

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**QCGN pleased by federal support for minority economic-development plan**

**MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 30** – Federal recognition of a 10-year economic development plan aimed at Quebec’s English-speaking community was welcomed by two major groups last week.

The Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC)’s report to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages, entitled [Economic Development of Official Languages Minority Communities in Canada](#), stressed a “collaborative approach when implementing positive measures targeting socio-economic development,” said CEDEC President and CEO, John Buck. “Working together to leverage official-language-minority communities’ assets at the local, regional, and provincial levels is the best guarantee of responding to the economic development needs of the community.”

The report’s acceptance encouraged Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Director General of the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN). “The Standing Committee’s recognition of the plan reflects a sincere effort on the part of the Committee to promote and protect these groups across Canada, while responding to their particular circumstances,” she said, noting that engaging members of the community in the process will ensure that actions are based on best evidence.

The QCGN, however, continues to be disappointed by the Bloc Québécois’s ongoing denial of the English-speaking community of Quebec’s status as an Official Language Minority Community, Martin-Laforge said, referring to the Bloc’s dissenting report. “This also leads to a denial of our community’s right to resources. As Canada’s Commissioner of Official Languages, Raymond Thériault, has repeatedly stated, the English-speaking community of Quebec suffers higher unemployment rates and lower median income levels than their francophone counterparts in Quebec, something the Bloc refuses to believe.”

While citing a recent report, Thériault noted that, “2021 census data confirms the unemployment rate of English-speaking Quebecers rising to 10.9% while French-speaking Quebecers remain constant at 6.9%. Further, the percentage of English-speaking Quebecers whose income was below the poverty line (10%) is almost twice that of French-speaking Quebecers (5.8%).”

“It is in that light that QCGN welcomed recommendations aimed to maintain an accurate picture of the economic state of our community in all regions of Quebec, and measures to improve it, such as free and accessible French-language training programs and improved partnerships between federal institutions and Quebec’s English-speaking communities,” Martin-Laforge said.

“The QCGN agrees with CEDEC’s suggestion that a 10-year economic development plan focusing on partnerships between public, private, and civil society sectors be developed. “Long-term planning is essential for effective economic outcomes in our communities.”

The Quebec Community Groups Network ([www.qcgn.ca](http://www.qcgn.ca)) is a not-for-profit organization bringing together English-language community organizations and individuals across Quebec. Its mission is to identify, explore, and address strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of English-speaking Quebec and to encourage dialogue and collaboration.

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