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**Working
Together**

**Travaillons
Ensemble**

Warmest wishes

to you and yours this holiday season!
We thank you for your support this past
year and look forward to working
with you in the new year.

Meilleurs vœux

à vous et aux vôtres en cette saison des fêtes !
Nous vous remercions pour votre soutien au cours de
la dernière année et nous nous réjouissons de travailler
avec vous au cours de la nouvelle année.



Please note that our QCGN workplaces will be closed for the holidays from December 26, 2022, to January 2, 2023, inclusively. Our offices will re-open on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

STANDING UP FOR OUR RIGHTS

By Eva Ludvig
QCGN President



As 2022 comes to a close, the sword of Damocles hanging over the head of Quebec's English-speaking community through **Bill C-13** has been temporarily sheathed as the federal government rises for the holiday break. The work of the Standing Committee on Official Languages (LANG) will continue in the new year, with a report on C-13 going back to the House no sooner than early March.

The QCGN's policy team has been closely following LANG's clause-by-clause study of C-13. We have been vocal that this federal Bill abandons half a century of linguistic policy in favour of protecting and promoting the French language at the expense of English-speaking Quebecers. There was hope, however, during the Committee's first clause-by-clause meeting last Tuesday, which featured spirited defences of the rights of English-speaking Quebecers made by Liberal MPs **Patricia Lattanzio**, **Anthony Housefather**, and **Marc Garneau**. I would like to extend my thanks to each of them for their important input. Watch the [full meeting here](#).

also incorporate, by reference, the Charter of the French Language into the new Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Act.

Earlier this week, opposition MPs confirmed to the Canadian Press that they plan to support the amendment to C-13 which would subject private businesses under federal jurisdiction in Quebec to the Charter of the French Language. This amendment would be a legal first and would constitute an unprecedented jurisdictional retreat by the federal government. See coverage by [CTV Montreal](#).

Over the past months, the QCGN has played a leading role in demanding the equal treatment of English and French in the Official Languages Act and we have stood firmly opposed to the application of Quebec's Charter of the French Language to federally regulated workplaces.

Federal support of the proposals included in Bill C-13 would knowingly legitimize Quebec's repeated use of the notwithstanding clause to trample on the minority language rights of English-speaking Quebecers. The government of Canada is proposing to abandon a half century of official language policy grounded in the principle that French and English, and Canada's linguistic minority communities, possess equal rights under the law. Parliamentarians would also be turning their backs on a longstanding vision of a Canada in which linguistic duality and the protection of minority rights are intrinsic values.

We insist that the Official Languages Act maintain the principle of equality of French and English and strongly oppose the asymmetrical approach being proposed in Bill C-13. We remain committed to working with parliamentarians to safeguard the language rights of Canadians, both English and French.

As I stated in the QCGN's [opinion piece](#) in The Montreal Gazette, this rewrite of the Official Languages Act is historic and must be undertaken with the greatest of care and diligence. Our parliamentarians have an opportunity to demonstrate that they stand firmly behind fundamental rights and freedoms for all Canadians.

Continued Support for Open Letter

The QCGN has been leading a campaign to oppose changes to the Official Languages Act through Bill C-13 that do not reflect our vision of Canada. As an organization and as a community, we are deeply committed to the protection and promotion of French, however, unlike many proponents of the new Charter of the French Language and Bill C-13, we are convinced that this is not a zero-sum game. The good news is, as mentioned in an update sent from QCGN Director General **Sylvia Martin-Laforge** to signatories yesterday, barring anything extraordinary, the earliest that C-13 could be passed into law will be late spring.

[Read the full document.](#)

While Bill C-13 is on the backburner for the holidays, we are continuing our call for the federal government to remove all mention of The Charter of the French Language (Bill 101) from the Bill through an open letter addressed to federal Justice Minister **David Lametti** and his parliamentary colleagues. The inclusion of the provincial language law within a federal law would abandon half a century of official language policy in favour of protecting only one official language community, at the expense of English-speaking Quebecers. The inclusion of the Charter into C-13 also enshrines into federal law the use of the notwithstanding clause by the Coalition Avenir Québec government to trample on the rights of the English-speaking minority.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the over 2,100 individual Canadians who added their names to this letter, and I strongly encourage those who have not already done so to [read and sign the letter](#) and share it widely within your personal and professional networks. Parliamentarians like Housefather, Lattanzio, Garneau, and Senator **Judith Seidman** need our support as they work with their Parliamentary colleagues to protect the rights of English-speaking Quebecers in Ottawa. You can also follow and share our #OuiBelong campaign on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) and follow the progression of the Bill on our [Language Rights](#) page and stay tuned for more elements of our campaign.

bill as it currently stands is simply not acceptable.

IN OTHER NEWS: MAJORITY OF QUEBECERS SUPPORT PROTECTION OF LINGUISTIC MINORITY RIGHTS

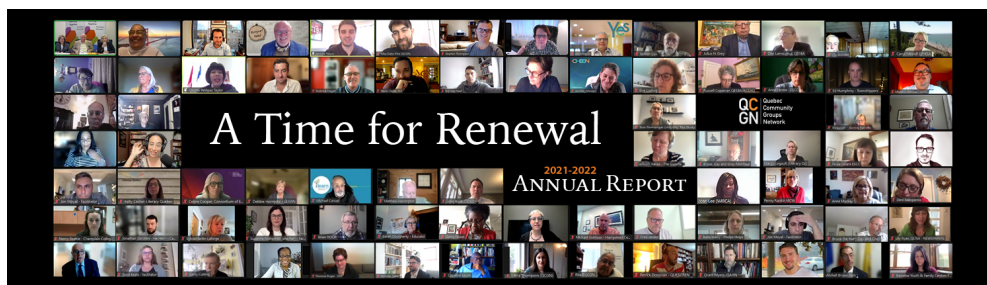
Both English- and French-speaking Quebecers agree on numerous issues concerning language rights for Quebec's English-speaking minority community, according to data from a Léger survey for the QCGN and the Association for Canadian Studies. Equal access to justice and health care for English and French Quebecers in their own language, as well as funding for community projects that reflects our proportion of the population were all supported from a clear majority of French- and English-speaking survey respondents.

The numbers show that 84 per cent of French-speaking respondents support equal access to health care for English-speaking Quebecers, with 43 per cent adding that they strongly support this measure. The notion of access to the courts in English was also supported by 85 per cent of French-speaking respondents. Another two-thirds of French-speakers also agreed that funding for the English-speaking community should reflect its size.

Along with these issues, English- and French-speaking respondents agreed that Quebec's English-speaking community should continue to receive support from the federal government. The survey found 81 per cent of all Quebecers to be in favour of sustained or more support from Ottawa, with 41 per cent of this group indicating that they feel that Ottawa should be doing more to assist our community.

This survey demonstrates that we Quebecers, both French- and English-speaking, agree that the English-speaking minority community deserves to be supported and to have its rights respected. We hope the Coalition Avenir Québec government takes note of the results of this survey. Read our [press release](#) and the full [poll results](#) and see coverage by [CTV Montreal](#), the [Montreal Gazette](#), and [CJAD 800](#).

A TIME FOR RENEWAL – THE 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE QCGN

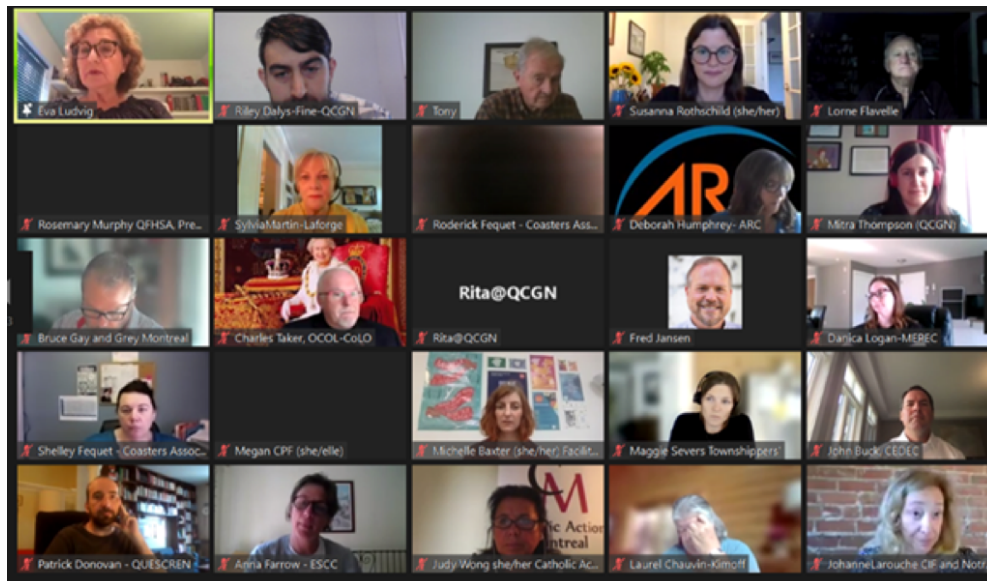


As we prepare to celebrate the new year, we have just published the [QCGN's 2021-2022 Annual Report](#) on our website. We invite you to take a backward glance at some of our accomplishments over a turbulent fiscal year that included the passage of Bill 96, which overhauled the Charter of the French Language, and the introduction of Bill C-13, the proposed legislation to update the Official Languages Act.

The language landscape shifted significantly and adversely over the past year. Both the provincial and federal governments introduced legislation, the fallout from which will undoubtedly have direct and grave impacts on the rights of English-speaking Quebecers and the vitality of our minority communities. In early May, the provincial government introduced Bill 96, which aimed to enforce and reinforce the Charter of the French Language (Bill 101). A month later, the federal government introduced Bill C-32 which seeks to modernize the Official Languages Act, which will abandon half a century of official language policy in favour

While our work in 2021-2022 was dominated by intense advocacy for the rights of English-speaking Quebecers, we took critical steps in pursuing our goal of renewing our organization, ensuring a framework for ongoing community engagement and priority setting, and reinforcing the essential link between advocacy and community development. Active listening and ongoing dialogue enabled a more grassroots approach to advocacy, strongly and more directly linking our policy work with community needs and priorities.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2027



By **Riley Dalys-Fine**

Director of Community Engagement and Strategic Alliances

This year, the QCGN and community stakeholders produced and released the 2022-2027 Community Development Plan for English-speaking Quebec. Titled ***Working Together for a More Vital Community***, this plan is the result of more than three years of continuous work to develop the platform for collective action to ensure the community's continued vitality. The Plan was validated by the four Community Vitality Roundtables in June and endorsed by the QCGN Board of Directors in July. It was shared with the community at the ***Looking Ahead to a More Vital Community Forum*** on Sept. 9.

While we reflect on the successes and challenges of the previous year, the Community Development Plan is a compelling example of the resilience of Quebec's English-speaking community and its institutions and organizations. Creating the Community Development Plan took years of consultation and collaboration between dozens of stakeholders. Since this process began in the fall of 2019, more than 80 community organizations have participated in the ongoing dialogue which would ultimately lead to the formation of the Community Vitality Roundtables and the development of the Plan. Thanks to their work, we have a framework that allows our community of communities to work together to achieve what we cannot accomplish on our own.

It bears keeping in mind that all this work took place during a time of unprecedented challenges for English-speaking Quebec's community sector. First, we contended with the impacts of a global pandemic and the burden it placed on our health and social services system. We then reckoned with the repercussions of Bill 96 on our communities. In the last year, the English-speaking community has had to deal with added challenges from the federal government in the form of Bill C-13, an Act to modernize Canada's Official Languages Act. Through these hardships, the community has consistently come together to build a Community Development Plan that is reflective of the diverse regions, sectors, and populations which comprise Quebec's English-speaking community.

This summer, Quebec's English-speaking community was invited by the Government of Canada to take part in consultations for its next Action Plan on Official Languages, expected early in 2023. In partnership with the Community Vitality Roundtables, the QCGN immediately set to work mobilizing stakeholders to attend discussions and submit briefs to the Minister of Official Languages **Ginette Petitpas Taylor**. The ink was not yet dry on our Community Development Plan as we faced its first litmus test: presenting a common vision to the federal government of the vitality of our Official Language Minority Community.

The Action Plan for Official Languages is nearing the end of its fourth cycle, and next year we could see the first Action Plan under an Official Languages Act as modernized by Bill C-13. The negative impact that this could have on our community's vitality is significant. As one of Canada's two Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs), Quebec's English-speaking community has always benefited from the support of the Government of Canada under the principle of substantive equality. This principle required due consideration for Quebec's English-speaking community and made certain guarantees of equitable treatment for both English-speaking Quebec and French Canada. C-13, however, would implement an asymmetrical approach to developing policy, programming, and funding for Canada's two Official Language Minority Communities, with a focus on protecting French in and outside of Quebec.

While C-13 has not been voted into law, the shift in approach was already evident to the community during the consultations, where the prevailing sentiment was that the process was geared towards developing an Action Plan primarily for the protection of French in Canada. While English speakers were underrepresented in that process, our community worked throughout the summer to ensure that we were represented in all discussions and that our needs and priorities were understood. These efforts culminated in the submission of a **report** to Minister Petitpas Taylor.

First year of Community Development Plan to be reviewed at March Forum

Looking ahead, the four Community Vitality Roundtables will continue to meet to oversee progress on the Community Development Plan. These Roundtables are responsible for bringing together stakeholders to discuss challenges and propose strategies to address four key areas of community development: Data, Funding, Organizational and Network Health, and Representation. Each of the four Roundtables is currently chaired by one of its members, ensuring that this process remains community driven.

The 2022-2027 Community Development Plan will be the subject of a Community Vitality Forum, which the QCGN will host in partnership with the Roundtables on **March 10, 2023**. We are especially excited to share that this forum will be the first in-person community forum since our Town Hall events in February 2020. We look forward to sharing more details about the forum in the new year, but for the time being we encourage you to save the date. There is still room to get involved with the Community Vitality Roundtables. If you would like more information, I encourage you to reach out to me at Riley.Dalys-Fine@qcgnc.ca.

STATSCAN LANGUAGE REPORTS

By Joshua Allan
QCGN Communication Support Officer

Statistics Canada released several reports last month focused on the data that was collected from the 2021 federal Census. Among a variety of topics, the reports included data on language in the workplace, as well as on eligibility for instruction in the minority official language – two areas of keen interest for the English-speaking community in Quebec.

The evaluation of the number of children eligible for education in a minority official language came as a new feature in this past federal census. The questions were added based on criteria established by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and consultations held

representatives. Looking at the numbers, the StatsCan report, *Learning in the minority language: Counting eligible children with the census*, shows that 304,000 children in Quebec – just over 18 per cent of all children in the province – were eligible for instruction in the minority official language at the primary and secondary levels in Quebec in 2021, with around 230,000 eligible for the public sector. “[T]hat’s a high number,” **Russell Copeman**, executive director of the **Quebec English School Boards Association** (QESBA), told **CTV News**: “It’s quite frankly higher than many of us anticipated”.

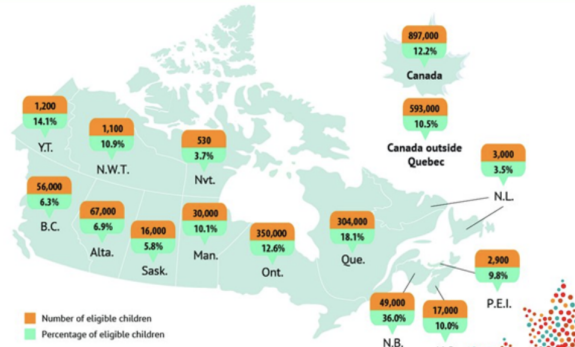
This data is important for official language minority communities, such as ours, in order to analyze how many children are eligible for education in an official minority language. It is in school where children will not only learn the language but also learn about the values of our community, and the important roles that English-speaking Quebecers have played in the history of this province and in Canada as a whole. It is through schooling that we are able to renew our linguistic minority community, ensuring its vitality for years to come.

Another topic of importance to our community is the StatsCan report on *Languages of work across Canada*. The report indicates that the use of French on a regular basis at work in Quebec remains steady at 92.1 per cent. At the same time, the rate of English used as the predominant language while at work in the province has risen slightly from 12 per cent in 2016 to 14 per cent in 2021. It must be noted, however, that caution should be used when comparing data from the 2016 and 2021 censuses, due to changes in data collection.

“Premier **François Legault** must take note of the StatsCan data on language in the workplace,” says QCGN Director General Sylvia Martin-Laforge: “The high usage of French indicates that many English-speaking Quebecers are able to get by in and contribute to predominantly French-speaking workplaces.” Premier François Legault has suggested that data on the language most often used at home is the best indicator of the vitality of the French language in the province. “It should go without saying that in a free and democratic society, no one, absolutely no one, has the right to tell anyone else what language they can speak in their own home,” writes former politician **Tom Mulcair** in an opinion piece he recently wrote for the **Montreal Gazette**.

See details of StatsCan releases on **education**, **labour**, **language of work**, **commuting**, and **instruction in the minority official language**. See coverage of data release on Minority Education Rights Holders by **CTV Montreal** and this **press release** from QESBA. Also see coverage on the language of work data on **CTV Montreal**, and **Radio-Canada**,

Official language, while more than a third of children in New Brunswick were eligible



Note(s): In the 2021 Census, children eligible for instruction in the minority official language were younger than 18 years of age on December 31, 2020 (born in 2003 or later).
Source(s): Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021 (9901).



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