

For immediate release

Building bridges between communities valuable, QCGN annual meeting is told

Montreal – June 20, 2024 – In focusing on finding common cause with Quebec’s francophone majority population, the Quebec Community Groups Network is on the right track, the organization’s annual general meeting heard today.

Hard on the heels of a report released Tuesday by Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL) about [the importance of bridge-building](#) between Canada’s official-language communities, QCGN President Eva Ludvig told the more than 50 people assembled at the St. Jax Community Centre in downtown Montreal that finding common cause is one thing that can work to help Quebecers better understand each other, and demonstrate in particular that the English-speaking community of Quebec is not a threat to the French language the way it is often portrayed.

“We need to hammer home the notion that English-speaking Quebecers are part of the glue that holds this country together,” Ludvig said. “This is not just a glib phrase; it’s actually important, and we should attempt to ensure all political leaders at whatever level understand this point and are persuaded to listen more carefully to our suggestions.”

“Protecting Quebec’s English-speaking communities and Canada’s bilingual status promotes diversity, inclusion and strong economic advantages,” said The Honourable Randy Boissonnault, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Official Languages, following the meeting, “That’s why our Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-2028 invests directly in minority language communities, and organizations like the Quebec Community Groups Network, to help them grow and thrive in the official language of their choice.”

The OCOL report also confirms that QCGN’s proposal to be included in the Quebec government’s Plan d’Action for the French language as a 10th priority is bang on.

“Our task is to ensure the voices of English-speaking Quebecers are not only heard but heeded,” QCGN Director-General Sylvia Martin-Laforge told the meeting. “We have spent considerable time and effort over the past year to put in place the framework and resources needed to get there through a broadening of our communications efforts as we also sharpen our message.

“The QCGN remains committed to advocating balanced, symmetrical policies that protect minority-language rights and promote linguistic duality in Canada.”

During the Annual General Meeting early Thursday evening, the QCGN paid tribute to two outgoing Board members – former Senator Joan Fraser and former QCGN President Marlene Jennings – in addition to welcoming an incoming Board member, well-known retired broadcasting executive Rob Braide.

QCGN members also passed a resolution in support of five guiding principles English-speaking Quebec feels are necessary in the development of new regulations related to Part VII of the federal Official Languages Act. Part VII is a critical lifeline between the government of Canada and our linguistic minority. The new regulations will better define the responsibilities of federal institutions to consult with and support our community.

Returning Board members include Alix Adrien, Matt Aronson, Eleni Bakopanos, Katherine Korakakis, Ludvig (heading into another year as QCGN President), Eric Maldoff, Chad Bean, Grant Myers, and Peter Starr. Other board members, representing individual members, are Chelsea Craig, Jordan Black, and Maria Kyles.

Link to English version of OCOL report: <https://www.clo-ocol.gc.ca/en/publications/studies-other-reports/2024/building-bridges>

The Quebec Community Groups Network (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.

For further information:

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