

Key Terms

FRENCH-SPEAKING IMMIGRANT

An immigrant for whom French is the first Canadian official language of usage. This includes permanent residents who declare knowledge of ‘French only’ as their official language or those who declare knowledge of ‘French and English’ as their official languages, as well as those who declare French as the language that they are the most at ease to use¹.

FRANCOPHONE MINORITY COMMUNITIES (FMCS)

Francophone minority communities outside of Quebec.

FRANCOPHONE SERVICE PROVIDER ORGANIZATION

An organization is defined as Francophone if its mandate, or part of it, includes serving the interest of the Francophone community in a given region and/or serves more than 50% of its clients or target groups in French².

FRANCOPHONE INTEGRATION PATHWAY

The Francophone integration pathway consists of a suite of settlement services in French, offered in a coordinated and integrated manner by Francophone organizations, and aimed at facilitating reception, support, economic and socio-cultural integration, as well as the creation of lasting ties between newcomers and Francophone communities.

PAR ET POUR (“BY AND FOR” FRANCOPHONES)

This principle requires the active involvement of Francophone communities in the development and implementation of policies, programs, and projects tailored to the specific needs of Francophone communities and French speaking newcomers.

WELCOMING FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

Welcoming Francophone Communities (WFC) is an initiative that supports targeted communities in creating an environment in which French-speaking newcomers will feel welcome, and enhance capacity to integrate and retain French-speaking newcomers³. Through partnerships, communities will be able to identify and implement projects, by and for Francophones, to address current gaps and develop innovative solutions adapted to their specific needs and those of the French-speaking newcomers settling in their communities.

The **Welcoming Francophone Communities initiative** represents 14 areas that have been selected to welcome and support French-speaking newcomers in their new community. This initiative is co-led by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Francophone communities outside Quebec, and **the 13 Réseaux en immigration francophone**.

In British Columbia, the selected Welcoming Francophone Community has received funding to pilot various activities for welcoming and integrating newcomers. The **community of Prince George** was chosen by the members of the BC Francophone Immigration Network (RIFCB) to implement this initiative.

¹ Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). “Meeting Our Objectives: Francophone Immigration Strategy”. 2019. Available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/corporate/publications-manuals/francophone-immigration-strategy.html>

² For more information, please refer to the IRCC document “Guidance on Implementing the Francophone Integration Pathway”. Available in iCARE resources.

³ Government of Canada. Action Plan for Official Languages – 2018-2023: Investing in Our Future. Available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/official-languages-bilingualism/official-languages-action-plan/2018-2023.html>

FAQ

Q: WHO QUALIFIES AS A FRANCOPHONE (OR FRENCH SPEAKING) CLIENT?

Any client who has French as their preferred official language and would like to receive services in French. This is not limited to clients who speak French as their mother tongue or who come from a Francophone country.

French is the 5th most-spoken language in the world, with over 300 million speakers⁴. French is spoken on all 5 continents and in 106 countries. With such a wide diversity, it is simply impossible to assume the preferred official language of your clients. The only way to know is to ask your clients in which of the two official languages they would like to receive services.

Q: AS A NON-FRANCOPHONE SERVICE PROVIDER, WHAT SHOULD I DO TO SUPPORT THE FRANCOPHONE INTEGRATION PATHWAY?

As a non-Francophone organization, you are also responsible for ensuring that all newcomers have access to accurate and complete information on settlement services offered in French by Francophone organizations, as well as the presence of Francophone communities in Canada⁵.

Q: WHAT IS A REFERRAL?

A referral means providing information to clients whose preferred official language is French on services in French available in person or virtually in the community, delivered by Francophone organizations⁶.

Q: HOW MANY FRANCOPHONE ORGANIZATIONS ARE THERE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA?

There are over 40 Francophone community organizations across the province that open their doors to newcomers and welcome and support newcomers in several areas: health, entrepreneurship, education, early childhood, arts and culture, services for people in precarious situations.

There are 6 IRCC-funded organizations:

La Coopérative d'immigration Le Relais francophone - Le Relais Francophone provides settlement services, information, orientation, integration, and employment services to holders of a Canadian immigration status and to naturalized citizens of Canada.

Collège Éducacentre - Collège Éducacentre is the only francophone college in British Columbia. They provide services for permanent residents and refugees:

- Settlement services, information, orientation, integration, employment services
- Language Instruction (English and French)
- TEF Exam

Conseil scolaire francophone - Francophone School Board (Conseil scolaire francophone) provides settlement and integration programs, information and orientation services for students and their families within the school and the community (TÉFIÉ Services/SWIS program).

⁴ Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères. The French language in figures.

Available at <https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/francophony-and-the-french-language/the-french-language-in-figures/>

⁵ For more information, please refer to the IRCC document "Guidance on Implementing the Francophone Integration Pathway". Available in iCARE resources.

⁶ For more information, please refer to the IRCC document "Guidance on Implementing the Francophone Integration Pathway". Available in iCARE resources.

FAQ

La Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique (SDECB) - La SDECB provides employment services, information, and orientation to francophone immigrants. They make employers aware of the opportunities to recruit skilled and bilingual newcomers.

Le Cercle des Canadiens Français de Prince-George (The French Canadian Association of Prince George) - Le Cercle des Canadiens Français de Prince-George provides settlement services, information, orientation, integration, employment services for Francophone immigrants through IRCC's Welcoming Francophone Communities (WFC) initiative.

Le Réseau en immigration francophone de la Colombie-Britannique – RIFCB (La Fédération des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique – FFCB) - Francophone Immigration Networks convene Francophone settlement service providers and a wide range of community partners to foster the capacity of Canada's Francophone minority communities to welcome, settle and fully integrate French-speaking newcomers into Canadian society.

The 34 members of the BC Francophone Immigration Network (RIFCB) provide information, orientation services, resources, and activities to facilitate the reception, settlement, and integration of immigrants.

Q: ARE THERE ANY ONLINE SETTLEMENT OR REMOTE SERVICES AVAILABLE IN FRENCH?

Due to COVID-19, most IRCC-funded settlement Francophone service providers offer remote services to newcomers.