal institutions, maintaining a culture of bilingualism in the workplace, and best practices for complying with language of work obligations.
- *Language of Work: Knowing One's Rights and Responsibilities and Maintaining One's Skills - Levels B and C* examines individual rights and responsibilities with regard to the working language and offers participants the opportunity to practice their second language skills, at levels B and C, in various professional situations.
- *Managing Official Languages Obligations* refers to the responsibilities of managers and individuals responsible for official languages within departments, including determining language requirements, managing complaints, organizing bilingual events, monitoring compliance, and producing reports.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had taken each of these training courses from the Canada School of Public Service. A majority of respondents, i.e., 68% of Francophones and 77% of Anglophones, indicated that they had taken the *Authority Delegation Training: Managing People Effectively* course. Upon closer examination of the data (not shown in tables), we see that 81% of those who received this training had more than 10 years of seniority in a supervisory position, compared to 67% who had 10 years or less of seniority, and that 82% of those in senior management positions had received this training, compared to 68% of those in middle management positions.

The training course *Respecting Official Languages in the Public Service* was taken by similar proportions of French-speaking (26%) and English-speaking (29%) respondents, as was the training course *Language of Work: Knowing One's Rights and Responsibilities and Maintaining One's Skills - Levels B and C*, which was taken by 13% of French speakers and 12% of English speakers. However, the training course *Managing Official Languages Obligations* was taken by a higher proportion of francophone respondents (21%) than anglophone respondents (12%).

Among respondents, a portion indicated that they had not taken any of these four training courses, specifically 22% of Francophones and 16% of Anglophones.<sup>25</sup>

A closer examination of the data (not shown in tables) reveals that 23% of respondents with 10 years or less of seniority in a supervisory position had not completed any of these training courses, compared to

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<sup>25</sup> Note that in addition, 20% of French speakers and 18% of English speakers responded "I don't know/I don't remember".

14% of those with more than 10 years of seniority, and that 22% of respondents in middle management positions had not completed any of these training courses, compared to 12% of respondents in senior management positions.

*Table 19 – Canada School of Public Service training related to language of work*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Authority Delegation Training: Managing People Effectively	68%	77%
Respecting Official Languages in the Public Service	26%	29%
Managing Official Languages Obligations	21%	12%
Language of Work: Knowing One’s Rights and Responsibilities and Maintaining One’s Skills - Levels B and C	13%	12%
<b>No, none</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Base</b>	<b>1,819</b>	<b>1,600</b>

Q33 — Have you taken any of the following training courses on language of work offered by the Canada School of Public Service?

Furthermore, when asked if they had taken any training other than that offered by the School of Public Service,<sup>26</sup> some respondents answered in the affirmative, with 18% of Francophones and 28% of Anglophones saying “yes.”<sup>27</sup>

Respondents were asked to answer a follow-up question about the institution that provided the last training they took (which was not provided by the Canada School of Public Service).<sup>28</sup> In more than half of the cases, this other training or these other training courses were offered by their department. This was similarly the case for 59% of 302 French-speaking respondents and 58% of 442 English-speaking respondents.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Have you previously attended any language of work training sessions other than those offered by the Canada School of Public Service? (Q35)

<sup>27</sup> Note that in addition, 18% of French speakers and 11% of English speakers responded “I don’t know.”

<sup>28</sup> Thinking about the last training session you took (not offered by the Canada School of Public Service), by whom or what type of institution was it offered? (Q36)

<sup>29</sup> Note that in addition, 10% of French speakers and 11% of English speakers responded “I don’t know/I don’t remember.”

### *Canada School of Public Service training on language of work<sup>30</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

#### **Characteristics of respondents who did not receive training from the Canada School of Public Service training:**

- Respondents whose first official language was French were more likely not to have received training (38%) than respondents whose first official language was English (31%);
- Respondents whose mother tongue was French were more likely not to have received training (38%) than other respondents (32% English, 32% French and English, and 32% other mother tongue than French or English);
- Respondents who were middle managers were more likely not to have received training (38%) than those who were senior managers (26%);
- Respondents who had been supervising employees for 10 years or less were more likely not to have received training (39%) than those who had been in such a position for more than 10 years (29%).

#### **Respondents who had not received training from the Canada School of Public Service were proportionally less likely than their counterparts who had received at least one training session to:**

- Say they are “very” or “somewhat” familiar with three subjective questions about the general provisions of the Act (68% vs. 81%);
- Inform their employees of their language of work rights (79% vs. 85%);
- Have consulted resources on the language of work (29% vs. 38%);
- Suggest resources on language of work to their employees (23% vs. 36%);
- Express a higher level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive from their superiors and their institution (27% vs. 35%).

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<sup>30</sup> Respondents categorized as having “received at least one training course” are those who selected one or more training courses when asked if they had ever taken any of the Canada School of Public Service’s language of work training courses. This was the case for 2,749 respondents, or 65% of the 4,235 respondents. **Those categorized as having “not received any training” are those who did not select one or more training courses, as they indicated having obtained “none” or they answered “I don’t know”/ “I don’t remember”.** This was the case for 1,486 respondents, or 35% of all respondents.

## 6.2 Resources consulted

While there are various resources available on Part V – Language of Work, only about one-third of respondents indicated that they had accessed them. In fact, 38% of French-speaking respondents and 31% of English-speaking respondents indicated that they had accessed such resources.<sup>31</sup>

*Table 20 — Consultation of resources on Part V of the Official Languages Act – Language of Work*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Yes	38%	31%
No	62%	69%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1,832</b>	<b>1,426</b>

Q39 — Have you accessed resources related to Part V of the Official Languages Act - Language of Work?

Among the majority of respondents who had already consulted such resources, these were available within their own department. This was the case for 72% of French-speaking respondents and 80% of English-speaking respondents.

Next was the consultation of resources available from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, which was done by 46% of francophone respondents, compared to 39% of anglophone respondents. However, while 35% of Francophones had consulted resources available from the School of Public Service, 48% of Anglophones had done so. Francophone and anglophone respondents consulted resources available from the Treasury Board Secretariat’s Official Languages Centre of Excellence (36% and 32% respectively) and the Network of Official Languages Champions (24% and 21% respectively) in similar proportions.<sup>32</sup>

*Table 21 — Organization where resources were consulted*

	First official language — French	First official language — English
Your department	72%	80%
Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages	46%	39%
School of Public Service	35%	48%
Treasury Board Secretariat, Centre of Excellence for Official Languages	36%	32%
Network of Official Languages Champions	24%	21%
Other	5%	5%
<b>Base</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>404</b>

Q40 — Were these resources available from any of the following organizations?

<sup>31</sup> Note that in addition, 20% of French speakers and 27% of English speakers responded “I don’t know/I don’t remember”.

<sup>32</sup> Note that in addition, 9% of French speakers and 8% of English speakers responded “I don’t know/I don’t remember”.

*Consultation of resources on Part V of the Official Languages Act – Language of Work<sup>33</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

**Characteristics of respondents who did not consult resources on Part V of the *Official Languages Act* – Language of Work:**

- Respondents whose first official language was English were more likely not to have consulted resources (69%) than respondents whose first official language was French (62%);
- Respondents with a lower self-assessment of their writing skills in their second official language were more likely not to have consulted resources (74%) than those who rated their skills higher (62%); the same proportions were observed for speaking skills (74% versus 62%);
- Respondents who were middle managers were more likely not to have consulted resources (67%) than those who were senior managers (61%);
- Respondents who had been supervising employees for 10 years or less were more likely not to have consulted resources (68%) than those who had been in such a position for more than 10 years (61%);
- Respondents who speak mainly English with their immediate supervisor were more likely not to have consulted resources (68%) than those who speak both official languages (59%) or mainly French (62%);
- Respondents who preferred to be supervised mainly in English were more likely not to have consulted resources (71%) than those who preferred to be supervised in both official languages (63%) or mainly in French (59%);
- Respondents whose immediate supervisor had not asked them which official language they preferred to be supervised in were more likely not to have consulted resources (68%) than those who had been asked about their preference by their immediate supervisor (59%).

**Respondents who did not consult resources were proportionally less likely than their counterparts who consulted resources on Part V of the *Official Languages Act* – Language of Work<sup>34</sup>:**

- Say they were “very” or “somewhat” familiar in response to three subjective questions on general provisions of the Act (69% vs. 91%);
- Correctly answer the 13 objective questions on specific provisions regarding language of work (30% vs. 42%);
- Inform their employees of their language of work rights (78% vs. 90%);
- Have completed training from the Canada School of Public Service on language of work (64% vs. 72%);
- Suggest resources on language of work to their employees (18% vs. 58%);
- Express a higher level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive from their superiors and their institution (29% vs. 39%);
- Agree on the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work (69% vs. 77%).

<sup>33</sup> Respondents categorized as having “already consulted resources” are those who selected “Yes” to the question asking if they had consulted resources on Part V of the Official Languages Act – Language of Work. This was the case for 1,137 respondents, or 35% of all 3,258 respondents who provided an answer to this question. Those categorized as having “not consulted resources” are those who selected “No” to the question asking if they had consulted resources on Part V of the Official Languages Act – Language of Work. This was the case for 2,121 respondents, or 65% of all 3,258 respondents who provided an answer to this question.

<sup>34</sup> Note that 23% responded “I don’t know/I don’t remember”.

## 6.3 Encouragement of employees to access resources

Among respondents, few indicated that they encourage their employees to access resources available under Part V of the *Official Languages Act* – Language of Work. Among Francophone respondents, 29% indicated that they do so for all or at least some of their employees. This was the case for 35% of anglophone respondents.<sup>35</sup>

*Table 22 – Encouragement of employees to access resources on language of work*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Yes, for all my employees	20%	27%
Yes, for some of my employees	9%	8%
No	71%	65%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,024</b>	<b>1,654</b>

Q47 - Do you encourage your employees who work in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes to access resources available on Part V of the *Official Languages Act* - Language of Work?

Among those who indicated that they encourage their employees to access such resources, similar majorities of Francophones and Anglophones responded that they are available from their own department. This was the case for 84% of francophone respondents and 85% of anglophone respondents. This was followed by those who encourage their employees to access resources available from the Canada School of Public Service, among 64% of Francophones and 74% of Anglophones. As for resources available from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 40% of Francophones and 35% of Anglophones indicated that they encourage their employees to access them. This was the case for resources from the Treasury Board Secretariat’s Official Languages Centre of Excellence which were indicated by 37% of Francophones and 35% of Anglophones, and finally, resources from the Network of Official Languages Champions were indicated as being proposed to their employees by 30% of Francophones and 29% of Anglophones.<sup>36</sup>

*Table 23 – Sources of resources on the language of work suggested to employees*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Your department	84%	85%
School of Public Service	64%	74%
Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages	40%	35%
Treasury Board Secretariat, Centre of Excellence for Official Languages	37%	35%
Network of Official Languages Champions	30%	29%
Other	4%	3%
<b>Base</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>534</b>

Q48 - Are these resources available from the following organizations?

<sup>35</sup> Note that in addition, 557 respondents (13%) answered “I don’t know” to this question. This was the case for 11% of French speakers and 16% of English speakers.

<sup>36</sup> Note that in addition, 4% of French speakers and 8% of English speakers responded “I don’t know/I don’t remember.”

*Encouragement of employees to access resources on language of work<sup>37</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

**Characteristics of respondents who do not encourage their employees to access resources on Part V of the *Official Languages Act* – Language of Work:**

- Respondents whose first official language was French were more likely not to encourage their employees to access resources on Part V of the Act (71%) than those whose first official language was English (65%);
- Respondents whose mother tongue was French were more likely not to encourage their employees to access resources on Part V of the Act (73%) than those whose mother tongue was another language (67% English, 60% French and English, and 56% other languages);
- Respondents who were middle managers were more likely not to encourage their employees to access resources on Part V of the Act (71%) than those who were senior managers (62%);
- Respondents who preferred to be supervised mainly in French were more likely not to encourage their employees to access resources on Part V of the Act (75%) than those who preferred to be supervised equally in both official languages (68%) or in English (65%);
- Respondents whose immediate supervisor had not asked them which official language they preferred to be supervised in were more likely not to encourage their employees to access resources on Part V of the Act (73%) than those whose immediate supervisor had asked them the question (57%).

**Respondents who do not encourage their employees to access to resources on Part V of the *Official Languages Act* – Language of Work were proportionally fewer than their counterparts who do encourage their employees to access resources to:**

- Say they were “very” or “somewhat” aware in response to three subjective questions on general provisions of the Act (71% vs. 89%);
- Inform their employees of their language of work rights (76% vs. 94%);
- Have received training from the Canada School of Public Service on language of work (61% vs. 75%);
- Have consulted resources on language of work (22% vs. 64%);
- Express a higher level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive from their superiors and their institution (24% vs. 51%);
- Agree with the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work (69% vs. 76%).

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<sup>37</sup> Respondents categorized as those who “encourage their employees to consult resources” are those who stated that they suggest to consult resources to all or some employees when asked whether they encourage their employees working in regions designated bilingual for language of work purposes to consult available resources on Part V of the Official Languages Act – Language of Work. This was the case for 1,163 respondents, or 32% of all 3,678 respondents who provided an answer to this question. **Those categorized as “who do not encourage their employees to consult resources” are those who selected “No” to this question. This was the case for 2,515 respondents, or 68% of all 3,678 respondents who provided an answer to this question.**

# 7. Leadership, information, and support

## 7.1 Perceptions of leadership, information, and support from the institution, senior management, superiors, and immediate supervisor

In addition to inquiring about respondents’ individual knowledge and experiences, we wanted to explore certain organizational dimensions. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement (“Totally” or “Somewhat” agree, and “Somewhat” or “Totally” disagree) with seven statements related to their perceptions of leadership, information, and support from their institution, senior management, superiors, and immediate supervisor. In response to each of the seven statements, fewer French-speaking respondents than English-speaking respondents agreed (“Totally” or “Somewhat” agree).

The three statements with which respondents agreed the least (at just under or just over 50%) relate to obtaining information from their immediate supervisors about language of work resources and training (initially, upon entering their position, and then on a regular basis) and encouragement from their immediate supervisors to consult resources and obtain training. Statements regarding senior management leadership, sharing information about Champions and Persons Responsible for Official Languages, communicating information about rights and obligations, and support from supervisors or management to ensure a work environment conducive to the use of both official languages received higher percentages of respondents agreeing at close to or above 70% and close to or above 80%.<sup>38</sup>

*Table 24 – Perceptions of leadership, information and support*

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	First official language - French – Agree	First official language – English – Agree
Q49 - My senior management provides the leadership needed to promote a workplace conducive to the use of both official languages.	73%	86%
Q50 - Employees are notified of the individuals carrying out the duties of Official Languages Champion and the Persons responsible for official languages within my institution.	68%	79%
Q51 - At least once a year, my institution provides its employees with information and reminders about their rights and obligations with regard to language of work.	68%	80%
Q52 - My direct supervisor informed me of the language resources and training available to me when I started in my current role.	48%	55%
Q53 - My direct supervisor keeps me informed of language of work resources and training on a regular basis.	45%	53%
Q54 - My direct supervisor encourages me regularly to access resources and training related to language of work.	45%	53%
Q55 - I feel that my superiors or management are adequately supportive in making sure that my work environment is conducive to the effective use of both official languages.	74%	80%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,257</b>	<b>1,928</b>

Q49 to 55- To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

<sup>38</sup> Note that depending on the question, the proportion of respondents having answered “I don’t know” varies from 1% to almost 25%, which makes the base vary.

*Levels of agreement regarding leadership, information, and support they receive<sup>39</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

**Characteristics of respondents who express a low level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive:**

- Respondents whose first official language was French were more likely to express a low level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive (47%) than Anglophones (35%);
- Respondents whose mother tongue was French were more likely to express a low level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive (48%) than respondents whose mother tongue was English (36%), French and English (39%), or a language other than French or English (34%);
- Respondents who were middle managers were more likely to express a low level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive (44%) than those who were senior managers (36%);
- Respondents who preferred to be supervised mainly in French were more likely to express a low level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive (51%) than those who preferred to be supervised equally in both official languages (43%) or mainly in English (36%);
- Respondents whose immediate supervisor had not asked them which official language they preferred to be supervised in were more likely to express a low level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive (54%) than respondents whose immediate supervisor had asked them this question (22%).

**Respondents who express a low level of agreement with regard to leadership, information, and support received were proportionally fewer than their counterparts who express a high level of agreement to:**

- Say they are “very” or “somewhat” familiar in response to three subjective questions about general provisions of the Act (69% versus 86%);
- Inform their employees of their language of work rights (76% vs. 92%);
- Have received training from the Canada School of Public Service on language of work (60% vs. 71%);
- Have consulted resources on language of work (30% vs. 42%);
- Suggest resources on language of work to their employees (21% vs. 50%);
- Consider that they can exercise their rights to be supervised in the official language of their choice on a frequent basis, i.e., “always” or “often” (74% vs. 95%).

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<sup>39</sup> Respondents categorized as those who “show a high level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive” are those who “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with 6 or more statements regarding leadership in language of work. This was the case for 1,378 respondents, or 33% of all 4,235 respondents. Respondents categorized as those who “show a moderate level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive” are those who “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with 4 or 5 statements regarding leadership in language of work. This was the case for 1,096 respondents, or 26% of all 4,235 respondents. **Respondents categorized as those “who show a low level of agreement with the leadership, information and support they receive” are those who stated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with 3 or fewer statements regarding leadership in language of work. This was the case for 1,761 respondents, or 42% of the total 4,235 respondents.**

## 7.2 Perception of the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work

The Office of the Commissioner wanted to find out how interested supervisors would be in introducing mandatory, government-wide training focused entirely on language of work.

Depending on their first official language, there is a gap between respondents’ perceptions of the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language rights and obligations in the workplace. In fact, 79% of Francophones indicated that it would be useful, compared to 62% of Anglophones. Conversely, 21% of Francophones and 38% of Anglophones disagreed. Nevertheless, a majority of francophone and anglophone respondents agreed with this statement.<sup>40</sup>

*Table 25 – Perception of the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work*

	First official language - French – Agree	First official language – English – Agree
Mandatory government-wide training on language of work rights and obligations	79%	62%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,132</b>	<b>1,799</b>

Q56 - Mandatory government-wide training on language of work rights and obligations would be useful.

<sup>40</sup> Note that 6% of French speakers and 8% of English speakers responded “I don’t know.”

*Perception of the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language rights and obligations in the workplace<sup>41</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

**Characteristics of respondents who believe that mandatory government-wide training on language rights and obligations in the workplace would not be useful:**

- Respondents whose first official language was English were more likely to consider that mandatory training would not be useful (38%) than those whose first official language was French (21%);
- Respondents whose mother tongue was English and those whose mother tongue was French and English were more likely to consider that mandatory training would not be useful (41%) than those whose mother tongue was French (21%) and those whose mother tongue was neither French nor English (23%);
- Respondents with a lower assessment of their writing skills in their second official language were more likely to consider that mandatory training would not be useful (39%) than those who rated their skills higher (25%);
- Respondents with a lower assessment of their oral skills in their second official language were more likely to consider that mandatory training would not be useful (38%) than those who rated their skills higher (26%);
- Respondents who speak mainly English with their immediate supervisor were more likely to consider that mandatory training would not be useful (34%) than those who speak both official languages equally (26%) or mainly French (20%);
- Respondents who prefer to be supervised mainly in English were more likely to consider that mandatory training would not be useful (39%) than those who prefer to be supervised equally in both official languages (24%) or mainly in French (18%).

**Respondents who felt that mandatory training would not be useful were proportionally fewer than those who felt that mandatory training would be useful to:**

- Inform their employees of their language of work rights (79% vs. 85%);
- Consult resources on language of work (29% vs. 38%);
- Suggest resources on language of work to their employees (27% vs. 34%);
- Express a higher level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive from their superiors and their institution (28% vs. 35%).

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<sup>41</sup> Respondents categorized as those who “consider that mandatory training would be useful” are those who “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” to the question asking whether mandatory government-wide training on language of work rights and obligations would be useful. This was the case for 2,792 respondents, or 71% of all 3,931 respondents who provided an answer to this question. **Those categorized as those who “consider that mandatory training would not be useful” are those who “strongly disagree” or “somewhat disagree” to the question asking whether mandatory government-wide training on language of work rights and obligations would be useful. This was the case for 1,139 respondents, or 29% of all 3,931 respondents who provided an answer to this question.**

## 8. Respecting their responsibilities as supervisors and exercising their rights as employees

Two key questions focused on the frequency (Always, Often, Sometimes, Never) with which respondents felt they were able to fulfill their responsibilities as supervisors, and the frequency with which they felt they were able to exercise their own rights as employees. Following each of these questions, depending on whether respondents indicated “Always,” “Often,” “Sometimes” or “Never,” they were asked to identify three main factors that, in the first case, facilitate or, in the second case, hinder the frequency with which they felt they could or could not fulfill their responsibilities and exercise their rights.

### 8.1 Fulfilling their responsibilities as supervisors

The frequency with which respondents considered themselves capable of fulfilling their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice varied greatly depending on the respondents’ first official language. In fact, almost all francophone respondents (99%) said they felt they were frequently (always or often) able to fulfill their responsibilities, compared to 85% of anglophone respondents. Looking at the data in more detail, 84% of Francophones said they were always able to fulfill their responsibilities, compared to only 57% of Anglophones.

*Table 26 – Frequency with which respondents consider themselves capable of fulfilling their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Always	84%	57%
Often	15%	28%
Sometimes	1%	13%
Never	0%	2%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,275</b>	<b>1,942</b>

Q29 - How often do you consider yourself able to fulfill your responsibility of supervising your employees in the official language of their choice?

Among French-speaking respondents who considered themselves to be frequently fulfilling their responsibilities, the main factor most often identified was, at 64%, their sufficient knowledge of their employees’ language rights, far ahead of any other factor. This was followed by the high priority they assign to official languages in their workplace (47%). Among English-speaking respondents, the main factor identified was their sufficient French language skills (60%), followed by their sufficient knowledge of their employees’ language rights (48%).

We observe that, although there are notable differences in the proportions, both Francophones and Anglophones indicated, among the three main facilitating factors, their knowledge of their employees’ language rights, which is the central issue of this study. Furthermore, what was also important for Francophones was the priority they gave to official languages in the workplace, while for Anglophones, it was their French language skills.

*Table 27 –Key factors facilitating the frequency with which respondents consider themselves to be able to fulfill their responsibilities*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Adequate knowledge, on your part, of your employees' language rights.	64%	48%
The high priority you give to official languages in your workplace.	47%	27%
A strong leadership role among your superiors, including senior management, with regard to the use of both official languages in the workplace.	36%	30%
The equal use of both official languages in your workplace.	35%	31%
Adequate English language skills on your part.	34%	19%
Adequate French language skills on your part.	30%	60%
Adequate knowledge among your employees of their language rights.	19%	14%
Employees on your team who wish to be supervised in French.	7%	16%
Employees on your team who wish to be supervised in English.	5%	13%
Adequate French language skills among your employees.	4%	7%
Adequate English language skills among your employees.	3%	7%
Other	2%	3%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,239</b>	<b>1,630</b>

Q30a - In your opinion, what are the factors that contribute to how often you consider yourself able to fulfill your responsibilities of supervising your employees in the official language(s) of their choice?

A small number of respondents felt that they were not frequently (either sometimes, or never) able to fulfill their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice. This was the case for 15% of English-speaking respondents and 1% of French-speaking respondents. These English-speaking respondents identified as main factors hindering the frequency with which they can fulfill their responsibilities their insufficient French language skills (88%), the unequal use of both official languages at work (33%), and their employees' insufficient French language skills (23%).

*Fulfilling their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice<sup>42</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

**Characteristics of respondents who are unable to frequently fulfill their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice:**

- Respondents whose first official language was English were more likely to be unable to fulfill their responsibilities frequently (15%) than those whose first official language was French (1%);
- Respondents whose mother tongue was English were more likely to be unable to fulfill their responsibilities frequently (16%) than those whose mother tongue was a language other than French or English (9%) or those whose mother tongue was French (1%);
- Respondents with a lower assessment of their writing skills in their second official language were more likely to be unable to fulfill their responsibilities frequently (22%) than those who rated their skills higher (2%);
- Respondents with a lower self-assessment of their oral skills in their second official language were more likely to be unable to fulfill their responsibilities frequently (25%) than those who rated their skills higher (2%);
- Respondents who speak mainly English with their immediate supervisor were more likely to be unable to fulfill their responsibilities frequently (12%) than those who speak both official languages (1%) or mainly French (1%);
- Respondents who preferred to be supervised mainly in English were more likely to be unable to fulfill their responsibilities frequently (15%) than those who preferred to be supervised in both official languages (2%) or mainly in French (1%).

**Respondents who were unable to frequently fulfill their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice were proportionally fewer than their counterparts who were frequently able to fulfill their responsibilities to:**

- Say they were “very” or “somewhat” aware in response to three subjective questions about general provisions of the Act (65% vs. 78%);
- Answer the 13 objective questions about specific language of work provisions correctly (26% vs. 35%);
- Inform their employees of their language of work rights (75% vs. 84%);
- Have consulted resources on language of work (21% vs. 36%);
- Agree on the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work (58% vs. 72%).

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<sup>42</sup> Respondents categorized as “being able to frequently fulfill their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice” are those who answered “always” or “often” to the question asking how often they consider themselves able to fulfill their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice. This was the case for 3,907 respondents, or 93% of all 4,217 respondents who provided a response to this question. Those categorized as “not being able to frequently fulfill their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice” are those who answered “sometimes” or “never” to this question. This was the case for 310 respondents, or 7% of all 4,217 respondents who provided a response to this question.

## 8.2 Exercising their rights as employees

Although most French-speaking and English-speaking respondents felt they could exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice, there were significant disparities in terms of frequency. Interestingly, unlike the responses to the question about how often they felt they could fulfill their responsibilities as supervisors (where more French-speaking respondents than English-speaking respondents indicated that they could frequently fulfill their responsibilities), fewer French-speaking respondents than English-speaking respondents indicated that they could frequently exercise their own rights, as employees, to be supervised in the official language of their choice.

In fact, 77% of French-speaking respondents felt that they could always or often exercise their rights as employees, while 94% of English-speaking respondents felt the same way. Among French speakers, 54% believed that this was always the case and 23% believed that it was often the case, while these proportions were 83% and 11% among English speakers.

*Table 28 – Frequency with which respondents consider they can exercise their rights as employees*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Always	54%	83%
Often	23%	11%
Sometimes	17%	5%
Never	6%	1%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,264</b>	<b>1,936</b>

Q58 - When it comes to exercising your right to be supervised in the official language of your choice at work, how often do you consider yourself able to do so?

For French-speaking respondents, the main factor facilitating the exercise of their own rights to be supervised in the official language of their choice was their immediate supervisor's sufficient knowledge of their language rights as employees (48%). This was followed by the high priority given by their immediate supervisor to official languages in the workplace (39%), their immediate supervisor's sufficient French language skills (38%), and strong leadership among their superiors, including senior management, with regard to the use of both official languages in the workplace (37%).

For English-speaking respondents, the main factor facilitating the exercise of their own rights was their immediate supervisor's sufficient English language skills (50%). This was followed by the fact that they wanted to be supervised in English (38%), and then their immediate supervisor's knowledge of their language rights as employees (34%).

Although there were differences between French-speaking and English-speaking respondents in terms of the main factors identified, it should be noted that both groups indicated as a main factor their immediate supervisor's knowledge of their language rights as employees, which is the main focus of this study. The language skills of their immediate supervisor in their first official language were also identified as a factor by both Francophones and Anglophones. In addition, francophones identified more organizational factors, including the high priority given to official languages by their immediate supervisor and the leadership of their superiors, including senior management, with regard to the use of both official languages in the workplace.

*Table 29 – Main factors facilitating the frequency with which respondents consider that they can exercise their rights as employees*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Your immediate supervisor's adequate knowledge of his or her employees' language rights.	48%	34%
Strong leadership among your superiors, including your senior management, regarding the use of both official languages in the workplace.	37%	24%
Your direct supervisor's adequate English language skills.	8%	50%
The equal use of both official languages in your workplace.	33%	23%
Your adequate knowledge of your language rights as an employee.	32%	24%
The high priority your direct supervisor gives to official languages in the workplace.	39%	17%
Your direct supervisor's adequate French language skills.	38%	9%
The fact that you would like to be supervised in English.	2%	38%
Adequate English language skills on your part.	10%	22%
Adequate French language skills on your part.	9%	11%
The fact that you would like to be supervised in French.	13%	1%
Other	1%	2%
None of these factors.	1%	3%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1,725</b>	<b>1,787</b>

Q59a - According to you, which factors make it easier for you to exercise your right to be supervised in the official language of your choice?

The most frequently indicated obstacle to exercising their right to be supervised in the language of their choice was the unequal use of the two official languages in their workplace (70% among Francophones and 45% among Anglophones). This was followed by insufficient French language skills among their immediate supervisors, indicated by 61% of Francophones but only 26% of Anglophones. In addition, 46% of Francophones, but only 26% of Anglophones, identified weak leadership among their superiors, including senior management, in the use of both official languages in the workplace as the main factor. Also, Anglophones identified their insufficient French language skills as the main factor (25%).

*Table 30 – Main factors limiting the frequency with which respondents feel they can exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Unequal use of the two official languages in your workplace	70%	45%
Your direct supervisor's inadequate French language skills	61%	26%
Weak leadership among your superiors, including senior management, regarding the use of both official languages in the workplace.	46%	26%
The low priority your direct supervisor gives to official languages in the workplace	22%	16%
Your direct supervisor's inadequate knowledge of his or her employees' language rights	12%	14%
The fact that you would like to be supervised in French	11%	1%
Inadequate French language skills on your part	1%	25%
The fact that you would like to be supervised in English	2%	19%
Your inadequate knowledge of your language rights as an employee	2%	7%
Your direct supervisor's inadequate English language skills	1%	1%
Inadequate English language skills on your part	1%	0%
Other	6%	14%
None of these factors	5%	14%
<b>Base</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>110</b>

Q59b - According to you, which factors hinder the frequency with which you can exercise your right to be supervised in the official language of your choice?

*Exercising their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice<sup>43</sup> - Other characteristics and results*

**Characteristics of respondents who are not able to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice:**

- Respondents whose first official language was French were more likely to be unable to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice (23%) than those whose first official language was English (6%);
- Respondents whose mother tongue was French were more likely to be unable to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice (23%) than respondents whose mother tongue was English (5%), those whose mother tongue was both French and English (8%), and those whose mother tongue was neither French nor English (15%);
- Respondents with a higher self-assessment of their writing skills in their second official language were more likely to be unable to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice (19%) than those who rated their skills lower (7%);
- Respondents with a higher self-assessment of their oral skills in their second official language were more likely to be unable to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice (17%) than those who rated their skills lower (8%);
- Respondents who speak mainly English with their immediate supervisor were more likely to be unable to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice (20%) than those who speak both official languages (9%) or those who speak mainly French with their immediate supervisor (9%);
- Respondents who preferred to be supervised mainly in French, or equally in French and English, were more likely to be unable to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice (22% for both categories) than those who preferred to be supervised mainly in English (6%);
- Respondents whose immediate supervisor had not asked them which official language they preferred to be supervised in were more likely to be unable to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice (21%) than those whose immediate supervisor had asked them about their language preference (8%).

**Respondents who were unable to frequently exercise their rights to be supervised in the official language of their choice were proportionally fewer than their counterparts who were able to frequently exercise their rights to:**

- Express a higher level of agreement with the leadership, information, and support they receive from their superiors and their institution (12% versus 37%);
- Disagree with the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work (24% vs. 30%).

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<sup>43</sup> Respondents categorized as “frequently able to exercise their rights to be supervised in the official language of their choice at work” are those who answered “always” or “often” to the question asking how often they consider themselves able to exercise their rights to be supervised in the official language of their choice at work. This was the case for 3,561 respondents, or 85% of the 4,200 respondents who provided an answer to this question. Those categorized as “not frequently able to exercise their rights to be supervised in the official language of their choice at work” are those who answered “sometimes” or “never” to this question. This was the case for 639 respondents, or 15% of the 4,200 respondents who provided an answer to this question.

## 9. Conclusion

With the adoption of a modernized *Official Languages Act* (June 2023) and new provisions related to Part V of the Act—Language of Work, which deal with the rights of employees in designated bilingual regions and the responsibilities of their supervisors, the Commissioner wanted to conduct a new study among the latter. He sought to gain insight into their “familiarity with” and “knowledge of” this part of the Act. In addition, he wanted to survey them on the application of best practices, training and resource consultation, their perception of leadership, information and support received from their institutions and superiors at various levels, their ability to fulfill their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice, and their ability to exercise their own right as employees to work in the official language of their choice.

This study is exploratory in nature. It was conducted through an online survey with a portion of the target population, namely 4,235 respondents who supervise employees working in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes. The results cannot be statistically extrapolated to the entire target population with a known sampling margin of error. Nevertheless, based on descriptive analyses conducted according to the respondents’ first official language and other demographic characteristics, we can draw some interesting conclusions and findings, which are summarized below and followed by future avenues for potential exploration.

First, we note discrepancies between, on the one hand, the higher proportions of respondents who say they are familiar with general provisions regarding language of work and who demonstrate knowledge of specific provisions, and, on the other hand, the lower proportions of respondents who indicate that they apply the best practices identified in the survey. We observe certain differences depending on respondents’ first official language and other demographic characteristics such as age, seniority or number of years in a supervisory position, management level, and self-assessed second language skills.

Thus, it appears that “familiarity with” and “knowledge of” language rights in the workplace would be a primary factor encouraging action such as the application of best practices, but that other factors could also come into play, particularly proficiency in the second official language.

It should be noted that respondents who implement some of the best practices mentioned in the survey are more likely to encourage their employees to do the same. Also, those who have benefited from the implementation of best practices by their immediate supervisors are more likely to implement these best practices themselves.

When asked how often they felt they were able to fulfill their responsibilities to supervise their employees in the official language of their choice, more French-speaking respondents than English-speaking respondents (based on self-reported first official language) indicated that they were able to do so regularly (99% and 85%, respectively). As for the main factors that facilitate their ability to fulfill these responsibilities, an important proportion of respondents, both francophone and anglophone (albeit in different proportions), indicated as a main factor a sufficient knowledge of their employees’ language rights (64% and 48% respectively). For their part, the majority of Anglophones indicated their sufficient French language skills (60%). Among Anglophones who indicated that they were unable to regularly fulfill their responsibilities as supervisors, the majority indicated insufficient French language skills as a main factor (88%).

Other factors facilitating the ability to fulfill responsibilities included the high priority they give to official languages in their workplace (47% among Francophones and 27% among Anglophones), strong leadership from their superiors, including senior management, regarding the use of both official languages in the workplace (36% and 30% respectively), and equal use of both official languages in their workplace (35% and 31% respectively).

When asked how often they feel they can exercise their rights as employees to be supervised in the official language of their choice, a majority of respondents said they can do so regularly, but the proportion is lower among Francophones (77%) than among Anglophones (94%). Among the main factors identified as facilitating this ability, nearly half of Francophones (48%) and nearly one-third of Anglophones (34%) identified their immediate supervisor's sufficient knowledge of their employees' language rights. Half of Anglophones (50%) and more than one-third of Francophones (38%) indicated their supervisors' sufficient proficiency in French and English, respectively.

Other key factors facilitating the exercise of their rights, identified by several Francophones, were: the high priority given by their immediate supervisor to official languages in the workplace (39%) and strong leadership among their superiors, including senior management, with regard to the use of both official languages in the workplace (37%). Several Anglophones also indicated as a main factor facilitating the exercise of their rights their desire to be supervised in English (38%).

Among Francophones (23%) and Anglophones (6%) who indicated that they were unable to frequently exercise their right to be supervised in the official language of their choice, the majority of respondents indicated the following as main factors: unequal use of the two official languages in their workplace (70% and 45% respectively), insufficient French language skills among their immediate supervisors (61% and 26% respectively), and weak leadership among their superiors, including senior management, with regard to the use of both official languages in the workplace (46% and 26% respectively). Several Anglophones also cited their insufficient French language skills as a factor hindering their ability to exercise their rights (25%).

With regard to perceptions of leadership, information, and support received, higher proportions of respondents agreed with statements about their institution, senior management, and superiors than with statements about their immediate supervisor.

With regard to the training offered by the Canada School of Public Service in relation to the language of work, the majority of respondents had taken the *Authority Delegation Training: Managing People Effectively* (68% of Francophones and 77% of Anglophones). In addition, a majority of respondents agreed on the usefulness of mandatory government-wide training on language of work, although the proportions differed between Francophones (79%) and Anglophones (62%).

In short, these results suggest that knowledge of rights, responsibilities, and obligations with regard to language of work is a key factor—though not the only factor—in the application of good practices and, more broadly, in the ability to fulfill one's responsibilities as a supervisor and exercise one's rights as an employee. Other factors identified include second language skills and leadership at all levels of the organization.

As noted, the modernized Act clarifies that the rights of employees working in regions designated as bilingual for language of work purposes apply regardless of the linguistic designation of their position. At the same time, and in relation to supervisors' second language abilities, new appointments to

supervisory positions are designated bilingual positions, and the incumbents of these new positions must have enhanced language abilities at the “CBC” level (*Directive on Official Languages for People Management*, revised June 2025). This should help strengthen supervisors’ abilities to fulfill their responsibilities and enable their employees to exercise their rights.

With regard to the importance of leadership at all levels, these results and findings suggest that leadership at one level of supervision contributes to its transmission to lower levels of supervision. This would strengthen the argument in favour of providing sustained support to supervisors so that they receive training to develop and refine their knowledge of language rights, responsibilities, and obligations in the workplace, are encouraged to consult resources, and have opportunities to learn and maintain their second language skills. Given the renewal of the federal public service, this would also strengthen the argument in favour of such support for newer cohorts of employees who, during their careers, may wish to move into supervisory positions.

Ultimately, these findings highlight the need for a renewed commitment to training, support for supervisors, and sharing resources to make sure the principles of Part V of the *Official Languages Act*—Language of Work are implemented in an equitable and effective way.

## Appendix I: Other demographic characteristics

The tables in this section present other demographic data that may be of interest.

*Table 31 – Respondents reporting to an office in a designated bilingual region or a non-bilingual region*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Yes	96%	89%
No	4%	11%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>1,959</b>

Q60 - Is the office you report to located in a region designated as bilingual?

*Table 32 – Designated bilingual regions where the offices to which respondents report are located*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
National Capital Region - Ottawa, Ontario	47%	71%
National Capital Region - Gatineau, Quebec	38%	24%
Bilingual Montreal Region (counties of: Deux-Montagnes, l'Île-de-Montréal et l'Île-Jésus, La Prairie, Vaudreuil)	10%	2%
New Brunswick	3%	2%
Other	1%	1%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,182</b>	<b>1,739</b>

Q61a - In which bilingual region is the office you report to located?

*Table 33 – Non-bilingual regions where the offices to which respondents report are located*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Ontario – Non-bilingual region	12%	44%
Quebec – Non-bilingual region	72%	3%
Nova Scotia	9%	14%
Manitoba	3%	10%
British Columbia	1%	11%
Alberta	1%	10%
Other	4%	8%
<b>Base</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>220</b>

Q61b - In which region is the office you report to located?

*Table 34 – Mother tongue of respondents*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
French	92%	9%
English	5%	78%
Other	8%	18%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,271</b>	<b>1,940</b>

Q68 - What is your mother tongue - the first language you learned as a child and still understand?

*Table 35 – Language requirements for supervisory positions*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
French essential	0%	0%
English essential	1%	10%
French or English essential (reversible)	1%	1%
Bilingual	98%	88%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,271</b>	<b>1,952</b>

Q69 - What are the language requirements of your job?

*Table 36 – First official language of the immediate supervisor according to respondents' first official language<sup>44</sup>*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
French	52%	32%
English	48%	68%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,181</b>	<b>1,848</b>

Q75 - What is your direct supervisor's first official language?

*Table 37 – Official language spoken with immediate supervisor according to respondents' first official language*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
French only or mainly	40%	2%
English only or mainly	35%	86%
French and English equally	25%	12%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>1,959</b>

Q76 - Which official language(s) do you speak with your direct supervisor?

*Table 38 – Preferred official language for supervision according to respondents' first official language*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
French only or mainly	45%	0%
English only or mainly	9%	84%
French and English equally	46%	16%
<b>Base</b>	<b>2,276</b>	<b>1,959</b>

Q77 - Which official language(s) do you prefer to be supervised in?

<sup>44</sup> Note that 4% of French speakers and 6% of English speakers responded "I don't know/I don't remember".

*Table 39 – Language of supervision asked by the immediate supervisor according to respondents’ first official language<sup>45</sup>*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Yes	41%	33%
No	59%	67%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1,802</b>	<b>1,487</b>

Q78 - Have you ever been asked by your direct supervisor in which official language(s) you prefer to be supervised?

*Table 40 – Supervision of employees who wish to be supervised in a minority official language according to respondents’ first official language<sup>46</sup>*

	First official language - French	First official language - English
Yes	34%	35%
No	66%	65%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>780</b>

Q79 - Do you have employees reporting to offices in regions designated as bilingual and who would like to be supervised in a minority official language?

<sup>45</sup> Note that in addition, 21% of French speakers and 24% of English speakers responded “I don’t know/I don’t remember.”

<sup>46</sup> Note that in addition, 11% of French speakers and 14% of English speakers responded “I don’t know / I don’t remember.”

## Appendix II: Federal institutions represented in the sample of potential respondents

Institutions
The Pacific Pilotage Authority
Canadian Food Inspection Agency
Public Health Agency of Canada
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario
Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Library and Archives Canada
Transportation Safety Board of Canada
Office of the Procurement Ombud
Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions
National Arts Centre
House of Commons
Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
Canadian Dairy Commission
Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP
Military Police Complaints Commission of Canada
Law Commission of Canada
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
Canada Council for the Arts
National Research Council Canada
Canada Economic Development for Quebec regions
Canada School of Public Service
Employment and Social Development Canada
Atomic Energy of Canada Limited
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Women and Gender Equality Canada
Policy Horizons Canada
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Federal Bridge Corporation Limited
Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada
Royal Canadian Mint
Canadian Transportation Agency
Canadian Heritage
Canada Energy Regulator
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Natural Resources Canada
Health Canada
National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians
Indigenous Services Canada
Shared Services Canada
Public Services and Procurement Canada
Statistics Canada
Transport Canada