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A Portrait of the English-speaking Communities in Québec

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Official Languages Support Programs Branch



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PREFACE

This document provides a synthesis of current research on the English-speaking communities (ESCs) of Quebec that constitute part of Canada's official-language minority communities. In the last few decades, there have been a number of studies assessing this population from the perspective of a linguistic minority across a broad gamut of issues, whether they are demographic, institutional or policy-related. The following overview highlights the work of academic researchers, government agencies, the community sector and as such, serves to delineate an up-to-date portrait of these communities based on current evidence.

Although this review is wide-ranging, it does not attempt to cover the issues cited in the text in detail nor does it refer to all aspects of community development. For further information, the reader is invited to consult the bibliography, which includes a list of the references utilized in this synthesis, as well as other suggested readings, which also pertain to community vitality as it relates to these communities. One of these readings is the March 2011 Report of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages: *The Vitality of Quebec's English-speaking Communities: from Myth to Reality* that contains a comprehensive description of the communities, together with a series of recommendations intended to promote community development.

INTRODUCTION

One element that defines the ESCs is their unique status within Canada: that of a minority within the French-speaking majority in Quebec, which is in turn a linguistic minority within Canada. Although once perceived to be a socio-economic elite, in the last forty years the province's English-speaking minority has been in a state of decline, losing vitality against measures such as population, institutional network and legal status.¹ As the leadership points out, the main concern facing the ESCs is not the future of the English language, which enjoys prominence in both North America and the world, but rather the future of the communities themselves, especially those in rural or remote locations. Despite these challenges, this report will present findings that suggest a renewed dynamism is starting to emerge in certain areas.

The concept of vitality stems from the *Official Languages Act* that obliges the federal government to take positive measures to enhance the vitality of French and English minorities and to support their development, and it is this notion that informs the ESC research being considered in the following document.²

¹ Bourhis, R.Y. and Landry, R. "Group Vitality, Cultural Autonomy and the Wellness of Language Minorities." In R.Y. Bourhis (Ed.) *The Vitality of English-speaking Communities of Quebec: from Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal (2008), p. 190.

² <http://www2.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb019-e.htm>

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population characteristics

One of the characteristics of vitality in official-language minority communities (OLMCs) is demographic capital, which refers to the size of the minority relative to the majority as well as its numerical concentration³. From 1971 to 2001, the proportion of Quebec residents who declared English as their mother tongue declined dramatically, from 13.1% to 8.3% of the province's total population. It was only in the last census period (2001–2006) that there was a slight growth rate among native English speakers, from 591,365 to 607,165⁴.

Despite an overall downward trend in the English mother-tongue demographic in Quebec since the 1970s, this loss has been partially offset by an increase in the number of allophones with English as the first official language spoken (FOLS). Because *Official Languages Regulations* require that FOLS be used to determine the regions of Canada where there is significant demand for minority-language services, it is this broader criterion that the federal government refers to in assessing population size, particularly for service delivery^{5,6}. For example, in Quebec, this more inclusive frame of reference defines English speakers as those who have English as a mother tongue as well as those who speak a mother tongue other than English, but for whom English is the FOLS. Based on this definition, the total Anglophone population in Quebec as of 2006 rose to 995,000, which is equal to 13.4% of all Quebecers and roughly equivalent to the number of French-speaking OLMCs in the rest of Canada⁷.

The difference in the size of the mother-tongue as compared to the FOLS group within the ESC has been growing since 1981 and is the result of the combined effect of the departure of native English speakers to other provinces and the increased immigration of persons with an "other" mother tongue for whom English is the first official language. For the period from 2001 to 2006 alone, English mother-tongue speakers increased by only 16,000 compared to the number of allophones, which grew by 76,000⁸.

³ Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages (OCOL), *A Sharper View: Evaluating the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities*, 2006, p.11.

⁴ Jean-Pierre Corbeil, Brigitte Chavez and Daniel Pereira, *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, Statistics Canada, September 2010, p. 11.

⁵ Jack Jedwab, "How shall we define thee? Determining who is an English-speaking Quebecer and assessing its Demographic Vitality," in R.Y. Bourhis (dir.) *The Vitality of English-speaking Communities of Quebec: from Community Decline to Revival*, Montreal, QC, CEETUM, Université de Montréal, 2008, p. 3.

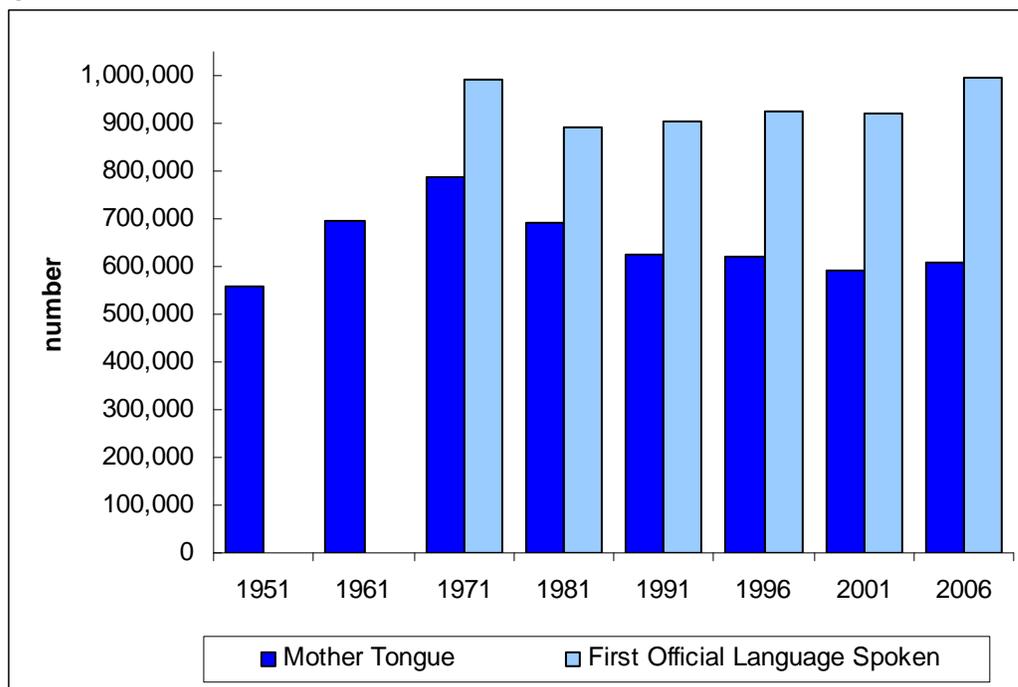
⁶ The *Official Languages Regulations* state that it is the first official language spoken that is used to determine the regions of Canada where there is significant demand for minority-language services. Using this criteria recognizes Anglophones and Francophones not only as persons with English and French as their respective mother tongue, but also persons whose mother tongue is neither English nor French but who know or speak one of these official languages at home. (Refer to *Official Languages (Communications with and Services to the Public) Regulations*).

⁷ Jean-Pierre Corbeil, Brigitte Chavez and Daniel Pereira, *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, Statistics Canada, September 2010, p. 13.

⁸ *Ibid.*

Chart 1

Number of persons with English as mother tongue and as first official language spoken, Quebec 1951 to 2006



Note: As the question on home language was introduced in the 1971 census for the first time, we cannot derive First official language spoken before 1971.

Source: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 1951 to 2006.

Apart from significant changes in demographic history, the ESCs are also marked by wide variances in terms of distribution and concentration from region to another. While the English FOLS in the Montreal Census Metropolitan Area account for 80.5% of Quebec’s English-speaking population, the rest is highly dispersed throughout the province, ranging from 5.9% in the Outaouais, 5.1% in the Estrie and South regions, to a mere 1.7% in the region of Québec City and the surrounding area. In Montreal, English FOLS represent 22.3% of the population; in the Outaouais, 17.4%; in the Estrie and South regions, 8.7%; and in Québec City and the surrounding area, 1.3%.⁹

Diversity

Often thought to be monolithic, the ESCs are now described as “multiple communities that are diverse, multicultural and multiracial.”¹⁰ Data shows that today Quebec’s ESCs are more ethnoculturally diverse than their French-speaking counterparts in Quebec and the most diverse of all OLMCs in Canada.¹¹ Traditionally, immigration from Europe constituted a source of growth for the community, and evidence of this ancestry is still very present in the regional communities of the province. However, since the 1970s, the percentage of immigrants to the province English

⁹ Corbeil, Chavez and Pereira, *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, p. 15.

¹⁰ QCGN. “Strengthening Communities by Working Together – Community Development Plan for the English-speaking Communities in Quebec 2005-2010.

¹¹ KSAR & Associates Inc., *Policy Dialogue*, p. 19.

FOLS has been in decline, dropping from what was once 20% of all new arrivals to 2.5% as of 2006.¹² With the majority of Quebec immigrants (88%) having Greater Montreal as their municipality of residence, this ESC population is increasingly composed of persons who either speak English or English and French as their FOLS. Among English FOLS, one-fifth belongs to a visible minority, of whom the majority is Black, with South-Asians constituting the second-largest group.

Quebec's ESCs differ from one another not only in terms of composition, but also in terms of circumstance. On the one hand, those on the Mainland outside Greater Montreal face differing degrees of economic and demographic loss, which is further aggravated by conditions in remote regions such as the Lower North Shore and the North Shore. On the other hand, in Montreal where ESCs benefit from a more solid socio-economic base, they are attempting to respond to the evolving challenge created by a highly heterogeneous, multi-racial and multi-ethnic constituency.¹³

Interprovincial Migration

From 1971 until the decrease tapered off in 2006, there was a total net loss of more than 180,000 persons, which included immigrants who spoke English only upon arrival in Quebec. Much of the decline in the number of Quebec's English mother-tongue population was due to an exodus to other provinces following the election of the Parti Québécois in 1976, the passage of Bill 101 in 1977, and a westward flow of key elements of the economy. This shift reflected a sizeable net migration to other provinces and territories (particularly Ontario, and mainly during the 1970s) and a drop in the birth rate below replacement levels.¹⁴ The main factors that motivated English speakers to consider leaving the province were political or linguistic for the non-immigrant population (26%) and educational or economic for immigrants (31%).¹⁵

This retention rate for Quebec's mother-tongue English speakers (that is, the proportion residing in the province of birth at the time of the census) is atypical when compared with other Canadian populations, including French-speaking minorities outside the province. Analysis shows that of the 70% of English speakers (mother tongue) who were born in Quebec and who lived in the province as of 1971, almost 50% had out-migrated to the rest of Canada by 2001. In addition, those who had higher educational credentials showed a higher tendency to depart than do those with lower educational status. Furthermore, cohort analysis suggests that those who remained in Quebec had a higher jobless rate (8.5%) compared to those who left (4.3%) and that this trend is likely to continue.¹⁶ As noted by Floch and Pocock, this exodus within the community is resulting

¹² Jedwab, J. How shall we Define thee?, p. 11.

¹³ Jedwab, J. and Maynard, Hugh. "Politics of Community: The Evolving Challenge of representing English-speaking Quebecers." In R. Y. Bourhis (Ed.) *The Vitality of English-speaking Communities of Quebec: from Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal (2008), p.166.

¹⁴ Corbeil, Chavez and Pereira, Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec, p. 26.

¹⁵ CROP/MISSISSQUOI Institute (2000). *Survey on the Attitudes, Experiences and Issues of Quebec's Anglophone Communities*. Sara Saber-Freedman, lead consultant, Montreal.

¹⁶ Floch, W. and Pocock, J. "Emerging Trends in the Socio-Economic Status of English-Speaking Quebec: Those Who Left and Those Who Stayed." In R. Y. Bourhis (Ed.) *The Vitality of ESC: From Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal (2008), pp. 50 -59.

in the development of a “missing middle” phenomenon; in other words, an over representation of those who are older and well integrated into the workforce at one end of the socio-economic spectrum and of those who are younger and less educated at the other.

Bilingualism

Another characteristic of the ESCs, which testifies to the desire to participate fully in Quebec society, is the rise in the level of bilingualism in the last few decades. English-French bilingualism among English speakers has increased significantly (from an average of 37% in 1971 to 69.8% in 2006) and is more common within this population than among francophones (at 36.1% in 2006). Variances also occur across regions and seem to be correlated to the concentration of English speakers within the majority population in that communities with a smaller share of English speakers tend to exhibit a higher rate of bilingualism (for example, 90.4% in the Capitale-Nationale, 89.5% in Mauricie and 56% in Outaouais). In addition, bilingualism rates differ across age categories with those aged 50 and older having less competency in French than other groups and those under age 24 (82.5%), the highest degree of fluency.¹⁷

Identity

The Survey on the Vitality of Official –Language Minorities on the relationship between bilingualism and identity shows that “while approximately 55% of English FOLS reported identifying ‘mainly’ or ‘only’ with the Anglophone group, 37% reported identifying with both the Anglophone and Francophone groups.”¹⁸ However, an important contrast emerged when Anglo-Quebecers with only English as the first official language spoken (FOLS) were compared to those having both French and English as FOLS: in this case, “59% of the former reported identifying ‘only’ or ‘mainly’ with the Anglophone group, compared to 19% of the latter.”¹⁹

Sense of Belonging

According to findings from the General Social Survey (Statistic Canada, 2003), which assessed the sense of belonging of Canadians to their local town, province of residence and to Canada as a whole, Quebec English speakers, based on mother tongue, showed a higher attachment to Canada than French-speaking Quebecers (93.6% vs. 71.2%) and the lowest sense of belonging to their province (69.7%). A subsequent 2004 Decima-PCH on Montreal produced similar results, which reflect the high level of diversity within this population of English FOLS and the tendency for non-native Quebecers to retain identification with their place of origin.²⁰

¹⁷ Statistics Canada, 2006 as quoted in PCH, *Official Languages Profile (internal)* (June 2009).

¹⁸ Corbeil, Chavez and Pereira, *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, p. 90.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ QCGN, *Social Participation and the Long-term Development of the English-speaking Communities of the Greater Montreal Region*, discussion document #6 for the GMCDI of the QCGN, April, 2007, p. 15.

ECONOMIC DIMENSION

Economic status also affects an OLMC's vitality, and dominant features of this dimension²¹ are related to education levels, employment, and income²².

Education

On a national scale, the ESCs have a higher level of education than other Canadians, being 17% more likely to hold a post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree and 14% less likely to be without a high school certificate.²³ In Quebec, the ESCs overall are at the upper end of the educational spectrum compared to the French-speaking majority, with almost 25% having a university degree or diploma, compared to slightly more than 15% of French-speaking Quebecers.²⁴ Within the community itself, education patterns tend to vary either by region or by generation: higher levels of schooling are more evident in urban areas, such as Montreal and Quebec City, and among more senior cohorts.²⁵

Socio-economic Profiles

Despite a high degree of educational attainment and bilingualism, the ESCs have suffered a loss in socio-economic status by virtue of the substantial changes the population has undergone in the last 40 years:²⁶

- Unemployment:

Floch and Pocock's analysis of the 2001 Census reveals that the ESCs had the highest rate of unemployment in Canada (at 9.4%) compared to 7.4% for all Canadians and 8% for Quebec's French-speaking majority. Within Quebec itself, these rates were higher than the provincial average in almost every region, with the exception of Montreal, and substantially higher in certain regions, such as in the North Shore (30.9%) and the Gaspé (29.2%). The rates also had a generational aspect, with a decline in socio-economic status being more pronounced in the younger age cohorts (aged 15-24 and 25-44).

Based on the 2006 Census, the unemployment gap between the ESCs and the French-speaking majority, which was already significant at 17% in the last census period, had risen over time to a total of 33%. Outside Quebec, this difference between the minority and the majority has been steadily decreasing, whereas within the province, the opposite trend has been occurring. Compared to other OLMCs in Canada, this linguistic minority now ranks second only to the

²¹ The dimensions used in this study are based on the work of the Commissioner of Official Languages. See "A Sharper View: Evaluating the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities." Commissioner of Official Languages, 2006.

²² OCOL, *The Vitality of Communities*, p. 16.

²³ Floch and Pocock, *Emerging Trends in the Socio-Economic Status of English-Speaking Quebec*, p. 38.

²⁴ Corbeil, Chavez and Pereira, *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, p. 69.

²⁵ KSAR & Associates Inc., *Policy Dialogue*, p. 23.

²⁶ Corbeil, Chavez and Pereira, *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, p. 85.

French-speaking minority in New Brunswick with respect to having higher unemployment than the surrounding majority.²⁷

A 2009 McGill University study on the Black population in Montreal points to the fact that differences in ESC unemployment rates are not only geographical, but also specific to population sub-groups. According to this source, Montreal's Black English-speaking community faces an even greater economic disadvantage than the ESCs in general given that they are twice as likely as non-Blacks to be unemployed and that those with graduate degrees are less likely to be employed than non-Black high school drop-outs.²⁸

- **Income:**

The 2006 Census indicates that English FOLS earn \$1,806 a year less than that French-speaking Quebeckers when the median is used to calculate salary, yet \$3,080 a year more when the mean income is the basis of comparison.²⁹

The 2006 figures on income have engendered much debate in the media in Quebec, pointing to the fact that fallacies about the economic position of the ESCs still persist. Regardless of the measure used, the research shows that the gap that once existed between the incomes of the English FOLS and the French-speaking majority has been significantly diminished. Today, more English FOLS than French speakers live below the low-income threshold (22% vs. 16%), and those living outside major urban centres have higher rates of underemployment and poverty. Factors, such as the outmigration of FOLS, the influx of international immigrants, and the "falling demand for English-language labour"³⁰ have had a determining effect on income levels within the community.

Brain Drain

One of the key socio-economic concerns of the ESCs is outmigration, which manifests itself as a loss of human capital, especially "the best and the brightest." While there are no doubt structural elements in the Quebec economy contributing to this phenomenon (see preceding paragraph), it is noteworthy that the "leavers" belong primarily to the bilingual cohort. Based on mobility patterns for 1996-2001, analysis shows that of more than 8,000 English speakers who out migrated to other provinces in Canada, 60% had post-secondary degrees and 69% of these individuals were reported to be bilingual.³¹ Although the 2006 Census data indicate that the exodus of better-educated English speakers was less pronounced, those aged 25 to 29 - a group likely to exhibit high levels of bilingualism - nevertheless had a net decrease of 1,000 individuals.

²⁷ Carter, James. "What Future for English-language Health and Social Services in Quebec?" In R. Y. Bourhis (Ed.) *The Vitality of ESC: From Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal (2008), p. 93.

²⁸ Torczyner, James, *Demographic Challenges facing the Black Community of Montreal in the 21st Century*, Montreal Consortium for Human Rights Advocacy Training (McGill University), 2009.

²⁹ Corbeil, J.-P., Chavez, B. and Pereira, D. *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, p. 86.

³⁰

³¹ Floch and Pocock, *Emerging Trends in the Socio-Economic Status of English-Speaking Quebec*, p. 51.

There has long been a perception within the ESC that increased bilingualism would improve employment opportunities and therefore have a concomitant effect on retention rates, especially among youth; however, to date, the evidence does not seem to support this correlation.³² According to provincial government reports, while bilingual English speakers earned 17% more than unilingual French speakers in 1970, this advantage was reduced to zero by 2000. Despite the expectation that greater French-language competency leads to greater success in the job market, ESC bilinguals (as well as those who are unilingual) have lower income levels than French-speaking bilinguals.³³

On the subject of bilingualism, there are “no recognized norms” to which English-speaking learners of French as a second language can refer in determining the level of proficiency needed to improve their job prospects in Quebec.³⁴ Surveys reveal that while the youth are more likely than their middle-aged or older cohorts to support the view that their elementary and/or secondary education provided them with an opportunity to acquire French, they still feel that they do not have the skills to work successfully in Quebec. At a 2009 QCGN consultation of 300 youth, the majority of the participants expressed a desire to remain in the province, but also acknowledged the attraction of the “west”, explaining that “outside Quebec any ability to speak French is a competitive advantage.”³⁵ In the absence of a clear frame of reference for the level of language acquisition necessary for the job market, the tendency for bilingual English speakers to seek work outside Quebec will continue.³⁶

Strategies to Strengthen Employability and Employment: A Few Examples

In recent years, community-driven research has identified a number of strategies to mitigate the higher rates of unemployment and low income within the ESCs. As noted in QCGN research findings, “barriers to entry and mobility within the workforce form the basis of exclusion from resources that are crucial to the vitality of the community in every sector.”³⁷

On the education front, one of the priorities identified to help ESCs better access jobs in Quebec is to strengthen French-language training, particularly in terms of the teaching of writing skills, to a level that would enhance the employability of English speakers in a predominantly French-speaking milieu. In a report for the QCGN, Qu’Anglo Communications suggests the need for “greater collaboration between education leaders and economic development leaders” so that initiatives can be designed to reinforce the link between second-language training and labour market requirements.³⁸ The QCGN has also proposed the establishment of “a culture of life-long

³² KSAR & Associates Inc., Policy Dialogue, p. 69.

³³ Vaillancourt, F., Lemay, D. and Vaillancourt, L. « Laggards No More: The Changed Socioeconomic Status of Francophones in Quebec.” Ottawa, C. D. Howe Institute (2007).

³⁴ KSAR & Associates Inc., Policy Dialogue, p. 118.

³⁵ Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), Employment and Entrepreneurship, *Creating Spaces for young Quebecers: Strategic Orientations for English-speaking Youth in Quebec* (January 2009).

³⁶ KSAR & Associates Inc., Policy Dialogue, p. 87.

³⁷ QCGN, Economy and Employment and the Long-term Development of the English-speaking Communities of the Greater Montreal Region, discussion document #4 for the GMCDI of the QCGN. (March 6, 2007), p. 16.

³⁸ Qu’anglo Communications and Consulting (2008) “A Policy Framework for Economic Development and Employability for the English-speaking Communities of Quebec.” Report submitted to the QCGN, Montreal, 2008.

learning to improve upon the perceived failings in the language competency of Anglophones that would include actions, such as increased core second-language instruction both at the secondary and post-secondary levels; and promoting work assignments in French-language private and public settings³⁹.

Another recommendation advanced by the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) Advisory Council is to promote vocational training as an important skill-building option within the English-language school system. Although there is a tendency among ESC students at the CEGEP level to show a preference of 70% for pre-university rather technical training, research indicates that the utilities and construction are a sector that could constitute a source of well-paid employment for English speakers in all regions.⁴⁰ To help support the growth of this sector, the QCGN has suggested that efforts be undertaken at the regional level to “create economic development, educational and private sector networks to encourage recruitment in the technical and vocational field.”⁴¹

As to employment in the public services, the QCGN has advocated a number of remedies to redress the under representation of the ESC in this sector, including the “explicit designation of English-speaking individuals as a beneficiary group.”⁴² Based on 2006 data, English speakers accounted for only 7.7% of the workforce in the federal government (in those institutions that are based in Quebec excluding the National Capital Region and report to Treasury Board); whereas, they represented a mere 0.7%, or one-tenth of their share of the Quebec population in the Quebec government. While the federal government does not consider members of the ESC to be an equity group in terms of hiring, it is obliged under the *Official Languages Act* to ensure that the composition of the public service reflects the proportion of OLMCs in the Canadian population. Faced with the likelihood of a major human resource shortage in the future, it has identified renewal of the public service to be a key priority and committed itself to “targeted and coordinated recruitment” that is diverse and representative (Clerk of the Privy Council, 2010).

POLITICAL AND LEGAL DIMENSION

Just as demographic and economic factors influence the vitality of OLMCs in Canada, so does the political and legal dimension engendered by language legislation, political representation, institutional strength and access to government services.⁴³

³⁹ KSAR & Associates Inc., Policy Dialogue, p. 132.

⁴⁰ Qu'anglo Communications and Consulting, *Where do the Anglos Work? A review of statistics for employment and training*, p. 2

⁴¹ QCGN. *Report of the Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative Steering Committee*, 2007, p. 23.

⁴² Ibid, p. 24.

⁴³ OCOL, *The Vitality of Communities*, pp. 14 -15.

Language Laws, Policies and Regulations

At the federal level, the constitutional and legislative guarantees that protect acquired language rights derive from the *Constitution Act of 1982* with its *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Official Languages Act* (in particular, the 2005 amended Part V11) as well as court decisions. The Constitution and the Charter recognize French and English as Canada's official languages and include provisions for language use before Parliament and the courts as well as for minority-language education. The *Official Languages Act*, adopted in 1969 and later augmented in 1988 and 2005, clarifies the rights and obligations created by the Charter for the federal jurisdiction: it sets out language policy in the public service, affirms the right of OLMCs to receive government services in their language where numbers warrant, and through its 2005 amendment, obliges federal departments to take "positive measures" to support OLMC development and vitality. In addition to these instruments, the federal government also has a suite of policies, directives and programs at its disposal to support these rights.

In Quebec, it is the *Charter of the French Language* (commonly known as Bill 101) that provides the legal framework for the province's language policy. Enacted on August 26, 1977, it represented the culmination of a series of language laws passed by the province during the Quiet Revolution, the goal of which was to promote the use of French in Quebec and assimilate immigrants into the mainstream population. At the time of its passage, the key factors affecting the language debate were the domination of the Quebec economy by the English-speaking establishment, the falling birth rate among French-speaking Quebecers to one of the lowest in the Western hemisphere, and the preference among immigrants for the English rather than the French school system for their children.

Heralded as the protector of French language and culture, Bill 101 aimed first and foremost at declaring French the official language of the civil service and of business and at establishing the rights of French-speaking Quebecers to work in the official language of the province. In assuring the predominance of French in Quebec, it also placed restrictions on: access to English primary and secondary education to all but children whose parents had attended English school in Canada; the constitutional guarantee to English legal proceedings; and, the use of languages other than French on commercial signs.

Impact of Bill 101

Initial reaction to Bill 101 was divided: on the one hand, it was welcomed by those who viewed the legislation as an essential safeguard for the French language, and on the other, railed against by elements within the ESC (including the immigrant population) who saw their rights delimited. Feeling increasingly marginalized from the political process, certain members of the community formed Positive Action (the precursor to Alliance Quebec) - a group that supported the concept of French as the common language in Quebec as stipulated under Bill 101, but rejected the more coercive elements that did not promote the pluralistic character of Quebec society.

Since the passage of Bill 101, there have been a series of legal challenges against the legislation that have resulted in certain provisions being declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.

The first were those governing the language of public administration – the Supreme Court rendered Quebec laws and courts accessible in English – and the next, those concerning unilingual French signs. In response to these rulings, the Quebec government passed the amendments of Bill 178 in 1988 and Bill 86 in 1993 that ultimately permitted the use of languages other than French on commercial signs, provided French was predominant.

Access to English-language Education

Equally contentious, the language-of-instruction clause, considered to be the cornerstone of Bill 101, has long been a subject of litigation. In October 2009, the Supreme Court ruled against Quebec's Bill 104 – an amendment to Bill 101 – on the grounds that it did not respect the minority-language guarantees stipulated in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Bill 104 removed a loophole in Bill 101 that had allowed children who were not eligible for English public education to gain access to that right by spending one year in a private unsubsidized English school known as a “bridging school.”

Declaring Bill 104 unconstitutional, the Supreme Court granted Quebec one year to develop an alternative to Bill 104 that would re-define entitlement to English schools, and at the same time, conform to minority-education rights. Presented in June 2010, Quebec's proposed replacement legislation – Bill 103 – has in fact increased the limits on access to English public schooling by requiring that children who are ineligible spend three years in a non-subsidized private English institution, in addition to satisfying a points system to be decided on a case-by-case basis before they can acquire the right to an English education.

Now enacted into law, the new bill has elicited criticism from both sides of the language issue in Quebec. From the Quebec nationalist perspective, restrictions on access to English schools should be even more stringent, and extended to the CEGEPs, colleges, and universities at the post-secondary level; for the ESCs, such measures will inhibit the English-language system's capacity to replenish a declining student population, and ultimately threaten its long-term viability. (Between 1971 and 2006, enrolments in English schools dropped from 248,000 to 108,000 students due to factors, such as Bill 101 restrictions, a sizeable proportion of English-French intermarriage and the desire of English-speaking parents to further their children's learning of French.)⁴⁴ Proposed as a “remedy” to Bill 104, Bill 103 has yet to be assessed in terms of whether it is aligned to the Constitution and Supreme Court decisions on education. As Bourhis notes, while Quebec's language legislation has been effective in bolstering the status and prestige of the Francophone majority in Quebec, it has also failed to find a legitimate place for the ESCs.⁴⁵ This perception was reiterated in the Bouchard-Taylor report on reasonable accommodation released in 2008, which referred to the English-speaking Quebecers “as the main loser in the new linguistic dynamic that followed Bill 101.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Corbeil, Chavez and Pereira, *Portrait of Official-Language Minorities in Canada - Anglophones in Quebec*, p. 63.

⁴⁵ Bourhis, *Group Vitality*, p. 190.

⁴⁶ Bouchard G., et Taylor C. *Fonder l'avenir : le temps de la conciliation*, Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles, p. 213.

Political Representation

As stated above, another aspect of the political environment that affects the ESCs' vitality is the extent to which the population can influence decision-makers. According to a 2006 Decima / PCH survey on perceptions and attitudes towards Canada's official languages, close to two thirds of the ESCs (62.4%) agreed that the municipal governments were making an effort to represent their interests.⁴⁷ That proportion is somewhat lower for the federal government (51.9%) and much lower for the provincial government (39.1%). This trend was also evidenced in an earlier 2002 GPC / PCH survey which found that the ESC had similar concerns with regards to the effort of the provincial government in terms of representation.

One of the chief factors that limits the communities' prospects for influencing the broader French-speaking society in Quebec is the demographic decline (coupled with an over concentration of population in Greater Montreal), which is further compounded by disproportionately low representation in the Quebec National Assembly and the public administration as a whole.⁴⁸ Being both under-represented and unevenly represented at the provincial level, the ESCs are less able to have an impact on decisions affecting policy and program development, particularly those that are not endorsed by the majority Quebec population.

An element of equal importance that has helped to reduce the role of the ESCs in the political sphere is the reorganization of the Quebec government that took place during the Quiet Revolution in the 1960s. At that time, the state assumed control of the delivery of services in sectors where community-based institutions, such as those managed by the ESCs, had had a more direct, decision-making role. Since this transfer in service delivery to state-run or state-supported bodies, the ESCs have failed to achieve a level of representation in the Quebec government to offset the effects of the shift. In other words, "the tasks related to social intervention and support once carried out by community institutions have been taken over by the state without the commensurate transfer of community participation."⁴⁹

Institutional Support /Leadership

In terms of its political capital, another feature of an OLMC's vitality is the degree to which it maintains and asserts its presence in formal institutions, specifically those operating for the benefit of the community. The ESCs have long been portrayed as being supported by a wide gamut of organizations and institutions; however, over the last few decades, this network has been weakened by population loss, provincial re-structuring, and provincial legislation, such as Bill 101. For example, on the health and social services front, although there are still a number of establishments designated under Bill 101 as having a particular responsibility vis à vis English

⁴⁷ PCH / Decima. "Attitudes and Perceptions of the Canadian Population towards Canada's Official Languages." Department of Canadian Heritage (2006).

⁴⁸ Bourhis, Politics of Community, p. 169.

⁴⁹ Jedwab and Maynard, Politics of Community, p. 177.

speakers, the reorganization of service delivery in this sector has had the effect of closing certain service providers, transforming the traditional mandates of others, or in some instances, transferring governance to the majority community.⁵⁰ As for education, while it would appear that the ESCs are well served by a system of three universities, five community colleges (CEGEPs) and nine school boards, institutions at the post-secondary level that are often referred to as contributing to the vitality of the ESCs do not have mandates that are community-specific, but instead define themselves as serving broader constituencies.⁵¹

In addition to structural (including demographic) changes within the ESC institutional network, its overall strength has also been affected by an increasingly uneven distribution that varies from one region to another. Although Montreal still benefits from the highest concentration of institutional support in the province, this is not the situation off-Island. When assessing the “wellness” of institutions across regions, “the Townships (Estrie region), which still has a stable educational base despite the loss of 8,000 English speakers from 1996 to 2000, is situated at one end of the spectrum compared to the Côte-Nord, which has both weak demographic and institutional support.”⁵²

As is the case with all OLMCs, advocacy organizations have a key function in reinforcing institutional strength. In recognition of this role, the federal government provides support to OLMCs to help build strong community networks with the goal of sustaining the overall vitality. Through the Development of Official Languages Programs, the Department of Canadian Heritage strengthens OLMC capacity by investing in linguistic minority-community sectors that are identified as strategic priorities and that conform to a long-term and over-arching vision for development.

In Quebec, the Department provides access to a range of programs, through both recurring and non-recurring funding, to support organizations working on behalf of the ESCs. The Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), which is an umbrella group with 36 members representing 15 of Quebec’s 17 administrative regions as well as priority sectors such as health and arts and culture, is recognized as the official representative of the community by the Department (see website below for detailed description).⁵³ Incorporated in 1999, the QCGN identifies, explores, and addresses the strategic issues affecting the development and vitality of English-speaking Quebec, as well as encourages dialogue and collaboration among its member organizations, individuals, community groups, institutions and leaders.

Its predecessor, Alliance Quebec, focused on the defense of minority language rights, having evolved as a collective response from the ESC to the political context of the 1980s. However, as consensus on issues affecting the community became more divided, it ultimately lost its support base together with its status as a province-wide organization. Its demise left a deficit with no

⁵⁰ KSAR & Associates Inc., Policy Dialogue, p. 67.

⁵¹ Jedwab and Maynard, Politics of Community, p. 166.

⁵² Bourhis, Group Vitality, p. 205.

organization singularly dedicated to the protection of judicial rights and opened the door to debate on the type of leadership needed to best represent the ESCs.⁵⁴

Minority-language Access to Government Services

Access to government services in the language of the minority is also a factor that affects the vitality of OLMCs. The 2006 GPC / Canadian Heritage survey on Canada's OLMCs' perceptions and attitudes assessed not only their confidence in government to represent their interests, but also their satisfaction with the minority-language services. When comparing all levels of government, ESC respondents in relation to their French-speaking counterparts were most dissatisfied with the services offered by the province (24% vs. 57%) and least inclined to believe that these services had improved in the last five years (17% vs. 40.4%).

- Access to Employment Services

Further analysis of this study shows that of the nine sectors of society on which OLMCs were polled, the ESC showed the lowest level of satisfaction with minority-language service access in the employment sector. In addition, this level of dissatisfaction did not change over time, being at just 54% in 2002 and 55% in 2006 for the ESC, in contrast to 72% in 2002 and 70% in 2006 for French-speaking OLMCs. Even fewer English-speaking respondents agreed that the organizations working in the employment sector were committed to supporting their interests (47% in 2002 and 50% in 2006).

In 1997, through an agreement with Quebec, the federal government transferred the responsibility for labour force training to the province. Since the language of communication between the state and the public under Bill 101 is French, one of the elements negatively affected by this devolution has been minority-language services, despite that fact that access was to be provided where demand was significant: "The obligations inherent in the application of the *Official Languages Act* have been largely set aside, giving way to the political pressure exerted by Quebec to take full control of this important jurisdiction."⁵⁵

Since the transfer, Quebec has also regionalized delivery of employment and economic development services to a number of non-government bodies that function at the level of municipalities or regional county municipalities, such as the Conférences régionales des élus.⁵⁶ Because the ESCs - particularly off the Island of Montreal - do not have the demographic weight within a given region or municipality of residence to be represented in local governance structures, decentralization has had the effect of disenfranchising the community from decisions that affect the development and implementation of regional labour market and employment strategies.⁵⁷ To compensate for this lack of participation, one of the solutions that has been proposed in community-driven research such as the *Policy Dialogue* is that English-speaking

⁵⁴ Bourhis, *Group Vitality*, p. 189.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Jedwab and Maynard, *Politics of Community*, p. 178.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

representative organizations forge ties with the local decision makers in this sector in order to transmit information on community priorities that might enhance service access.⁵⁸

- Access to Health and Social Services (H & SS)

The 2006 GPC / PCH survey also showed that in addition to employment, ESC respondents registered low levels of satisfaction with access to H & SS as compared to other sectors.⁵⁹ In this jurisdiction as well, Bill 101 has imposed restrictions on service providers, which in turn, has had the effect of creating variations in access across the province. As stated earlier, under this legislation only designated institutions (that is, those serving a population that is more than 50% non French-speaking) are required to provide services in English and the number of providers that meet this criterion has been reduced by restructuring. Regions, such as those outside major urban centres or in remote locations where the critical mass of English speakers is weaker, show greater disparity in terms of access. Studies have shown that limitations on access to services in English also limit access to information on health promotion or prevention programs from public health and social service institutions, which ultimately limits the effectiveness of health policy in general.

In order to facilitate access to services in the language of OLMCs in Canada, the federal government contributes additional resources through transfer agreements with the provinces and territories. For example, the Department of Canadian Heritage has had three generations of agreements with Quebec since 1989 that support the provision of minority-language services, particularly in the H & SS sector, for English speakers in the province. Through the *Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality 2008-2013*, Health Canada has funded the Community Health and Social Service Network (CHSSN) to build a comprehensive portrait of the community from which to plan policies and programs and create a total of 18 health networks across the province that enable professionals, health-care establishments, government authorities and community organizations to undertake activities enhancing health care. In addition, the department has allocated resources to McGill University to support second-language training to French-speaking professionals, especially in French-speaking institutions outside Montreal, which are the dominant service providers for the ESC living off-Island.

Despite improvements in this sector as a result of the joint efforts of the federal and provincial governments, sustained investment remains a priority. The ESCs do not compare favorably with the francophone majority on determinants that assess community health, such as income, employment, demographics and social supports.⁶⁰ From a population health perspective, English speakers also face the challenge of living in an environment where access to linguistically and culturally appropriate services is limited by the reality of minority status.⁶¹ According to research, language barriers create inequalities in health status; problems in communication reduce

⁵⁸ KSAR & Associates Inc., Policy Dialogue, p. 160.

⁵⁹ PCH / Decima, "Attitudes and Perceptions of the Canadian Population towards Canada's Official Languages"

⁶⁰ Carter, James. "What Future for English-language Health and Social Services in Quebec?" In R. Y. Bourhis (Ed.) *The Vitality of ESC: From Community Decline to Revival*. Montreal, Quebec: CEETUM, Université de Montréal (2008), pp. 91-104.

⁶¹ CHSSN, *Investment Priorities 2009-2013* (March 2010), p. 4.

the usefulness of preventative services, increase the amount of time spent in consultations and on diagnostic tests, and negatively influence the quality of service in areas where language is an essential tool such as mental health services, social services, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy.⁶²

- Access to Media

Finally, the service sector in the 2006 OLMC survey that elicited the highest level of satisfaction among ESC respondents was the media, - a sector where provincial public institutions exercise the least influence. The ESCs, particularly in Montreal, are served by mass communications in the English language, ranging from the private to the public to the community-based. There are two dailies (*The Montreal Gazette* and *The Sherbrooke Record*) and 32 weekly regional papers; seven commercial radio stations based in Montreal, as well as Quebec City CBC, five community-run (three on the Lower North Shore, one in the Townships and one in the Gaspé) and three university campus-operated; and, four English-language television stations available on cable throughout the province.⁶³ In addition, ESCs have proximity to a range of options from outside Quebec because of the existence of the English-speaking market in the rest of Canada and the U.S. While these resources provide the community with ready access to information in the English language, one concern that has been receiving increasing attention is that the content does not necessarily reflect the cultural reality of the communities themselves, especially in the regions. On the other hand, this is an issue that also affects the majority French-speaking population in Quebec as service providers generally are becoming more and more centralized and less focused on the periphery outside Montreal and Quebec City.

CULTURAL DIMENSION

For some observers, the cultural capital of OLMCs (that is, the cultural resources available to OLMCs) is “the lowest common denominator associated with minority status.”⁶⁴ On the other hand, the more predominant view is that the development of arts and culture is indispensable to the survival of a language group: as cited in the *Policy Dialogue*, Rodrigue Landry observes that “arts and culture play a key role in the vitality of an OLMC and form an integral part of the identity of linguistic and ethnic communities.”⁶⁵ In fact, the 2004 Decima / PCH survey of OLMCs reaffirms this interconnection between arts and culture and linguistic identity, showing that almost 90% of ESC respondents agree to the need for access to a “dynamic arts and culture community.”⁶⁶ The importance of this issue is also underscored by the results of the 2010 CHSSN-CROP survey on attitudes and perceptions within the ESCs as important.⁶⁷

⁶² CCESMC (2007). Report to the Federal Minister of Health. Consultative Committee for English-speaking Minority Communities, Health Canada, Ottawa, p. 23.

⁶³ KSAR & Associates Inc., p. 29.

⁶⁴ OCOL, *The Vitality of the Communities*, p. 15.

⁶⁵ KSAR & Associates Inc., *Policy Dialogue*, p. 184.

⁶⁶ PCH /Decima. “Attitudes and Perceptions of the Canadian Population towards Canada’s Official Languages.” Department of Canadian Heritage, Gatineau, 2006.

⁶⁷ CHSSN. *Community Vitality Survey*, April 2010, pp. 99-102.

Cultural Networks

In recent years, the leadership has begun to strengthen this sector in recognition of its contribution to building a sense of pride and belonging within the community. Although English-language theatre groups, such as Centaur and Playwrights' Workshop, existed in the 1960s, organizations representing key disciplines, such as the Quebec Drama Federation and the Quebec Writers' Federation (formerly the Quebec Society for the Promotion of English Language Literature and the Federation of English-language Writers of Quebec) did not start to emerge until the late 1980s and early 1990s. It was only in 2004 - following the endorsement of 100 ESC artists assembled at the Quebec Arts Summit - that a multi-sectoral umbrella organization called the English Language Arts Network (ELAN) was formed.

Prior to this event there had been a reluctance on the part of ESC artists to associate with a representative organization like ELAN, fearing the polarizing effect of language and the weakening of ties with their French-speaking peers and "preferring instead to identify with their art form"⁶⁸ Since, ELAN has had a burgeoning membership, which testifies to the fact that its efforts to provide support and build bridges within this milieu are succeeding.

Development Challenges

In response to the growing interest in this sector, the QCGN has targeted arts, culture and heritage as a key priority in community development, and thus committed resources to community-based research, public and sectoral consultations, and the development of a strategic framework.⁶⁹ (For the ESCs, heritage is seen as an integral component of the sector and is represented by the umbrella organization Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network known as QAHN.) One of the challenges cited in this strategic analysis by the QCGN is that artists lack visibility, and therefore recognition as a cultural entity distinct from either English-speaking Canada or French-speaking Quebec. Another challenge is that given the decline in population, audiences are smaller, and this in effect means fewer opportunities for artists to present their works, especially outside Montreal. Off the Island, particularly in certain regions, there is a lack of infrastructure - in terms of both human resources and facilities - which in turn limits the capacity of local cultural industries to develop and thrive. Also at issue, ESC artists and cultural organizations believe that they do not have equitable access to federal or provincial support; in other words, a level of resources commensurate to that received by their counterparts in French-speaking OLMCs or mainstream Quebec. In addition, they find that federal funding programs set eligibility requirements, such as those for touring, that do not reflect the reality of applicants working in a regional context.

⁶⁸ Rodgers, Guy. "Quebec's English-speaking Artists: Reinventing a Cultural Landscape," *Association for Canadian Studies* (Spring 2010), p. 8.

⁶⁹ QCGN, *Strengthening Communities by Working Together - Community Development Plan for the English-speaking Communities in Quebec 2005-2010*.

Opportunities in the Cultural Sector

However, despite certain constraints, the ESC cultural community, particularly in Montreal, is experiencing, to quote ELAN's executive director, "a visible (and audible) renaissance."⁷⁰ With a thriving arts and culture sector, Quebec is becoming more and more attractive not only to English-speaking artists born in the province, but also to those from other parts of Canada or the U.S. According to the Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative (GMCDI) discussion paper on this sector, Montreal-based artists, in particular, are seen as leaders in the areas of literature, music, visual arts, film, dance, drama and other artistic disciplines.⁷¹ As this demographic continues to increase in number and in prominence, so does the recognition of their art form by the French-speaking majority, as demonstrated by the awarding of prestigious prizes such as the 2004 *Grand prix du livre de Montréal* to poet David Solway for his book *Franklin's Passage*.

The centre of this "renaissance" is Montreal, which is fast acquiring a reputation as a creative metropolis, having an economy fuelled in part by a vibrant arts and culture sector. One factor that contributes to the city's cultural potential is the diversity of its population, which manifests itself in terms of ethnicity, religion, and language. On the subject of Montreal, award-winning writer Rawi Hage says: "Besides, its physical aspect, I love its heterogeneity. I'm intrigued by the idea that everyone here is a minority, even the French in the sense that they are an island in a sea of English. So we are all sharing in the same struggle for identity, which is often expressed through the arts. Where borders blur and minorities are able to freely mix, you'll usually find exceptional ferment which translates into a thriving culture."⁷²

As the QCGN 2007 GMCDI document reports, bilingual ESC artists are well-positioned to contribute to Montreal's reputation as a cultural metropolis since they are able to create cultural products for a range of audiences, both English- and French-speaking.⁷³ Having a long tradition of producing bilingual events, they can project a contemporary image of the ESC that is characterized by cultural and linguistic diversity. An example is the *Blue Metropolis Literary Festival* created in 1999 and now a multilingual event, which on its 12th anniversary in 2010 featured more than 230 writers, literary translators and publishers world-wide. Another is the festival *Accès Asie* founded in 1995, which presents English-speaking Asian culture through the medium of non-language-based work, such as dance, and by readings that are multilingual.⁷⁴ Through events such as these, ESC artists are generating opportunities for members of both the minority and majority communities to work in collaboration, thus promoting diversity and linguistic duality.

⁷⁰ Rodgers, *Quebec's English-speaking Artists: Reinventing a Cultural Landscape*, p. 11.

⁷¹ QCGN. *Arts, Culture and Heritage and the Long-term Development of the English-speaking Communities of the Greater Montreal Region*, discussion document #5 for the GMCDI of the QCGN (April 2007), p. 13.

⁷² www.artsandopinion.com/2007_v6_n3/hage.htm

⁷³ Greater Montreal Community Development Initiative (GMCDI) of the Quebec Community Groups Network, Report of the GMCDI Steering Committee (Summer 2007), p. 15.

⁷⁴ Rodgers, *Quebec's English-speaking Artists: Reinventing a Cultural Landscape*, p. 7.

CONCLUSION

This report is an updated portrait on the ESCs of Quebec that attempts to summarize key findings on a number of factors that have an impact on community vitality and that could have implications for policy makers in the future. The information provided has underscored the fact these communities face the unique challenge of being a minority within a minority and that these special circumstances must be taken into consideration in the development of strategies designed to promote community well-being. To this end, the federal government is a key player in providing support to help promote an increased understanding of these communities, and in so doing, encourage the implementation of measures that are adapted to an ever-changing dynamic.

As stated in the preface, the goal of this report is to serve as a useful primer in terms of recent research, and is intended to be a complement to other readings on this subject. It also testifies to the need for a reliable knowledge base on this community as well as for ongoing monitoring of new and emerging research in this sector. It also testifies to the need for a reliable knowledge base on this community as well as for ongoing monitoring of new and emerging research in this sector.

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