



**BUILDING BRIDGES**  
ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE  
SECRÉTARIAT AUX RELATIONS  
AVEC LES QUÉBÉCOIS  
D'EXPRESSION ANGLAISE  
2017-2019



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For more information, you may contact the Direction des communications.

Direction des communications  
du ministère du Conseil exécutif  
et du Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor  
1<sup>er</sup> étage, secteur 400  
875, Grande Allée Est  
Québec (Québec) G1R 4Y8

Telephone: 418 643-2001

Fax: 418 643-3006

Email: [communic@mce.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:communic@mce.gouv.qc.ca)

Website: [www.mce.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.mce.gouv.qc.ca)

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

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The creation of the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise meets a need expressed by the English-speaking communities. The government understands the importance of this essential administrative structure to help English-speakers achieve their full potential, in Québec.

Thanks to the Secrétariat, we are now in a better position to build bridges between the English-speaking communities and the public administration, with the primary objective of facilitating full participation in Québec's social, economic and cultural life.

Several challenges still remain if the English-speaking communities are to contribute to the dynamic growth of our society while at the same time being assured of high-quality services. I am thinking, in particular, of the members of small communities, who face multiple difficulties. Language should not constitute a barrier to public services, but other obstacles such as isolation and a dwindling population can also have a negative impact. We are determined to remove the obstacles once and for all and to offer English-speaking Quebecers our constant support, in particular through the initiatives financed by the Secrétariat.

The socio-economic status of some English-speaking Quebecers is another concern for us as a government. Contrary to popular belief, English speakers face a higher unemployment rate than their French-speaking neighbours, and are also more likely to be living under the poverty line. One of the ways to redress this situation, and a priority for us as a government, is to create wealth by encouraging more people to remain in or return to the labour market. Significant resources have been allocated for this purpose, and we will spare no effort to find a solution for each individual.

The exodus of young English-speakers is another worrying problem. Many leave Québec prior or after completing their studies, and this is very unfortunate. The government has launched an ambitious economic plan based on the growth of private investment and the creation of well-paid jobs for all. The implementation of the plan will clearly help keep young, talented people from the English-speaking communities in Québec.

I fully support our continuing actions to help English-speaking Quebecers, and this report on the work accomplished by the Secrétariat reflects our willingness to build bridges with the English-speaking communities.

FRANÇOIS LEGAULT



## MESSAGE FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANT TO THE PREMIER FOR RELATIONS WITH ENGLISH-SPEAKING QUEBECERS



Since I took up my duties, it has been my privilege to meet with many members of Québec’s English-speaking communities. During our discussions, I have always noted our shared love for the province.

I have also learned that many English-speakers feel excluded from Québec society and consider that they are unable to participate fully in the cultural, economic and political aspects of our collective life. It is all too clear that some people do not have adequate access to public services in the health, education and training sectors. This is a concern, and one that highlights the need to build strong bridges between the Québec public administration and the English-speaking communities. This is my motivation for strengthening government actions in this area.

I firmly believe that the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d’expression anglaise can help make our decision-makers more aware of the realities and needs of the English-speaking communities in Québec, just as it can provide the communities with more information about the full extent of public resources allocated to them.

Since its creation in November 2017, the Secrétariat has played an active role in strengthening relations between the public administration and English-speaking Quebecers. This report provides an overview of what has been achieved. We have made a good start! I would like to commend the work of the team at the Secrétariat and to offer my full support as it continues to pursue its mandate.

We are eager to meet with all the different English-speaking communities in Québec in order to understand their needs, respond to their concerns and inform them about the role of the Secrétariat. It is essential that we take the time to listen to each individual who chooses to take part in the consultations, and I look forward to pursuing the mission entrusted to me by the Premier, along with the Secrétariat.

English-speaking Quebecers can rely on the government and the Secrétariat team to listen attentively to their concerns and address the issues that affect them.

CHRISTOPHER SKEETE



## MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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This report provides an overview of the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise (SRQEA) from its creation in November 2017 until the end of its first full year of operation in March 2019.

The document focuses on the various dimensions of its mandate: community liaison, research, policy development, interdepartmental relations and intergovernmental relations.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the objectives, strategies and activities of the Secrétariat to ensure that stakeholders inside and outside government are fully informed of its progress to date.

WILLIAM FLOCH



# CREATION OF THE SECRÉTARIAT AUX RELATIONS AVEC LES QUÉBÉCOIS D'EXPRESSION ANGLAISE

## History and contribution of English-speaking communities

The English-speaking communities have deep roots in Québec. They have influenced the evolution of Québec society and contributed to building a modern Québec and to the expression of its identity.

The English-speaking communities of Québec also play an important role in Canada's economic and political development and continue to display a strong entrepreneurial dynamism. Québec's scientific, cultural and social sectors, as well as its architectural heritage, have also benefited from the dynamism of this community thanks to the remarkable contribution of internationally renowned researchers, authors, musicians and actors.

The philanthropic spirit that animates this community is reflected in the creation of several recognized institutions, such as the Montreal General Hospital, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and McCord Museum. It has national and international exposure through academic institutions such as McGill, Concordia and Bishop's universities, and shines through the talent of multiple artists and writers.

These communities participated in building Québec, are part of Québec's history, but are also part of its future.

## Background

For several years, various stakeholders including Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages and the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) emphasized the importance of creating an office for relations with English-speaking Quebecers similar to structures dedicated to French-speaking minorities in other Canadian provinces.

Through various groups or organizations, English-speaking communities have reiterated the need for a more structured relationship with the Gouvernement du Québec. In the 2015 Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)-CROP Community Vitality Survey, a very high majority (88%) of English-speaking Quebecers supported the creation of an Anglophone Affairs Office within the Gouvernement du Québec.<sup>1</sup>

The communities wanted to feel included in the public and political life of Québec. When new rules or public policies were implemented, they did not feel taken into account or considered.

Furthermore, access to services in English in the regions is more difficult than in the greater Montréal area.

- English-speaking Quebecers in the Montréal metropolitan area benefit from most of the institutional base (general and vocational colleges (CEGEPs), universities, university hospitals, corporate headquarters, etc.), as well as a critical mass in the fields of culture and communications.

1. COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES NETWORK (CHSSN), (2016). Baseline Data Report 2015-2016 [PDF], *The 2015 CHSSN-CROP Survey on Community Vitality* p. 21.



- English-speaking communities in outlying regions are more isolated and are experiencing a demographic decline.
- This geographic disparity poses challenges for political and community representation, health, education and social institutions and services in the English-speaking community.

## Examples from other Canadian jurisdictions

Until the creation of the Secrétariat, Québec was the only province in Canada to have no administrative structure dedicated to the official-language minority community.

Outside Québec, provincial and territorial governments have adopted laws, regulations, policies, orders and language-related directives to meet their official languages obligations and provide services to francophone minorities.

These structures differ from one government to another. The Secrétariat aux priorités et aux projets stratégiques (SPPS) of the ministère du Conseil exécutif (MCE) has conducted an analysis of administrative structures, particularly with regard to:

- the political and administrative authorities responsible for these entities;
- their mandates, functions and responsibilities;
- their legal bases, constitutive and relevant laws and regulations;
- the presence or name of official languages policies;
- the annual budgets of the entities in question;
- their number of employees;
- their date of creation and history;
- the present francophone population of the province.

## Launch and mandate

In the fall of 2017, the Gouvernement du Québec took the decision to create the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise (SRQEA). This new entity is housed in the MCE and has a Minister responsible for the Secrétariat. This allows the concerns of the English-speaking community to be heard at the highest levels of government.

On November 24, 2017, the Secrétariat was officially launched at the Morrin Centre in Québec City with the announcement of the appointment of an Assistant Secretary. At its inception, the Secrétariat had a budget of just over \$1 million and had the authority to hire eight people. The team was gradually formed in the winter of 2018.

The Secrétariat's mandate is to:

- ensure liaison with the sectoral, regional and provincial groups that represent English-speaking Quebecers;
- ensure recognition of the concerns of English-speaking Quebecers in government policy directions and decision-making as well as regards to access to government programs and their application, in collaboration with the relevant government departments and agencies;



- facilitate access to the relevant statistics, in particular to document the challenges that English-speaking Quebecers are facing;
- interact with the federal government with respect to the issues, agreements, programs or policies that can directly or indirectly affect English-speaking Quebecers, in collaboration with the Secrétariat du Québec aux relations canadiennes (SQRC) and government departments and bodies;
- advise the government and government departments and bodies in their relations with English-speaking Quebecers and service delivery, and on the issues, agreements, programs and policies that can directly or indirectly affect this community.

## Strategic objectives of the Secrétariat: the logic model

In its first year of operation, the Secrétariat developed a strategic vision that closely follows the mandate assigned by the government and identifies anticipated short-, medium- and long-term results. The logic model that expresses the strategic vision can be found on the Secrétariat's website.<sup>2</sup>

The expected long-term outcome for the Secrétariat is that organizations and institutions from English-speaking communities will have better relationships with Gouvernement du Québec departments and agencies and will work together to promote the full participation of English-speaking Quebecers in all aspects of society, be it social, cultural or economic.

The expected mid-term results are that:

- community organizations and institutions will have an increased ability to partner with the Government;
- departments and agencies and other government-level entities will be better informed about the situation of Québec's English-speaking communities and demonstrate an increased capacity to include them in departmental strategies, programs and services;
- the Secrétariat will be perceived by community stakeholders and by the government as a useful facilitator for establishing community-government links and as a source of reliable and relevant information on community realities and government policies or programs.

The logic model presents this information in an organized and coherent way. Short-term results are established based on the Secrétariat's mandates and are associated with the targets to be achieved. In addition to the general administration of the Secrétariat, these mandates are:

- building an evidence base;
- community liaison;
- policies and programs;
- interdepartmental relations;
- inter-governmental relations.

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2. [www.mce.gouv.qc.ca/srqa](http://www.mce.gouv.qc.ca/srqa).



This logic model also shows that the work to be done begins with building an evidence base that can be used to found action on a solid evidence base. The liaison work provides useful information on community needs across Québec. These two approaches combined make it possible to describe the situation of Québec's English-speaking communities in a way that is clear and aligned with their reality.

By developing interdepartmental and intergovernmental relations, the Secrétariat will be able to identify the policies and programs that need to be modified or implemented to achieve the long-term result of ensuring the full participation of English speakers in Québec society.

The logic model is a sort of roadmap to lay out this work during the Secrétariat's first years of operation. The result of this process will be the government action plan.

## The theme of a government action plan

The theme of the plan that emerged when interacting with partners is that of building bridges.

- The idea is to build bridges between the government and the English-speaking communities of Québec, as well as between the English and French-speaking communities.
- This depends, in turn, on values such as respect for diversity, openness to others, fairness and impartiality, collaboration in driving change and innovation in applying effective solutions to solve problems.

## COMMUNITY LIAISON

Among its responsibilities, the Secrétariat has a mandate:

To ensure liaison with the sectoral, regional and provincial groups that represent English-speaking Quebecers.

In the period November 2017 to March 31, 2019, the Secrétariat delivered on this mandate:

- by organizing structured consultations in February-March 2018;
- through an extensive series of bilateral and multilateral meetings with community organizations and institutions;
- through the development of a funding support program to build capacity at the community level.

The following section describes some of the Secrétariat's key community liaison activities to date.

## 2018 consultations

As a first step in fulfilling its community liaison mandate, the Secrétariat organized a series of consultation activities, the purpose of which was to gather input from community and institutional networks on the priorities and orientations that could inform the Secrétariat in its start-up phase.

The exchanges also provided the Minister responsible for Relations with English-Speaking Quebecers and Secrétariat personnel with an opportunity to become more familiar with the community and institutional networks and provide community stakeholders with first-hand information on the initial plans and orientations of the Minister and the Secrétariat.

The Secrétariat's exchanges with community stakeholders involved two formats:

- The first was a series of eight online tele-meeting sessions based on regional and sectoral groupings, which were offered from February 1 to 9, 2018 and in which a total of 164 community representatives participated. The sessions were arranged by regional and sectoral themes as follows:
  - » Regions of Québec: Western/Northern, Central/Southern, Eastern, Greater Montréal
  - » Sectors: Education, Children & Youth; Economy & Employability, Youth Retention; Arts, Culture, Heritage and Media; Health & Social Services and Seniors
- The second format was a face-to-face meeting with 42 community representatives, held on February 16 at Concordia University in Montréal, which served to validate the key messages heard by the Minister and Secrétariat personnel during the previous online exchange sessions.

Three main topics framed the sessions:

- Policies, Programs and Services of the Gouvernement du Québec
- Role of Community Institutions, Associations and Networks
- Orientations and Priorities for the Secrétariat

During the online sessions, community representatives presented their views on Québec government policies, programs and services, as well as the situations and challenges faced by English-speaking communities. They also provided examples of successful or innovative initiatives or program approaches that government or public institutions have taken in response to the particular situation of English-speaking communities, and suggested specific ways to better adapt the government approach. Participants were also invited to provide additional input via an online form after the exchange sessions.

During the face-to-face meeting at Concordia University, Secrétariat personnel presented the summary findings on each of three main themes (government, community and Secrétariat) and asked participants if these findings generally reflected the input received from those participating in the exchange sessions. The participants were also asked to add or reinforce other important points and, considering the community input and the Secrétariat's analysis, to suggest what areas of activity or actions should



be prioritized by the Secrétariat in its start-up phase. The aggregate input from the online sessions, the face-to-face meeting, the post-session online input and the results from the online evaluation survey were used to inform the Secrétariat in its start-up phase.

## Community Perspectives

### Policies, programs and services of the Gouvernement du Québec

Participants in the consultation sessions addressed a number of policy dimensions and shared the following concerns:

- Lack of recognition of the English-speaking communities and the legitimacy of their concerns, along with an outdated view of the English community as a wealthy, privileged minority.
- Lack of visibility of the English-speaking community within policies and programs and inconsistency of government services and information in English, resulting in poor understanding and uptake.
- In policy terms, English speakers feel like the proverbial ‘square peg in a round hole’, not meeting the specific criteria of government programs.
- Delays in implementation of important community measures such as access committees in the health and social services sector, and the appointment of an Assistant Deputy Minister for the English education sector.
- Continued low presence of English speakers in the public service, along with elevated French-language competency requirements that are viewed as an obstacle.
- Members of visible minority groups who face additional challenges.
- Policy and program gaps for youth, the unemployed and under-employed, program and service delivery at the regional county municipality level and local access to French-second-language courses and vocational training.

### Community institutions, associations and networks

Participants in the online exchange sessions commented on a series of issues they face:

- Being labelled as a problem (“we’re not angryphones”); the participants preferred to position the community and its organizations as part of the solution, based on the community’s strong tradition of volunteerism, giving and self-reliance.
- The fragile funding base with little access to core funding relative to the number of projects to be implemented.
- The opportunity and the feasibility of participating in various committees and tables to represent and discuss community needs, such as the access committee.
- Having to contend with diverse regional differences, vast territories and geographical differences, high travel costs, and diversity amongst the English-speaking population.
- Successful partnerships and networks have been put in place but require additional resource investments.

- Organisations are adapting to better address community needs, in some cases evolving from advocacy to service provider, especially in the areas of health and social services and social economy.
- The importance of French-language competency to stay and thrive in Québec and the need to provide support for courses and professional development for teachers.
- The identity of the English-speaking population and the decline in English-language institutions as well as the decline of English-Language culture and heritage within the schools and educational curriculum, and the need for improved connections between arts and education.
- The need to support the heritage sector which faces funding challenges and is volunteer dependent.
- Access to justice in Québec is a concern as some administrative tribunals cannot function in English.
- With youth being so mobile and opportunities abounding, it is a significant challenge to retain young bilingual English-speaking Quebecers in Québec as their bilingual language skills are a sought-after attribute.

## Orientations and priorities for the Secrétariat

The participants commented on the role, orientations and priorities of the Secrétariat:

- They recognized the Secrétariat's primary role to serve as a facilitator in:
  - » linking community organizations and institutions with the appropriate government bodies;
  - » helping to open doors in government for adapted access to programs and services;
  - » being present in government deliberations as policies and programs are developed.
- They appreciated the process of engagement and supported the continuation of the exercise on a regular basis.
- They appreciated the inclusion of building an evidence base regarding the English-speaking community, to correct some of the misperceptions and lack of understanding about the community and to guide policy development.
- The creation of a funding program to support community infrastructure received universal endorsement as it would help organizations to:
  - » be present within the multiple levels of jurisdiction;
  - » reduce the necessity for organizations to compete with francophone partners within the same funding envelopes;
  - » help address the gaps in regional and sector community infrastructures.
- It was proposed that the Gouvernement du Québec adopt an official policy on English-speaking Quebecers. This would allow for the reception of services in English so that English speakers can fully participate in the social, economic, and political life of the province, while maintaining their linguistic and cultural heritage.



- A survey of participants in the consultations found that more than 80% found the consultations to be very useful.<sup>3</sup>

## The main fields of action

With regard to English-speaking Quebecers, the main fields of action identified by the communities included:

- the capacity for action and sustainability of community organizations, institutions and networks of partnerships;
- the vitality of communities and the disparity of their realities in each region;
- removal of barriers to access to government programs by agencies and institutions;
- increased participation in civil society, public institutions and the civil service;
- easier access to public services, especially health and social services;
- the development of employability and the retention of young graduates;
- the development of communities and employability through entrepreneurship, especially in the social economy;
- the development of language skills in French as a second language;
- creativity and dynamism in the arts and culture as well as the conservation of community heritage;
- supporting the concerns of English-speaking communities in the development of public policies and programs.

## Gateway to organizations and networks

In order to facilitate links between the community and the government, the Secrétariat has organized and participated frequently in bilateral and multilateral meetings with organizations and institutions representing English-speaking Quebecers.

In 2018-2019 alone, Secrétariat staff held 98 meetings and activities with English-speaking community organizations.

A number of these meetings also brought together staff from other departments and agencies in Québec. It is anticipated that the participation of officials from other departments will increase over the next few years.

## SUPPORT PROGRAM – STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY VITALITY

Notable achievements of the Secrétariat in its first phase include the creation of its financial support program, the “Strengthening Community Vitality” program. The following section of this report recounts

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3. *Evaluation of Exchange Session*, SRQEA, 2018.

the process leading to the creation of the program and provides an analysis of the program trends thus far by objective, region and sector.<sup>4</sup>

## History of the program

March 2018 – The Secrétariat assisted the ministère des Finances (MF) in the organization of a pre-budget consultation at McGill University where 20 representatives of community organizations presented their views on the needs and priorities of the English-speaking community.

The representations made during this pre-budget consultation closely matched the key messages heard during the February 2018 exchange sessions with the communities. Community representatives expressed strong support for the creation of a Secrétariat funding program, and several of these organizations subsequently submitted funding proposals for specific projects.

These exchanges and consultations culminated in an announcement in the March 2018 budget giving the Secrétariat responsibility for creating a funding program with a budget of \$24.5 million over six years, 2017-2018 to 2022-2023.

**April-May 2018** – The government announced the signing of agreements with Concordia and McGill universities, to support employability initiatives and strengthen research capacity in government policies. Community beneficiaries of these aid agreements include the QCGN, the Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders (CAMI), Youth Employment Services Montreal (YES Montreal), the Townshippers Association (Townshippers), the English-Language Arts Network (ELAN) and the Quebec English-speaking Community Research Network (QUESCREN).

**June 2018** – The Minister responsible for the Secrétariat delivered a speech at the QCGN Annual General Meeting, in which she provided a roadmap for the Secrétariat funding program, stating that:

*The Gouvernement du Québec is working hard on finalizing the details of our much-anticipated funding program. It goes without saying that the program respects government regulations and is responsibly managed. While it is a priority to get the funding flowing, we have the duty to ensure taxpayer money is being spent in a correct manner.*

*I want to give you a quick overview on the main objectives and functioning of the program.*

*Responding to the main messages we heard in the various consultations, the program will enhance community capacity to build bridges with departments and agencies in the Gouvernement du Québec.*

*We are particularly aware of the pressing needs faced by vulnerable segments of the English-speaking population such as young children, seniors and persons living in isolated circumstances. Socio-economic data on poverty, unemployment and higher than normal rates of developmental delays for young children underscore the challenges that English-speakers face. In the same*

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4. Detailed information for each project funded in 2018-2019 is presented in this document, part 2 of the *Activity Report*.



vein, the excessively high unemployment rates experienced by visible minority communities and a number of regional communities will require sustained effort to redress.

We will be supporting regional and sectoral organizations in their efforts to improve the vitality of English-speaking communities and improve government services to these populations. There is a unique opportunity to complete the community infrastructure across regions and sectors, which will contribute to sustainable benefits for English-speaking Quebecers now and into the future.<sup>5</sup>

**June 2018** – The Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor (SCT) approved the terms and conditions of the *Strengthening Community Vitality* funding program, providing the Secrétariat with an administrative framework for the delivery of the program. Secrétariat staff began interacting with various organizations that submitted proposals between January and July 2018. In accordance with government policy, funding proposals are considered confidential until announced.

**August 2018** – The Conseil des ministres approved an agreement with Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) to implement the Enhancing Regional Community Capacity initiative (ERCC) to support the organizational development of regional networks serving English-speaking Quebecers.

The ERCC initiative provides support for regional organizations to:

- develop satellite offices to ensure greater proximity to the communities they represent;
- expand their mandate into sectors other than health and social services;
- translate key documents into French to increase their capacity to interact with the Gouvernement du Québec and mainstream francophone organizations;
- participate in activities and events in other regions of Québec through a travel fund.

The Minister responsible for the Secrétariat officially launched the *Strengthening Community Vitality* funding program and announced four agreements with the following organizations: CHSSN, ELAN, Literacy Quebec (LQ) and Seniors Action Quebec (SAQ).

The Secrétariat launched a call for proposals for the funding program and organized an online technical briefing on the operation and objectives of the program. Representatives from 40 community organizations and institutions that participated in this information session reused the same validation document used at the February 16 meeting mentioned above.

**August 2018-March 2019** – Secrétariat staff worked on implementing the funding program created to contribute to the development of community infrastructure in various regions and sectors in order to support organizations in their efforts to improve the well-being of their English-speaking communities and to assist these organizations in building working relations with the Gouvernement du Québec.

## Projects 2017-2018

In the winter of 2018, as a result of interactions with organizations and institutions working on behalf of English-speaking Quebecers, the Secrétariat received authorization from the MF to sign agreements

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5. *Speech to the Annual General Meeting of the Québec Community Groups Network (QCGN)*, Kathleen Weil, Montréal, June 16, 2018.



with Concordia University and McGill University. The two institutions provided an entry point into various community organizations to address issues of importance to English-speaking communities.

## Concordia University Agreement

In March 2018, through the SRQEA-Concordia agreement, \$950,000 was awarded to Concordia University, which is committed to fostering networking among researchers and increasing research capacity to support public policy development. The lead organization at Concordia is QUESCREN, housed at the School of Public and Community Affairs.

QUESCREN provides support to its partners (QCGN, Eastern Townships Resource Centre (ETRC), CAMI, ELAN) for various projects related to policy research, promotion and dissemination of history and heritage, social economy, arts and education. Through this agreement, QUESCREN is committed to building and disseminating knowledge and to increasing the scope of research on topics important to the vitality of English-speaking communities of Québec.

## McGill University Agreement

Under the SRQEA-McGill agreement, \$925,000 was allocated to University McGill and its partners, YES Montreal, Townshippers and John Abbott College (JAC), to support their efforts to reduce the “brain drain” of English-speaking communities in Québec by researching the motivations of young people to stay in Québec, providing refresher training in French as a second language at a professional level, and creating networking activities linking new graduates to potential employers.

## Projects 2018-2019

By the end of March 2019, agreements had been signed with 17 organizations and institutions representing the interests of English-speaking Quebecers.

When including organizations that are third-party recipients of aid agreements through Concordia, McGill Universities and CHSSN, more than 40 organizations and institutions serving English-speaking Quebecers participate in the Secrétariat *Strengthening Community Vitality* funding program.

## Objectives

Formally adopted by the SCT in June 2018, the Secrétariat *Strengthening Community Vitality* funding program has four objectives:

**Objective 1** – Support the capacity building of organizations and institutions

**Objective 2** – Develop community organizations

**Objective 3** – Broaden access for English-speaking Quebecers to public services

**Objective 4** – Contribute to the retention of young people through employability

Throughout the first full year of the Secrétariat funding program, organizations and institutions serving English-speaking Quebecers submitted proposals and received financial support for a range



of initiatives and projects aimed at contributing to the vitality of their communities in line with these four objectives. As shown in the table below, many projects touch more than one of the program’s objectives. With the support of the Secrétariat funding program, the capacity of community infrastructures will be strengthened, which will in turn increase the capacity to support the vitality of the community in all regions and sectors.

OBJECTIVE	# OF PROJECTS
1 – capacity building of organizations	37
2 – development of community organisations	36
3 – increased access to public services	26
4 – contribution to the retention of youth through employability	35

Community organizations and institutions are being increasingly empowered to collaborate with departments and agencies of the Gouvernement du Québec.

## Sectors

The vitality of a community and the well-being of its people depend on institutional leadership and access to services in various sectors. Key sectors include community development, education, culture and communications, and health and social services. Each organization supported by the Secrétariat’s funding program is active in at least one of these key areas, as shown in the table below.

### Major Sectors of Projects Supported between 2017-2018 and 2018-2019

MAJOR SECTORS	PROJECTS SUPPORTED
Community development	26
Culture and communications	6
Education	3
Economy and employability	10
Research and public policy	4
Total	49

## Beneficiaries of the Program with a Sectorial Mandate, by Sector, 2018-2019

SECTOR	ORGANIZATIONS
Community development	Black Community Resource Centre Community Health and Social Services Network Seniors Action Quebec Y4Y Quebec Association
Culture and communications	English-language Arts Network Quebec Community Newspapers Association Quebec English-language Production Council
Education	Literacy Quebec Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations
Economy and employability	Dialogue McGill Youth Employment Services Montreal
Research and policy development	Insitut du Nouveau Monde McGill Institute for Health and Social Policy Quebec Community Groups Network Quebec English-speaking Community Research Network

## Regions

Québec covers more than 1.5 million square kilometers. Although a large number of English-speakers are concentrated in southwestern Québec (60% live on the Island of Montréal),<sup>6</sup> it is important to remember that English-speaking communities are spread throughout Québec. There is at least one English-language school in each of the 18 administrative regions of Québec and in several regions (Chaleur Bay region on the Gaspé Peninsula, Eastern Townships, Châteauguay Valley, Outaouais, Côte-Nord), English speakers were the first settlers and have lived there continuously for more than two centuries.

## Program Beneficiaries with a Regional Mandate, by Administrative Region, 2018-2019

<b>GASPÉSIE-ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE</b>
Committee for Anglophone Social Action Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders Vision Gaspé-Percé Now
<b>BAS-SAINT-LAURENT</b>
Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence
<b>CAPITALE-NATIONALE</b>
Jeffery Hale Community Partners Jeffery Hale Hospital - St. Brigid's Home Voice of English-Speaking Quebec
<b>CHAUDIÈRE-APPALACHES</b>
Megantic English-Speaking Community Development Corporation

6. STATISTICS CANADA, 2016 Census of Canada.



<b>ESTRIE</b>
Bishop's University Eastern Townships Resource Centre Phelps Helps Townshippers' Association
<b>MONTÉRÉGIE</b>
Montérégie West Community Network South Shore Assistance and Referral Centre
<b>MONTRÉAL</b>
African Canadian Development and Prevention Network Collective Community Services East Island Network for English-Language Services John Abbott College
<b>LAVAL</b>
Youth and Parents AGAPE Association
<b>LANAUDIÈRE</b>
English Community Organization of Lanaudière
<b>LAURENTIDES</b>
4 Korner's Family Resource Centre
<b>OUTAOUAIS</b>
Connexions Resource Centre Regional Association of West Quebecers
<b>ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE</b>
Neighbours Regional Association of Rouyn-Noranda
<b>CÔTE-NORD</b>
Coasters Association North Shore Community Association

## RESEARCH AND THE EVIDENCE BASE

Among its responsibilities, the Secrétariat has a mandate:

To facilitate access to relevant statistics, in particular to document the issues facing English-speaking Quebecers.

To fulfill this mandate, the Secrétariat is building its research capacity and creating an evidence base. In addition, the Secrétariat works with other organizations to share data and reinforce research capacity to build and mobilize knowledge. The following section sets out some of the key observations from the evidence base, which is used to orient the Secrétariat.

## Linguistic Rights

Important historical rights protect the use of the English language in Québec. For example, English-speakers may speak in their language when interacting with provincial institutions. This right stems mainly from section 133 of the Constitution Act of 1867, which allows anyone to speak English in debates in the National Assembly or its parliamentary committees and in Québec courts.

Moreover, this constitutional provision also requires the National Assembly to adopt bilingual laws, both versions having the same legal value. In addition, a litigant may request that any judgment rendered by a court or any decision of a body exercising quasi-judicial functions be translated without charge.

Government services are offered to the English-speaking community. A large English-language education network, from kindergarten to university, is present in Québec. Like the francophone population, the English-speaking community currently controls the management of its elementary and secondary schools through nine English-language school boards.

English-speakers may also receive public services through the government in their language, including health and social services, to the extent permitted by the human, material and financial resources of the institutions providing such services.

Under the Charter of the French Language, more than 80 municipalities are recognized as providing services in English to their population.

## Sociodemographic data

The current socio-demographic portrait<sup>7</sup> of English-speaking Quebecers reveals that:

- In 2016, there were 1,097,925 individuals with English as their first official language spoken, representing 13.8% of the total population of Québec;
- Nearly three in five (56.7%) of English-speaking Quebecers live on the island of Montréal where they represent one-third (32.8%) of the total population;
- The remaining English-speakers are dispersed unevenly throughout Québec, as follows:
  - » in Eastern Québec (regions 01, 09 and 11) there were 15,045 English speakers, accounting for 4.1% of the regional population and 1.4% of Québec's English-speaking population;
  - » in the Montérégie region, there were 156,000 English speakers, accounting for 11.8% of the regional population and 14.2% of Québec's English-speaking population;
  - » in Laval-Laurentides-Lanaudière there were 142,885 English speakers, accounting for 9.7% of the regional population and 13% of Québec's English-speaking population;
  - » in Central Québec (regions 02, 03, 04 and 12) there were 25,745 English speakers, accounting for 1.4% of the regional population and 2.3% of Québec's English-speaking population;

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7. STATISTICS CANADA, *op. cit.*



- » in the Eastern Townships there were 37,015 English speakers, accounting for 8.1% of the regional population and 3.4% of Québec's English-speaking population;
- » in Western Québec (regions 07, and 08) there were 75,740 English speakers, accounting for 14.6% of the regional population and 6.9% of Québec's English-speaking population.

## Socio-economic status in decline

There is an observable decline in the socio-economic status of English-speaking Quebecers in comparison to other language groups in Québec and Canada. Notably:

- Their unemployment rate was 8.9% in 2016, compared to 6.9% for French-speaking Quebecers and 7.2% for the population of the rest of Canada.<sup>8</sup>
- The unemployment disparity is greater in remote, isolated regions of Québec with some regions reporting unemployment levels that are more than twice the levels reported by francophones in the same region.<sup>9</sup>
- The unemployment gap between English-speaking Quebecers and their French-minority counterparts elsewhere in Canada has increased with each census since 1996.<sup>10</sup>
- The younger half of English-speaking Quebecers of working age (ages 25-44) is worse off than the older half (ages 45-64) and is also worse-off when compared to minority francophones elsewhere in Canada. This suggests that the gap in employability between young English-speaking Quebecers and minority francophones elsewhere in Canada will increase.<sup>11</sup>
- The 2016 census reveals that the tendency to live below the low-income cut-off (LICO) was much higher among English-speaking Quebecers (17.8%) than among francophones in Québec (11.9%), whether in the metropolitan region or elsewhere in the region.<sup>12</sup>

## Out-migration of English-speaking Quebecers

Nearly half of English-speaking Quebecers who were born in Québec now live in other Canadian provinces.<sup>13</sup>

- Those with a higher level of education are more likely to have left Québec (before or after their studies). More than two-thirds of doctoral graduates (70%) and those with a master's degree (61%) now live in another Canadian province.<sup>14</sup>
- In comparison, we observe much lower interprovincial migration rates among francophones with high level education (only 9% for those with a doctorate and 7% of those with a master's degree).<sup>15</sup>

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8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. SRQEA analysis based on 2016 census of Canada, 2019.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

- Young English-speaking Quebecers report having a weaker sense of belonging to Québec than their elders.<sup>16</sup>
- English-speaking Quebecers report being much more likely to move to another province within the next five years than French-speaking Quebecers.<sup>17</sup>

In public opinion research conducted by CROP for CHSSN and Decima for Canadian Heritage, the motivation to leave Québec varies depending on the age group:

- For people under 30, economic and educational opportunities were most cited.<sup>18</sup>
- For those between the ages of 30 and 59, politics and perceived discrimination were most cited.<sup>19</sup>
- For those 60 and over, family reasons (joining children who have left Québec or returned to their home region) were most cited.<sup>20</sup>

## Vulnerable groups in Québec English-speaking communities

Among seniors, the level of bilingualism is lower than that of the total population of English-speaking Quebecers (51% compared to 67% respectively):<sup>21</sup>

- The isolation is also increased because of the emigration of their adult children who have chosen to live in other regions of Québec or outside the province.
- French-language competency constitutes an added barrier to accessing services for this population.

For young children, we find several challenges related to development, in particular because of the following facts:

- 33% of pre-school children with English as their mother tongue have one or more developmental delays compared to 23% in the French mother tongue population.<sup>22</sup>
- The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) has the highest proportion of students living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
- English-speaking children aged 0 to 14 were more likely to live below the low-income cut-off (15.4%) than their French counterparts (11%).<sup>23</sup>

For visible minority groups:

- The rate of unemployment is higher for black English-speaking Quebecers (13.5%) than for non-blacks (7.9%).<sup>24</sup>

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16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. CHSSN, *op.cit.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. STATISTICS CANADA, *op. cit*

22. INSTITUT DE LA STATISTIQUE DU QUÉBEC. 2018. *Enquête québécoise sur le développement des enfants à la maternelle 2017*

23. CHSSN, *op.cit.*

24. STATISTICS CANADA, *op. cit.*



Regarding the populations in the regions:

- Despite overall demographic growth, some English-speaking communities in the regions have experienced a demographic decline over the last 20 years (Gaspésie, Côte-Nord, Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Estrie).
- Certain English-speaking communities are faced with the ageing of their population. For some regions, seniors represent 20% of their population (Gaspésie, Estrie).
- In some regions, there are few English-language institutions. Most English-speaking communities in the regions do not have access to post-secondary education in their language; there are few designated health facilities; and the vast majority of cultural and artistic organizations are concentrated in major urban centres.

## Perceptions of community vitality, access to services and relations with government

For every five years since 2000, the CROP survey company has conducted a major survey of the attitudes and experiences of English-speaking Quebecers across a wide range of subjects that contribute to an understanding of their subjective vitality.<sup>25</sup> The survey includes a robust sample of more than 3,000 English-speaking Quebecers.

CHSSN has produced two substantive reports on the findings of this survey. One of these reports provides a nuanced understanding of the situation regarding access to health and social services, while the other provides data and analysis on various subjects.

The following section presents a series of highlights from the 2015 version of the survey on topics of key interest to the Secrétariat.

### Community Vitality

In 2015, English-speaking Quebecers showed low confidence in the vitality of their community:<sup>26</sup>

- Just one-third (34%) agreed that the situation of English-speaking communities in Québec had improved in the previous 20 years.<sup>27</sup>
- Looking to the future, less than half (41%) felt that the situation of the English-speaking community will be stronger and more stable in twenty years.<sup>28</sup>

### Relationship with the Gouvernement du Québec and access to services

The 2015 CHSSN-CROP Survey on Community Vitality explored community perceptions of its relations with the Gouvernement du Québec. Survey results revealed that:

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25. The original 2000 survey was conducted under the aegis of the Missisquoi Institute while the 2005, 2010 and 2015 versions were sponsored by the Community Health and Social Services Network.

26. CHSSN, *op. cit.* p. 6-9.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 8-9.



- Very few (18%) English-speaking Quebecers believe that members of their community have equal access to employment in the Québec public service.<sup>29</sup>
- Most English-speaking Quebecers (88%) agreed with the suggested creation of an office for anglophone affairs within the Gouvernement du Québec.<sup>30</sup>

Access to services and programs is also a central issue, particularly outside the Montréal area:

- Just over one-third (37%) of English-speaking Quebecers said they were satisfied with their access to Gouvernement du Québec services in their language.<sup>31</sup>
- The net satisfaction levels varies across regions, with only the western and central areas of Montréal reporting positive satisfaction levels while other regional communities such as Lanaudière, Laurentides, Laval and Capitale-Nationale showed much higher levels of dissatisfaction.<sup>32</sup>
- The survey revealed a much higher rate of satisfaction with access to services from the government of Canada (62% satisfied compared to 15% dissatisfied).<sup>33</sup>

## Institutional Analysis<sup>34</sup>

### Database

Over the past year, the Secrétariat has:

- created a database of English-speaking organizations and institutions:
  - » 16,000 organizations including 1,300 English-language organizations;
  - » 94 variables including data on institutional characteristics and geographic groupings;
- compiled a demographic and institutional portrait of English-speaking communities (October 2018):
  - » including regional profiles on the institutional presence and key demographic characteristics of English-speaking communities across Québec's administrative regions.

### Section 29.1 institutions

The Secrétariat has also created a listing of health and education institutions as well as municipalities listed under section 29.1 of the Charter of the French language of Québec. This data has been analyzed to better understand the presence / absence of institutions that are key to community vitality.

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29. CHSSN, *op.cit.*, question 33E

30. *Ibid.*, p. 20-21.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

32. *Ibid.*, p.25.

33. *Ibid.*, p.26-27.

34. SRQEA *institutional database*, 2019.



## Support for research activities

### Research projects

Since its creation, the Secrétariat has launched 12 study assignments to be delivered by sectoral bodies and research institutions. These research activities address priority issues such as:

- language skills among health professionals;
- retention of young people;
- the vitality of minority communities;
- culture, heritage and the media;
- literacy and academic success;
- seniors and vulnerable populations.

### Centre of expertise

The Secrétariat has supported the creation of a centre of expertise on adapting delivery of health and social services for English-speaking Quebecers (\$390,000 over 3 years for the Jeffrey-Hale-Saint Brigid's Hospital (JHSB)).

### Research network

The Secrétariat has strengthened QUESCREN capacity to conduct research on community vitality and contribute to policy development (\$360,000 over 3 years at Concordia University).

## SECRÉTARIAT INTERDEPARTMENTAL WORK

In addition to the responsibilities of departments and agencies towards English-speaking Quebecers, the Secrétariat is mandated to:

Advise the government departments and agencies on relations with English-speaking Quebecers and on the provision of services and issues, agreements, programs and policies that may impact the community directly or indirectly.

To this end, in the spring of 2018, a first series of meetings took place between the Secrétariat and the senior executives of certain government departments and agencies, deemed key to Québec's English-speaking communities, with the purpose of:

- promoting the coherence of government policies;
- exploring the possibilities of collaboration and linkages between the actions of the Secrétariat and the different government departments and agencies within the framework of their respective missions;
- presenting socio-demographic and socio-economic statistics that show the reality of English-speaking Québec community organizations as well as their major issues.

Subsequent to these meetings, the Secrétariat has returned to some of these departments and agencies to explore in greater detail the possibilities of collaboration between the organizations as part of their respective missions for the benefits of English-speaking Québec communities.

In total, the Secrétariat organized more than 20 meetings with 15 departments and agencies of the Gouvernement du Québec:

- 9 meetings (April 1, 2018 to September 30, 2018);
- 12 meetings (October 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019).

In addition, the Secrétariat held an interdepartmental consultation with the heads of certain advisory bodies already existing within the Gouvernement du Québec in order to obtain information on the process that ensures the coherence of government actions and on the best coordination methods.

Here a few examples of concrete actions following the meetings between the Secrétariat and various departments and agencies of Québec.

## **Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale**

In February 2019, the Gouvernement du Québec announced the start of preparatory work for the creation of a new government action plan for community action.

To this end, since March 2019, the Secrétariat has been a member of the Interdepartmental Committee on Community Action. This committee is made up of approximately twenty government departments and agencies and is under the responsibility of the ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale. The Secrétariat will participate in the work for the development of the new Plan. Through this committee, the Secrétariat will be able to sensitize government departments and agencies on the issues and concerns of English-speaking Quebecers and to promote government coherence.

## **Secrétariat du Québec aux relations canadiennes and ministère de la Culture et des Communications**

On October 24, 2018, the federal government released its draft regulations amending the current Official Languages regulations on communications and services to the public. These regulations, which derive from the Official Languages Act (OLA), define the criteria for establishing the directory of federal offices and points of service required to provide services in both official languages. The objectives of the regulatory review include a change in the method of calculating the minority language population within the meaning of the regulation, which the federal government believes may better reflect the needs and interests of linguistic minority communities.

In March 2019, following a meeting on the modernization of the OLA, the Secrétariat du Québec aux relations canadiennes (SQRC), the Secrétariat à la promotion et à la valorisation de la langue française (SPVLF) and the Secrétariat agreed to set up an interdepartmental committee to develop Québec's position on the modernization of this legislation.



The participants accepted to use the method of the first official language spoken (FOLS) as a general reference to define English-speaking Quebecers. This is a major step forward by the Gouvernement du Québec and has positive implications for communities affected by this designation.

## Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor

The participation rate of English-speaking Quebecers in the public service is 1% of the regular workforce of the Québec public service, while their representation within the Québec population is, depending on the chosen linguistic definition, approximately 9% to 14%. This percentage has remained unchanged for more than 30 years while the representation of visible minorities and ethnic minorities in Québec's public service increased from 8% to 10% in recent years.

During consultations with community organizations, held in February 2018 by the Minister responsible for English-speaking Quebecers, the representation of English-speaking Quebecers in the public service emerged as one of their main priorities.

Consequently, in 2018-2019, the Secrétariat has undertaken a number of actions to increase the representation of English-speaking Quebecers in the public service, as detailed below.

In June 2018, the Secrétariat participated in two activities to promote careers in the Québec public service, including:

- a call to the SCT and several community organizations to encourage English-speaking Quebecers to register for the public service recruitment contest;
- in collaboration with the Centre de services partagés du Québec (CSPQ), participation by the Secrétariat in a «speed-dating» type of in-person meeting with community organizations in Québec.

In December 2018, the Secrétariat and the SCT initiated work aimed at defining strategies to increase the representation of English-speaking Quebecers in the Québec Public Service:

- Document the issues further to better determine the relevant actions to put in place:
  - » Financial assistance to Concordia University to produce a baseline study on the participation of English-speaking Quebecers in the Québec public service;
  - » Acquisition and analysis of statistical databases to further document the issues in order to better determine the relevant actions to be put in place;
  - » Participation in the work of the SCT in revising the content of information leaflets on the management of diversity in relation to English-speaking Quebecers, including adding to the SCT glossary the definition of English-speaking Quebecers based on the FOLS method.
- Target some job promotion activities to attract more English-speaking Quebecers to the Public Service.

## Secrétariat aux aînés and ministère du Conseil exécutif

Secrétariat interventions with government departments and agencies to better recognize and value English-speaking communities in some of their actions have been successful, including:

- The Assistant Deputy Minister of the Secrétariat aux aînés has changed the title of the coordinator specializing in abuse in cultural communities to «English-speaking and cultural communities»;
- Collaboration to support English-speaking seniors in vulnerable situations by:
  - » financial support of \$400,000 over 3 years to SAQ to contribute to the capacity of organizations providing services to seniors;
  - » facilitator role with the Secrétariat aux aînés for the hiring of resources by six organizations under the Community Work Initiative for Vulnerable Elders (ITMAV) program.
- The subject of English-speaking Quebecers has been added to the new DOSSDEC government template. This addition forces government departments and agencies to assess direct or indirect impacts of proposed new government measures on English-speaking Quebecers.

## SECRÉTARIAT INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORK IN 2018-2019

The Secrétariat also has the mandate:

To interact with the federal government on issues, agreements, programs or policies that may have a direct or indirect impact on English-speaking Quebecers, in collaboration with the Secrétariat du Québec aux relations canadiennes and with departments and agencies.

- To this end, in 2018-2019, the Secrétariat organized meetings with the senior executives of certain federal government departments and agencies, deemed key to Québec's English-speaking communities, for the purpose of promoting the coherence of intergovernmental policies.
- It also explored opportunities for collaboration and alignment between the actions of the Secrétariat and the different federal departments and agencies as part of their respective missions.

A total of 16 meetings were held between the Secrétariat and 8 departments and agencies of the federal government:

- 7 meetings (April 1, 2018 to September 30, 2018);
- 9 meetings (October 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019).



## Intergovernmental agreements

In August 2018, the Gouvernement du Québec approved two intergovernmental agreements, namely:

- The Canada-Quebec Cooperation Agreement for the English-Speaking Communities of Quebec 2018-2019 to 2022-2023, whose objective is essentially to strengthen the collaborative relationship between the Gouvernement du Québec and the Government of Canada with the goal of reinvigorating English-speaking communities and enhancing the vitality of their members;
- The Canada-Quebec Agreement for English Language Services 2018-2019, whose purpose is essentially to continue federal funding, in the order of \$400,000 annually, in order to contribute financially to activities aimed at promoting access of English-speaking Quebecers to certain government services.

In March 2019, the Canada-Quebec Agreement for English-Language Services 2018-2019 was signed in order to maintain and improve the delivery of English-language services in the areas of justice as well as health and social services.

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avec les Québécois  
d'expression anglaise*

Québec 