

TO ENRICH QUÉBEC

Courtesy translation

More French Better integration

Measures to strengthen Québec's action
with regard to the francization of immigrants

Learning French
Capitalizing on a diversified offer

Word from the Minister

I am very pleased to share with the people of Québec the ways in which the government plans to strengthen its action in order to promote the integration of immigrants into the French-speaking community.

On a few occasions over the past two years, Quebecers were consulted on important issues related to immigration and the integration of newcomers. Whether during the parliamentary consultation respecting the planning of immigration for 2008-2010 or the hearings of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission on accommodation practices related to cultural differences, the testimonials collected have helped to highlight the importance of increasing francization efforts.

The new measures presented here support the francization programs already offered to immigrants. They are aimed at better meeting their needs at various steps in the process of integration into Québec society.

By enabling francization to take place earlier on in the immigration process, to reach a wider clientele and to improve its effectiveness by matching course content to the specific needs of certain professions, these additional measures will enable newcomers to become active citizens more quickly in a society where French is the official language.

Citizens have expressed the desire for more effective methods to be implemented so that both newcomers and the host society can benefit from this exchange. I truly believe that this new momentum for "more French and better integration" will bring us closer to our primary goal: to enrich Québec and enable all citizens to contribute to our prosperity.

Yolande James
Minister of Immigration and Cultural Communities

Introduction

When immigrants come to Québec, they hope to integrate quickly into society and find a job as soon as possible. Although the criteria for selecting immigration candidates favour individuals who already know French, many newcomers must make considerable efforts to learn or improve their knowledge of our language. French is a key, not only to accessing the labour market, but also to becoming familiar with Québec's values, culture and lifestyle.

At the core of its integration policy for newcomers, Québec offers new non-Francophone citizens a range of French courses and learning conditions not to be found anywhere else.

Immigrants enrolled in French courses receive financial assistance enabling them to follow the program which is free of charge. The three levels of the francization program, which includes about 1,000 course hours, are held over 33 weeks, for 30 hours per week. Part-time courses are also available.*

In a context of increased levels of immigration for the 2008-2010 period, the government's francization offer must be reinforced to meet new demands. Additional measures will therefore be put forth with three distinct objectives:

More francization of immigrant persons by reaching out to new clienteles, particularly in the workplace;

Earlier francization, starting abroad, by offering immigration candidates the opportunity to learn French prior to their arrival in Québec;

More specialized French courses in order to meet the professional needs of newcomers.

The new measures that will be added to the current francization program include:

ABROAD:

- New agreements will be concluded with Alliances françaises and other francization partners, allowing for more effective coverage of Québec's recruitment area.
- The candidates selected will be able to take an intermediate-level French course adapted to Québec's environment, *La francisation en ligne*. Students in these new virtual classes will benefit from the educational supervision of a tutor.

IN QUÉBEC:

- New clienteles will have access to or will be encouraged to take French courses part-time. These include temporary workers and foreign students who have chosen to settle in Québec.
- More immigrant persons will be able to learn French in their work or living environment, and others will be able, in particular, to acquire more specialized language competency linked to their profession.

- Major promotional efforts will be made to better publicize the government's service offer and thus better meet the needs of immigrant persons, among them, those in the family class.

Each measure is accompanied by performance indicators that will be monitored and reported on in the annual management report of the Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles. In addition, the government will monitor one major indicator in particular namely, the proportion of adult immigrants (15 years and older) who know French, in order to observe its evolution and adjust its policies as required.

* MICC's service offer. MELS also offers francization services to immigrants through the school boards.

OBJECTIVE 1

Expand the clientele reached by the francization service offer

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
1.1 ENABLE IMMIGRANTS WHO ARE ALREADY EMPLOYED TO PURSUE THE LEARNING OF FRENCH IN THE WORKPLACE The workplace francization program is a refresher training formula implemented to meet the needs of immigrant workers with limited knowledge of French who became integrated into the labour market more quickly and were not able to take advantage of the French courses offered full- or part-time. In concert with the primary stakeholders in the field such as the Commission des partenaires du marché du travail, the Office québécois de la langue française, the services to businesses of Emploi-Québec and the education network, the MICC will complement the offer of francization in the workplace in order to enable immigrants to have a better grasp of French in their workplace. This service offer must be diversified and adapted to the size of the business, area of activity and the nature of the duties carried out by immigrant workers. Various programs will therefore be implemented. The number of French courses offered in the workplace will be increased, experimental online training projects with tutors will be created and programs combining courses in the workplace and online self-directed learning will be offered. This measure requires the support of employers and unions. Businesses, especially those with 50 employees or less, will therefore be made aware of the importance of organizing French courses in the workplace. An effective marketing strategy will support this initiative aimed at strengthening the use of French in the workplace.	– New course programs that combine self-directed online learning and courses in the workplace – Pilot projects for online courses with distance teachers for workers – Renewal of agreements and promotion of the two self-directed learning centres with focused activities for workers – More partnership projects to offer more course hours (unions, sectoral committees, Emploi-Québec, OQLF, etc.) – Fieldwork with SMEs in collaboration with community organizations – Determining businesses that could benefit from francization services	Number of employers and number of immigrants reached by francization services in the workplace
1.2 IMPLEMENT A BUSINESS-DIRECTED REFUNDABLE TAX CREDIT FOR THE FRANCIZATION OF IMMIGRANTS In the budget speech (March 13, 2008), the Finance minister announced the introduction of a refundable tax credit for francization. Intended for all employers, it will enable them to deduct 30% of francization-related training expenses incurred for their immigrant employees.	– Introducing a refundable tax credit for francization – Promoting the tax credit to Québec businesses	Number of employers having taken advantage of the refundable tax credit

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
1.3 OFFER FRANCIZATION SERVICES TO A MORE DIVERSIFIED CLIENTELE AND BETTER SUPPORT FAMILY CLASS IMMIGRANTS This measure consists in making the MICC's part-time service offer accessible to individuals who are currently not eligible, i.e. older immigration cohorts as well as temporary workers and foreign students (and their spouse) who have a Québec selection certificate. It also aims to prompt more people in the family class to follow French as a second language courses by supplementing the financial aid to which they are entitled to with coverage of transportation costs. It also consists in conducting an inquiry to find out why certain clientele do not use the services available and adapting the service offer accordingly.	– Conduct an inquiry to understand the difficulty in reaching certain clientele – Associate with cultural community organizations to promote the services and recruit clientele – Carry out an information campaign to prompt target clientele to take advantage of MICC's francization services – Reach members of the family class by developing information tools aimed at them – Prompt more people in the family class to follow French as a second language courses by supplementing the financial aid to which they are entitled with coverage of transportation costs	Number and proportion of immigrants reached by immigration category

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
1.4 PROMOTE THE LEARNING OF FRENCH TO IMMIGRATION CANDIDATES AND IMMIGRANT PERSONS The MICC intends to actively promote the learning of French. It will also review all of its informational tools in order to increase information on French, the common language in Québec, and on the importance of learning it for a successful integration into Québec society. This strengthened message will also be used during promotional activities abroad directed at potential candidates. The measure is also aimed at developing and implementing a permanent marketing strategy for the francization service offer in Québec by targeting subgroups of immigrants who currently seldom use these services or not at all.	– Permanent marketing strategy of French teaching services directed at newcomers – Awareness-raising campaign aimed at certain isolated clienteles or those reached to a lesser extent by francization services – Increased information abroad on French, the common language in Québec, and its importance for successful integration – Promoting the learning of French abroad with promotional tools designed for this target clientele – Targeted promotion of specialized training services that offer French instruction adapted to specific professional sectors and at higher proficiency levels – Reinforce messages about French and French training in the <i>Learning about Québec</i> guide handed out to all selected immigrants as well as on the MICC's websites	Rate of increase of the clientele in francization services
1.5 INCREASE THE OPENING FREQUENCY OF NEW COURSE SESSIONS TO MEET NEEDS MORE QUICKLY This measure consists in the re-examination by the MICC of the organization of full-time francization sessions in order to increase the pace at which new courses begin. It aims to give quicker access to training, given the fact that the current training schedule only includes four sessions per year.	– Conduct a feasibility study to determine the best implementation methods – Inform partners and come to an agreement with them on the application methods for the new organization – Publicize the new session calendar	Number and proportion of immigrant persons who have begun a French instruction course within the timeframe established in the Declaration of services to citizens Number of groups started between the set session start dates

OBJECTIVE 2

Enable mastery of French at higher proficiency levels

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
2.1 OFFER SPECIALIZED FRENCH COURSES FOR CERTAIN PROFESSIONAL AREAS OF ACTIVITY AND ADVANCED-LEVEL MODULES FOR ONLINE FRENCH COURSES This measure consists in developing a service offer adapted to certain professional areas of activity (e.g., healthcare, engineering and administration) in order to facilitate and accelerate access to the labour market. It also involves developing advanced-level modules for the online French courses (FEL – francisation en ligne).	– Determining target professions and trades – Designing courses and teaching material for teachers and students – Designing advanced-level online modules (e-learning) and modules specific to certain professional areas of activity	Number and proportion of immigrant persons who have taken specialized courses

OBJECTIVE 3

Facilitate the learning of French as early as possible in the immigration process

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
3.1 EXPAND THE NETWORK OF PARTNERS ABROAD TO WHICH IMMIGRATION CANDIDATES CAN BE DIRECTED TO IMPROVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH The agreements negotiated with the Alliances françaises and other francization partners abroad, in collaboration with the Ministère des Relations internationales, enable individuals selected by Québec to have access, at their expense, to French courses that include activities to learn more about Québec. The MICC provides these partners with a documentary holding to assist them in this area. Other agreements will be added to the nearly 55 already negotiated over the past few years to ensure optimal coverage of Québec's recruitment territories.	– Negotiate partnership agreements – Offer a documentary holding on Québec – Inform the target clientele and refer more candidates	Number of individuals referred as part of the francization referral program Number of individuals having received a selection certificate following referral to a francization partner

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
3.2 MAKE FRENCH COURSES ACCESSIBLE ONLINE TO SELECTED CANDIDATES ABROAD AS WELL AS TO IMMIGRANT PERSONS ALREADY ESTABLISHED IN QUÉBEC AND EAGER TO IMPROVE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH An online intermediate-level French course will be accessible abroad to selected candidates and their spouses. Developed by the MICC, this course is adapted to the realities in Québec and allows users to familiarize themselves with its values as well as its cultural, social and economic codes. In Québec, immigrant persons will have access to self-directed online courses. Pilot projects will also be implemented that will involve employed immigrants or immigrants living where francization services are scarcely available or not at all.	– Implementation abroad – Promotion and clientele recruitment activities abroad – Pilot project with Québec businesses – Pilot project with immigrant persons living in the regions	Number of individuals having participated in self-directed training activities Number and proportion of non-Francophone selected candidates having participated in an online French course abroad Number and proportion of individuals who successfully complete a training block

OBJECTIVE 4

Better assess and recognize the French proficiency level of immigration candidates and individuals enrolled in the francization program

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
4.1 INCREASE USE OF STANDARDIZED PROFICIENCY TESTS IN FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE AS PART OF THE SELECTION PROCESS ABROAD This measure consists in promoting the use of a standardized test by demonstrating the advantages it provides immigration candidates, i.e. an accelerated processing of their application (that can then be processed based on their file), a formal recognition of the proficiency level achieved and, if applicable, a quick referral to a francization partner if improvement in French is required. Two standardized French proficiency tests have been recognized by the MICC since January 2007. These optional tests can be used in the selection process for candidates in the skilled worker category. Although they are now available in several countries, these tests are still rarely used.	– Promote the use of tests among target clienteles – Recognize the French proficiency of immigration candidates – Increase selection based on the file and thus accelerate the processing of applications	Number and proportion of candidates selected based on their file through the use of standardized tests Number and proportion of candidates whose application is accompanied by a standardized test result

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
4.2 IMPLEMENT STANDARDIZED TESTS TO ASSESS FRENCH PROFICIENCY UPON COMPLETION OF THE MICC FRANCIZATION PROGRAM This measure consists in instituting the use of a standardized test to assess French proficiency so that francization students can receive formal and objective recognition of the proficiency level achieved at the end of their MICC training. It will also enable the MICC to transparently report the French proficiency level its service offer enables immigrants to achieve and adjust it as needed.	– Determine the best tool available and use it to obtain reliable results – Adopt a language proficiency level scale common to both the MICC and the MELS – Develop the standardized test in partnership (Université de Montréal and MELS) – Establish a correspondence between this standardized test and those used abroad in the selection process	Number and proportion of students whose knowledge of French was assessed using a standardized test Proficiency levels attained

OBJECTIVE 5

Ensure better coherence of francization interventions, increase the system's efficiency and optimize the reception capacity of government services

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
5.1 ENSURE SIMPLIFIED AND UNIFIED ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT FRANCIZATION SERVICES AND RELATED FINANCIAL AID The MELS and the MICC will adopt a common francization training program and French proficiency evaluation scale for adult immigrants, allowing for greater harmonization of governmental services currently being offered. Also, jointly with the MELS and the MESS, the MICC will implement a one-stop-shop for access to francization services, responsible for assessing the needs and language proficiency of newcomers, determining the applicable financial aid and directing them to the facility that is most appropriate to their needs, i.e. a CÉGEP, university, school board or community organization. A unified allowance program for newcomers enrolled in the full-time francization program will also be implemented to support all participants equally. These changes will maximize the use of francization resources and ensure fairness in the services offered to all new immigrants. Considering the important operational and financial implications involved and the magnitude of the preliminary work to be done, this measure will be implemented in 2009.	– Adoption of a francization training program and a joint French proficiency evaluation scale (MICC and MELS) – Introduction of a one-stop-shop for access to francization services – Introduction of a unified allowance program for newcomers enrolled in the francization program full-time	Total number of francization students Wait times for francization Degree of satisfaction with the one-stop-shop (one-time measure)

Description	Actions	Performance indicators
5.2 DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT AN ONLINE ENROLMENT SERVICE FOR GOVERNMENT FRANCIZATION PROGRAMS This measure consists in designing a computer application that enables clients to submit their government francization services application online (MICC and MELS) and track its progress. This project is part of work related to the harmonization of government francization services.	– Design of a one-stop-shop (prior) – Conducting a feasibility study – Developing the computerized solution – Testing the tools developed and launching the service under the new one-stop-shop for access to government francization services	Number and proportion of applications submitted online

Acronyms

MELS: Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport

MESS: Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

MICC: Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles

OQLF: Office québécois de la langue française

SME: Small and medium enterprise

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