



Acadian and Francophone Affairs
French Language Services Act

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021



The Province of Prince Edward Island

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2020-2021

The Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat

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Minister's Message

STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS

Like society as a whole, departments and agencies had to pivot and find new ways to provide services during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. The public health measures that were necessary to keep Islanders safe had broad impacts on our province, but I am proud to say that even in uncertain times we were able to forge ahead and make progress for French-speaking Islanders during the period of April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021, and that progress is highlighted in this report.



Amidst the drive to reassure and protect Islanders, the importance of keeping the Island's French-speaking population apprised of the latest measures and guidance remained a top priority as was exemplified by the actions of the province's Chief Public Health Officer. I want to thank Dr. Heather Morrison, Chief Public Health Officer, for putting an emphasis on sharing information and guidance in French during our regular public health briefings.

Despite the challenges we were faced with during this time, five new French-language services were designated during the year, including 211 PEI. This service is a valuable tool to navigate many social, health and government services available on Prince Edward Island, and was especially useful at a time when awareness of and access to these services were critical for all Islanders. I am proud that it will be offered in French for Islanders going forward.

Government was proud to continue to collaborate with various organizations of the Acadian and Francophone community to celebrate Acadie 300 and mark an important milestone in the history of the community and of the province, the 300th anniversary of the French presence in Prince Edward Island. The capacity to adapt these celebrations to the reality of the pandemic while maintaining their true spirit is a testimony to the resiliency and strength of character of the Island's Acadian and Francophone community.

In the coming years, government will continue to develop and enhance French language services, including designating new services under the French Language Services Act.

It is my sincere belief that ongoing collaboration will continue to contribute to the vitality and the successful future of the Island Acadian and Francophone community no matter what challenges we encounter.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "DKing". The signature is stylized and fluid, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Dennis King
Premier of Prince Edward Island
Minister Responsible for Acadian and Francophone Affairs

Deputy's Message

Providing and improving French-language services to PEI's Acadian and Francophone community is best achieved by leveraging collaboration and adopting a concerted approach. This was even more true during 2020-2021, as novel measures were put in place by various government institutions to keep all Islanders informed and safe.

In direct response to the pandemic, a health telephone line was established to provide information related to COVID-19 in both English and French through an innovative partnership between the Department of Health and Wellness and the Tourism Division of the Department of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture.

In addition to pandemic-related information and services provided in French to inform and support French-speaking Islanders, government also launched a pilot project to provide home care services in French as part of its efforts to modernize and reinvent how health care is delivered in the province.

Government also ensured that mechanisms were in place to allow and encourage the Island's Acadian and Francophone community to engage and provide input in French on a wide range of topics from online pre-budget consultations to the revision of the proposed Water Withdrawal Regulations.

The Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee, established more than 40 years ago in 1977, continued to play an important role in the implementation of the French Language Services Act. Despite pandemic-related challenges, it illustrates how the provincial government can meaningfully engage and collaborate with the community. By informing the government on the service priorities of the Acadian and Francophone community, the committee contributes valuable information that directly informs the strategic and operational planning of government institutions. These insights are more relevant than ever as government pivots to better serve all Islanders during the current challenging times and in the years to come.

Christopher Gillis

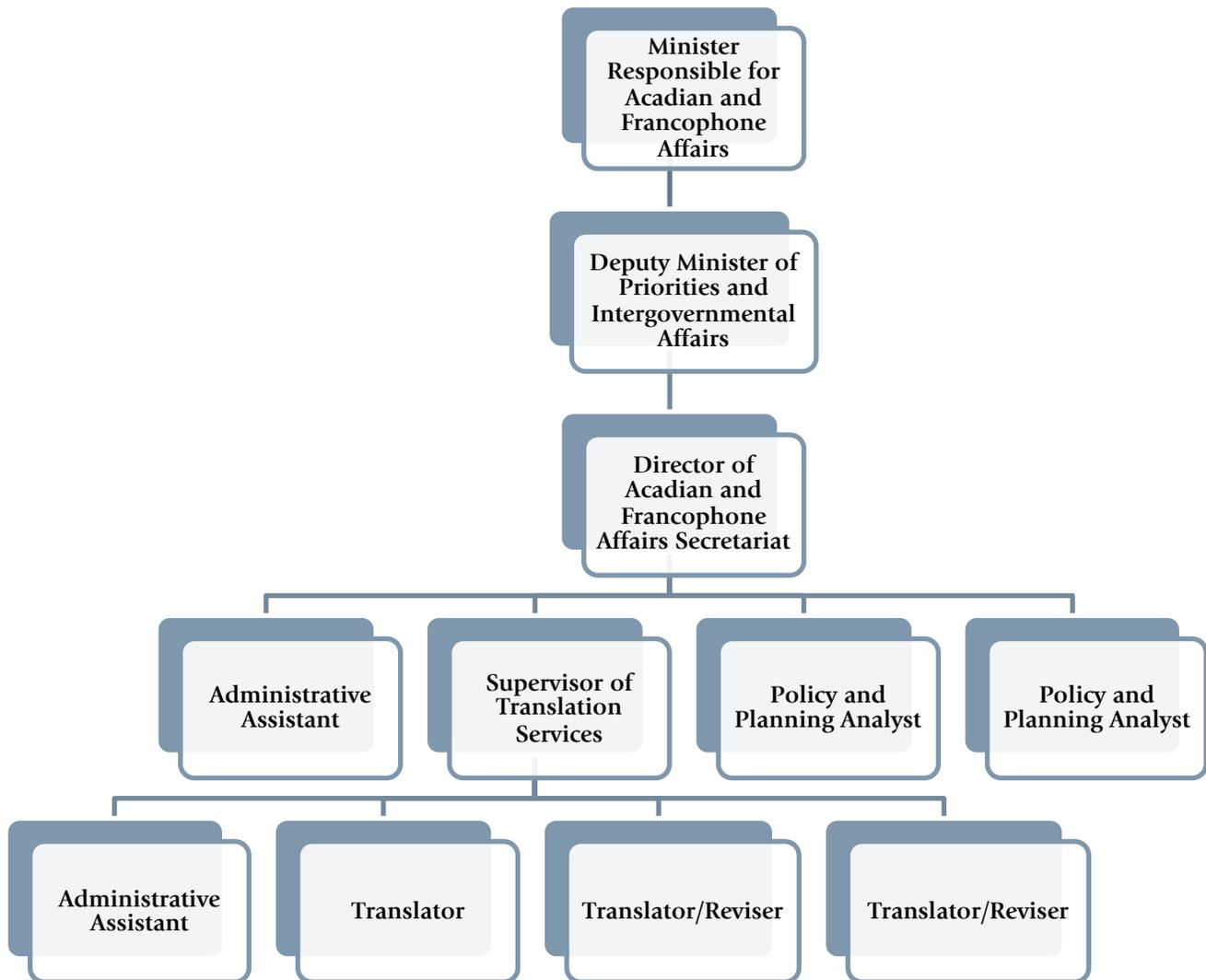
Deputy Minister,

Priorities and Intergovernmental Affairs

Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat Overview

MANDATE, VISION & MISSION

The Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat supports the provincial government on matters related to the Acadian and Francophone community of Prince Edward Island. The secretariat advises the government on the provision of programs and services in French in order to align them with the priority needs of the Acadian and Francophone community. The secretariat is also charged with the administration of the French Language Services Act and its regulations.



Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat organizational chart

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES ACT

The French Language Services Act came into effect in December 2013.

Designated services must be provided in a person's choice of English or French and be of comparable quality in both languages. An active offer must also be made to inform the public that the service is available in both languages. The designation of services is determined by government, taking into consideration government capacity and community priorities, and is done via modifications to the general regulations of the Act.

With respect to written correspondence and public consultations, the Act states that government must respond in French, in writing, to written correspondence received in French and that the public must be provided with an opportunity to participate in French in public consultations.

The Act establishes various mechanisms to ensure its implementation:

- The Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat is responsible for the administration of the Act and regulations. It also provides operational support to the Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee and chairs the French Services Coordinators Committee established by the Act.
- The Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee advises the Minister Responsible for Acadian and Francophone Affairs on all matters related to the province's Acadian and Francophone community, including its priorities for services in French.
- Each government department or agency subject to the Act is required to appoint a French Language Services Coordinator to advise on the implementation of the Act.
- A Complaints Officer, appointed by the Minister Responsible for Acadian and Francophone Affairs, handles complaints filed under the Act, when required.

The Act includes an accountability framework to ensure that government undertakes planning and reporting regarding programs and services in French, addresses and reports on complaints received, and tables a report before the Legislative Assembly on an annual basis.

The General Regulations identify the 20 government institutions that are subject to the Act, define active offer of designated services, and describe the designated services.

The addition of four (4) new designated services in June 2020 and one (1) new designated service receiving approval by the Lieutenant Governor in Council in March 2021 strengthens the solid foundation of the French Language Services Act. This brings the total number of designated services to nineteen.

The current designated services are as follows.

Government Department or Agency	Designated Service
Department of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture	The Community Cultural Partnership Program
Department of Education and Lifelong Learning	Services offered in person at the Abram-Village Public Library, the Dr. J.-Edmond-Arsenault Public Library (Charlottetown), and the J.-Henri-Blanchard Public Library (Summerside)
	Coaching support services for early childhood educators
	Online application form for a public library card*
	Online form for suggesting a purchase to a public library*
	Online request form for an interlibrary loan*
Department of Social Development and Housing	Online registration form for accessible public library services*
	211 PEI*
Department of Transportation, Infrastructure, and Energy	Traveller Information Service – 511
	Traffic signs (excluding stop signs, variable message signs, those with proper names, the words “Trans-Canada Highway”)
	In-person services at Access PEI Wellington
Executive Council Office	Online application process for Engage PEI
Health PEI	Telehealth Information Service – 811
	General orientation services at Summerset Manor
	Financial assessment services for the purpose of the Long-Term Care Subsidization Program at Summerset Manor
	Reception services at Summerset Manor
	Long-term care dental care at Summerset Manor
Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation	All information, both for permanent and temporary exhibits, at the Acadian Museum
	All in-person services at the Acadian Museum

* Newly designated in 2020-2021

ACADIAN AND FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee, established in 1977, plays a critical role in the implementation of the Act. The committee ensures that the government is informed of the service priorities of the Acadian and Francophone community. It also provides government with direction on the designation of services, the provision of designated services in French, and any other matters related to the province’s Acadian and Francophone community.

The committee is made up of ten (10) members: one member for each of the six (6) Acadian and Francophone regions (West Prince, Evangeline, Summerside-Miscouche, Rustico, Charlottetown, and Eastern Kings) and four (4) members at large, including the chair. The members for 2020-2021 were as follows:

- Carlo Lavoie, Chair
- Josée Gallant-Gordon, West Prince region
- Imelda Arsenault, Evangeline region
- Maïté Mézierre, Summerside-Miscouche region
- Stéphane Blanchard, Rustico region
- Zain Esseghaier, Charlottetown region
- Tina Peters-White, Eastern Kings region
- Ashley Richard, member at large
- Carol Horne, member at large
- Jesse Francis, member at large



PRIORITIES OF THE ACADIAN AND FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY

Based on the results of the 2019 community survey, the Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee reported the following priority sectors for the 2020-2023 period: Health, Education, Access to Information and Social Services.

In addition, the committee also identified the following specific priority services for the 2020-2021 fiscal year:

Priority Sectors	Priority Services
<p style="text-align: center;">Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online services • Ambulance services • Mental health services • Family doctors • Long-term care homes • Admission to hospital/ER

Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online services • Online motor vehicle registration • 911 Emergency Service • Access PEI services • Single window service
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online services • Public library services

FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES COORDINATORS COMMITTEE

Each government institution subject to the Act is required to appoint a French Language Services Coordinator. In 2020-2021, all government institutions had a coordinator.

The coordinators ensure that government institutions deliver the annual plans and reports that must be prepared pursuant to the Act. They are responsible for advising and supporting their institution on French-language programs and services, and they handle any complaints made against their institution under the Act.

The Act provides for the establishment of the Coordinators Committee, chaired by the Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat.

FUNDING AGREEMENTS

The Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat manages two (2) bilateral agreements: the Canada-PEI Agreement on French Language Services and the Quebec-PEI Cooperation and Exchange Agreement. The Canada-PEI Agreement on French Language Services is one of the principal funding mechanisms which supports the administrative work of the Secretariat, the Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee, as well as government institutions in the development and implementation of projects designed to enhance French-language services. On the other hand, the Quebec-PEI Cooperation and Exchange Agreement is a cooperation and exchange mechanism which facilitates joint funding of Acadian and Francophone community projects between the governments of PEI and Quebec.

Key Indicators

ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

Among the accountability measures set out in the Act are the complaints mechanism, the annual plans and reports by government institutions, and the annual report of the Minister responsible for Acadian and Francophone Affairs (this document). In addition to this information, the Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee provides insight and guidance in terms of identifying key issues and priority areas for action for PEI's Acadian and Francophone community. Finally, the funding agreements that are leveraged to support the implementation of the Act set out specific strategic objectives guiding project funding.

Complaints Mechanism

The complaints mechanism enables members of the public to file a complaint when:

- A designated service is not provided to them in French;
- The quality of a designated service provided to them in French was not comparable to the quality of that service in English;
- A government institution subject to the Act did not take the measures set out in the French Language Services Act General Regulations to make it known to the public that a designated service was available in a person's choice of English or French;
- A government institution subject to the Act did not respond to their French written correspondence in French;
- A government institution subject to the Act did not provide the public with an opportunity to participate in a public consultation in French.

The complaints mechanism consists of two (2) levels. At the first level, complaints are handled by the French Language Services Coordinator of the institution in question and, at the second level, if necessary, by the Complaints Officer.

In 2020-2021, one (1) complaint from the previous year was resolved and one (1) new complaint was received under the Act. The following is an overview of the complaints received:

Government Institution	Complaint Subject	Result
Health PEI	Provision of a bilingual health card; unilingual French health card requested by complainant	Complaint was dismissed by Health PEI. Complainant appealed the dismissal and the complaint was referred to the Complaints Officer who determined that, while the complaint was not receivable, there was value in offering a unilingual French card. After discussions with Health PEI, a unilingual French health card is now available upon request.
Department of Health and Wellness	Absence of summaries in French during COVID-19 press conferences	Complaint was dismissed as press conferences are not designated under the Act, nor do they qualify under written correspondence or public consultations. The Department committed to providing summaries in French when possible.

A public awareness document about the complaints process is available online and is included as part of the paper version of the complaint form. Complaints can be made online or via e-mail.

Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee

During the reporting period, the committee met three (3) times. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, all meetings were held virtually. Another meeting was initially planned in December 2020 but was finally cancelled due to the COVID-19 circuit breaker.

In accordance with its mandate, the committee identified the priorities of the Acadian and Francophone community for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Government institutions use these priorities when preparing their annual plans required under the Act. The committee continued to develop a strategic framework for the implementation of the Act, and followed up on different topics: the secretariat's role in the COVID-19 crisis, an ongoing complaint (see Complaints Mechanism section), the modernization of the Official Languages Act, and the Secretariat's involvement in the organization of special events such as Tricentenaire de la présence française à l'Î.-P.-É. and Acadie 300. In March 2021, the committee invited the Director of Access PEI to speak to the group about the new Service PEI strategy, which aims to make the delivery of programs and services more accessible for Islanders.

The committee also examined its own role and that of its members to ensure that it fulfilled its obligations under the Act and vis-à-vis the community. The committee noted that ongoing information and awareness sessions were key to keeping members engaged and focused.

Unfortunately, several committee activities such as community consultations initially planned to consolidate the 2019 survey's results, and two (2) public consultations were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

French Language Services Coordinators Committee

The 2020-2021 period represents the first full year of the COVID-19 pandemic, not only on PEI but around the world. Regular government operations were significantly impacted, including the work of the French Language Services Coordinators Committee. Until June 2020, the provincial government was focused on maintaining essential services and bolstering the staffing complement in areas supporting the pandemic relief effort. This meant that staff were reassigned throughout government.

In previous years, the committee would meet in person up to four (4) times per year. Committee meetings provide a venue for French Languages Services Coordinators of all organizations subject to the Act to network and share best practices. With the pandemic, meetings had to move online. While the committee was only able to meet twice as a whole in 2020-2021, Acadian and Francophone Affairs continued working one-on-one with coordinators.

Funding Agreements

The 2018-2023 Strategic Plan for the Canada-PEI Agreement on French Language Services identifies three (3) strategic objectives:

- Internal support for administrative structures and resource optimization;
- Support for the development, planning, and delivery of public services and programs;
- Communications and consultations with the Acadian and Francophone community.

Through this agreement, the Government of Canada contributes \$1,237,500 per year to the provincial government for French-language programs and services. In 2020-2021, 12 projects and 34 designated bilingual positions were funded, such as support to the Acadian Games, the development of a bilingual health care workers recruitment

tool, and the creation of designated bilingual positions at Summerset Manor, a long-term care facility in Summerside.

The Quebec-PEI Cooperation and Exchange Agreement facilitates funding of Acadian and Francophone community projects, more particularly in the following priority sectors: early childhood, Francophone immigration, tourism, youth, education and culture. These projects, co-funded by the governments of Quebec and PEI, contribute to the promotion, development and vitality of the French language and Francophone culture on the Island. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only one (1) project was funded under the Quebec-PEI Cooperation and Exchange Agreement in 2020-2021.



Annual Plans and Reports by Government Institutions

The Act states that government institutions must prepare annual plans and reports. This process enables government institutions to plan, on an annual basis, actions aimed at improving services in French and then report on the implementation of the plan.

The Act requires that government institutions provide information on the following in their annual plans:

- The service priorities of the Acadian and Francophone community in relation to the services they provide;
- Their capacity to provide services in French;
- The provision of their designated services in French if applicable.

In their annual reports, institutions must also provide information about complaints they have received regarding their compliance with the Act. For the 2020-2021 period, all government institutions subject to the Act presented an annual plan and an annual report with a few exceptions. The 2020-2021 plans and reports for Health PEI and the Island Waste Management Corporation (IWMC) as well as the 2020-2021 report for Justice and Public Safety were delayed and not received by the end of the fiscal period (March 31, 2021). However, these three organizations did submit content for the Highlights section of the Minister's report.

A summary of the information contained in these plans and reports can be found in the tables below. The first table highlights activities and initiatives undertaken by various institutions in priority sectors identified by the Acadian and Francophone community of PEI.

Priority Sectors	Highlights
<p style="text-align: center;">Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous development of bilingual service delivery in long-term care facilities, at Summerset Manor and Beach Grove Home, and more recently, at Maplewood Manor. • Launch of a pilot project that aims to provide home care services in French in Prince County. • Launch of a provincial project, including a Francophone lens, that aims to create a platform to provide home care services. • Capture of primary care services data in French for 2020-2021. Plans to use the data analysis in the planning phases of the Primary Care Network service delivery model. • Translation of COVID-19-related services and materials on the government website. • Responses in French from Dr. Heather Morrison to Francophone media questions during COVID-19 press conferences. Étoile Santé award given to Dr. Morrison by the PEI French Health Network.
<p style="text-align: center;">Education, Lifelong Learning and Early Childhood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to support the operations of the Association des centres de la petite enfance francophones de l'Î.-P.-É. for the 2019-2022 period, through the Canada-PEI Agreement on French Language Services. • Designation of four (4) online library services in June 2020 (see French Language Services Act section). • Progressive translation of Web content. Translation of the entire student financial services information. • Many online services available in French, continuing to identify Web forms and services for translation. • Work with the Francophone early childhood community with specific attention to francization, recruitment and training needs. • Launch of a home visiting program for Acadian and Francophone families, delivered through the family resource centre. • Due to COVID-19, establishment of a virtual school model for the second semester of 2020-2021 to expand French-language course offerings for students in Grades 11 and 12.

<p>Access to Information and Social Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of Service PEI, a new service strategy that aims to make the delivery of programs and services more accessible and multilingual for Islanders. • Progressive translation of the online services most frequently used. • Designation of the 211 telephone service, which helps the public, including French speakers, navigate the many social, health and government services on PEI by providing a single point of entry (toll-free number) to apply for different programs. • Translation of the motor vehicle registration online service in progress. Online guide and bilingual staff available to help Francophones complete the online form in English. • 911 emergency service available in French. • Launch of Contact PEI, a “one-stop access point” (toll-free number) that delivers government services to Islanders. Plans to expand on deliverables, including French services.
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Other institutions subject to the French Language Services Act worked to continue to implement the Act and to provide services and programs in French. Below are the highlights and accomplishments of these other departments:

<p>Finance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-mail sent by the Deputy Minister and the Treasury Board to employees encouraging language assessments; good response rate. • All news releases translated into French. • Launch of online pre-budget consultations in both English and French. Participation of the Comptroller in the Facebook live portion to answer (in real time) any questions posed in French. • Internal review of the Department’s website to ensure all information is current and to prioritize information for translation.
<p>Fisheries and Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal language profile survey and French-language services toolkit for staff - in partnership with Agriculture and Land (see A&L note above). • Ongoing support to the Rural Action Centre in Wellington, which serves Francophone clients and organizes learning opportunities for NGOs in French. • Ongoing support to the Francophone municipalities and NGOs by updating website with French content (e.g., guidelines, application forms).

<p>Health and Wellness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of the Jeux de l'Acadie (Acadian Games) through an annual grant that allows hundreds of Island Francophone children to participate in the regional games on PEI and then attend the Jeux de l'Acadie. (Many activities had to be cancelled or modified significantly due to COVID-19.) • French service delivery to the Jeux de l'Acadie and possibility to serve any other sport and recreation groups in French should that be their preference. • Other items (see table "highlights" related to the priority sectors).
<p>Human Rights Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website redesign - all the French resources available under one (1) tab. • New documents available in French: companion piece to Worker Compensation Board's sexual harassment policy guidelines, FAQs for mask wearing. • Set up of different initiatives within the sexual harassment in the workplace project: creation of a high school steering committee to guide the process of developing curriculum-based lesson plans and teacher guides for the Career Exploration and Opportunity class (mandatory for grade 10). • Online student survey available in French, promoted on Radio Canada. Partnership with the SAF'île, regarding their application for funding for a Sexual Harassment Prevention project. • Exploration of options to develop French service delivery in relation to education and complaint processes, in collaboration with Francophone organizations (Coopérative d'intégration francophone, Actions Femmes Î. P. É., SAF'île).
<p>Innovation PEI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding of French culture and heritage projects via more than 25 grants. • Relocation of the bilingual Cultural Development Officer from the Department of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture to Innovation PEI in August 2020. • Support to clients in French when needed.
<p>IRAC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing finishing touches on website. • Translation of the rental office FAQs. • Public notices and press releases in <i>La Voix acadienne</i>.

<p>IWMC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage at public sites in both English and French. • All documents created for customers available in English and French. • When material is provided in English only, a caption to contact the organization for a French copy is included. • Newspaper advertisements featured in French in <i>La Voix acadienne</i>. • Recent redesign of IWMC website. Plans to translate it. • Free mobile app Recycle Coach available for customers (interactive sorting guide, collection calendars, notifications, and tips). Exploring options for a French version of the app.
<p>Justice and Public Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilingual positions in the process of being created to fulfill requirements under the federal Divorce Act starting with three (3) bilingual positions in the Family Law and Court Services Division. • Increased website translation, including COVID-19-related Web material. • Translation of a significant number of public resources, including materials associated with the Maintenance Enforcement Program, Vital Statistics and public consultation feedback materials for draft legislation.
<p>Liquor Control Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening of Notables store in July 2020 - same name in English and French, bilingual signage in the store, news release done in both languages. • Education program Restons sociable/Keep it Social, promoted at the University of PEI and Holland College; website (info, tools, blog) offered in French. • Two (2) presentations Précipice given by Mothers Against Drunk Driving Canada at École La-Belle-Cloche on November 6, 2020.

<p style="text-align: center;">Museum and Heritage Foundation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilingual signage at the Acadian Museum, the Eptek Art & Culture Centre and many other sites. • Greetings by bilingual staff at the Acadian Museum and the Eptek Art & Culture Centre. • Island Magazine's 2020 issue published, and website created in both English and French to commemorate the 300th anniversary of Acadian and French presence in PEI. • Promotion of the PEI Museum and Heritage Foundation's programming within both school boards and in many schools. • Provision of information in English and French from the Acadian Research Centre by phone, e-mail or via the website. • Talks of the Acadian Research Centre available on Zoom and Facebook. • Digitalization and online publishing of archives related to the Acadian and Francophone community of PEI thanks to equipment funded by a grant from Canadian Heritage. • Translation of website contents, exhibits in both English and French and several social media posts in French. • Inventory of French services (active offer, signage, exhibits, staff) in the seven (7) locations which led to a list of recommendations to increase the delivery of French services. • Increase in classroom educational tools and on-site products thanks to a partnership between the French language programmer (recently hired) and schools.
<p style="text-align: center;">Public Service Commission</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Francophone public events among bilingual employees. • Creation of a committee to update the Targeted Recruitment Strategy (developed in 2017). • Participation in the development of the PEI FLS strategic framework. • Cancellation of the spring 2020 Collège de l'Île French courses because of the pandemic. • New partnership with UPEI in August 2020. Five (5) French courses and virtual conversation groups offered. • Babbel self-directed learning offered to civil service and Health PEI employees in contact with the Francophone public.
<p style="text-align: center;">Transportation and Infrastructure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of Service PEI, a new service strategy (see table "highlights" related to the priority sectors). • Launch of Contact PEI, a "one-stop access point" (toll-free number; see table "highlights" related to the priority sectors).
<p style="text-align: center;">Social Development and Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designation of the 211 telephone service, which helps the public navigate the many social, health and government services on PEI by providing a single point of entry (toll-free number).

<p>Workers Compensation Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing of a promotional video in French outlining the services provided by the organization. • Young Workers National Video Contest: promotions done in French at French schools; winner was from École François-Buote (video made in English). • News releases in French.
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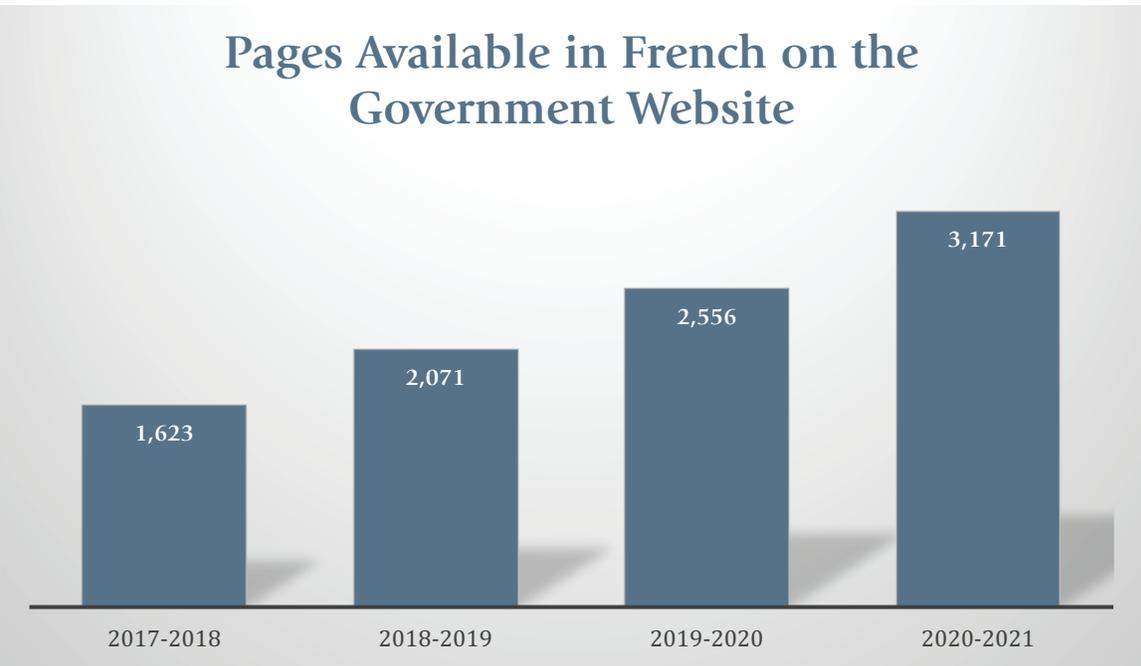
OTHER INDICATORS

Provincial Government Website

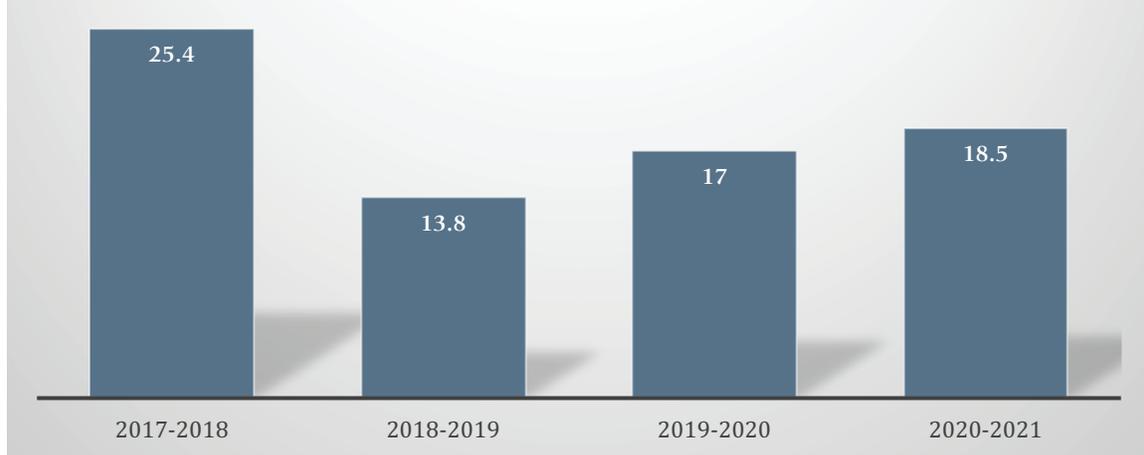
The PEI Government website continues to be the main platform for increasing access to information in French, a priority sector for the Acadian and Francophone community. The website is used by government to publish information about government programs and services, as well as provide access to online services.

From a technological perspective, each page of the website can be translated and made available in French, making it possible to publish new information in French on an ongoing basis as the website is populated with new content. The pages most frequently viewed by users are prioritized. As of March 31, 2021, the site had 3,171 pages in French, up from 2,556 in 2019-2020. There was a total of 17,103 Web pages as of March 31, 2021 (+14% vs. 2019-2020, where there were 14,968), meaning that 18.5% of the website was available in French as of that date.

French-language pages have increased since 2018-2019 in both absolute numbers and as a percentage of total pages. Historically, there was a dip in the percentage of French-language pages from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019. This one-time percentage decline was due to the extremely rapid growth in English-language pages in 2018-2019 (going from just over 6,000 to almost 15,000 in one year) in the follow-up to the launch of the new government website. As previously indicated, the percentage of French-language pages has been increasing since.

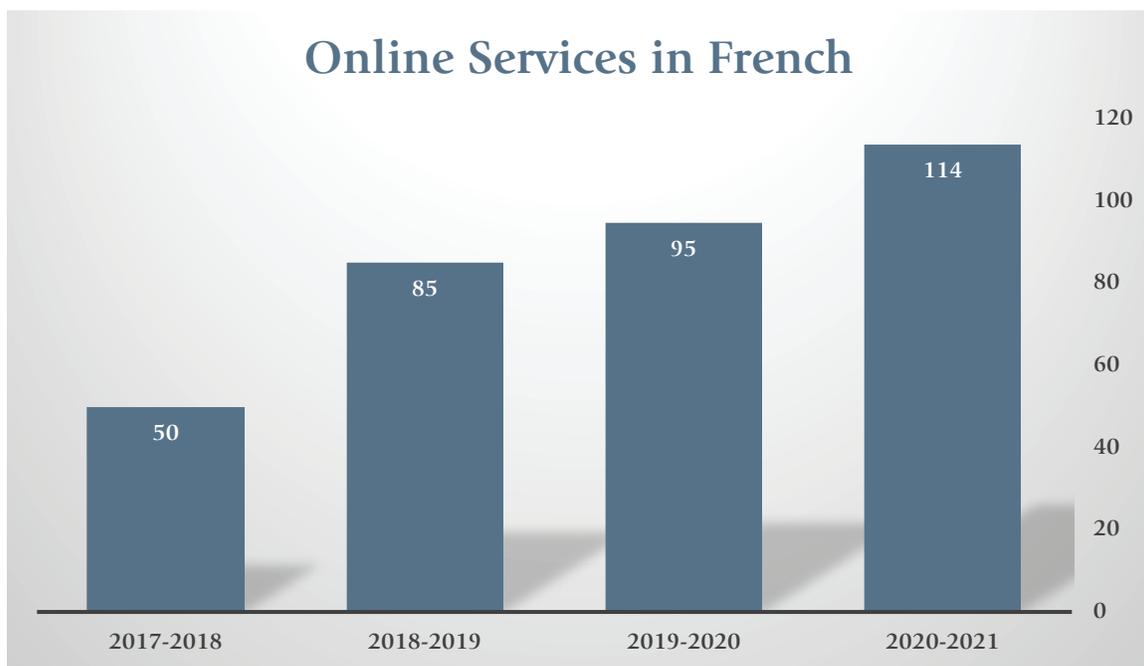


Percentage of Pages Available in French on the Government Website



The website also makes it possible to offer online services in French. As of March 31, 2021, the site offered 114 online services in French, up from 95 in 2019-2020.

Online Services in French

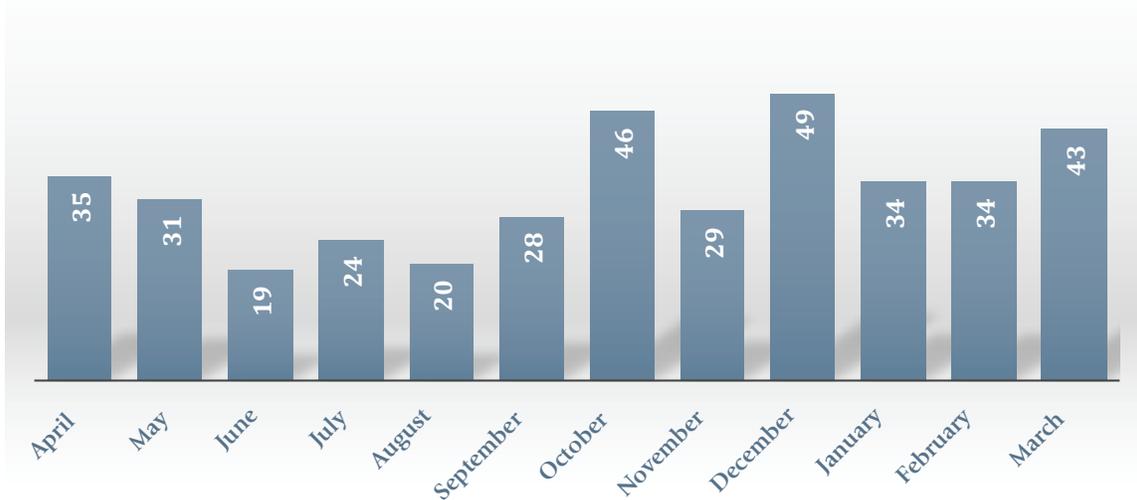




Government News in French

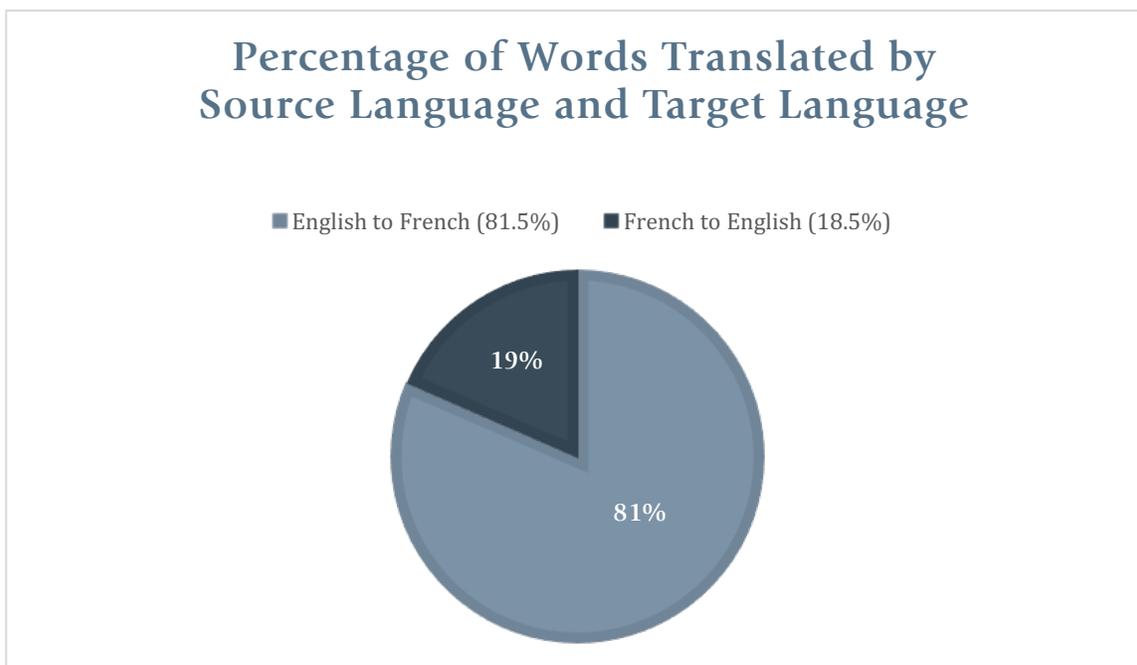
In 2020-2021, the government issued 392 news releases in French out of a total of 426 or 92%. The news releases dealt with various information about government services and programs, including public health measures and information related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Number of News Releases in French (2020-2021)



Translation Services

The provincial government's Translation Services play a key role in the delivery of services in French by government institutions. Translation Services enable government institutions to increase the amount of information available in French. In 2020-2021, Translation Services translated 1,304,972 words, of which 81.5% were translated from English to French and 18.5% from French to English.



Government Capacity

Government institutions offer services in French partly based on the availability of bilingual employees. The Public Service Commission is responsible for preparing a list of designated bilingual positions and bilingual employees not in designated positions for the public service and Health PEI.

The number of bilingual employees has been steadily increasing over the years. The number of designated bilingual positions has also generally grown although that number does tend to fluctuate from year to year based on operational requirements.

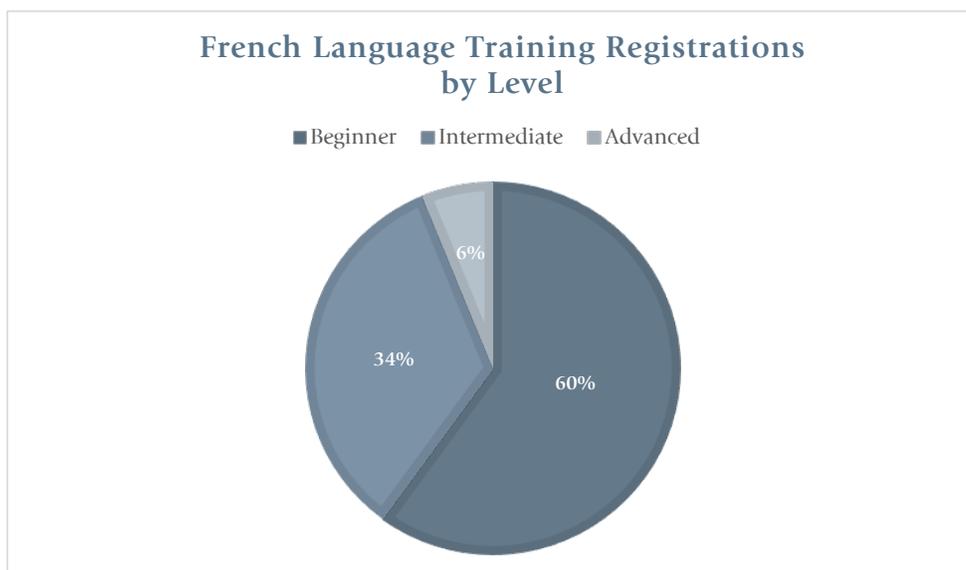
Bilingual employees of the Government of PEI	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Designated bilingual positions	119	120	116	142	141	146	148	138
Bilingual employees ¹ not in designated bilingual positions	102	110	120	124	140	160	211	226
Total	221	230	236	266	281	306	359	364

¹Bilingual employees are employees whose French oral skills have been assessed by the Public Service Commission and who have achieved an "Intermediate Plus" level or higher.

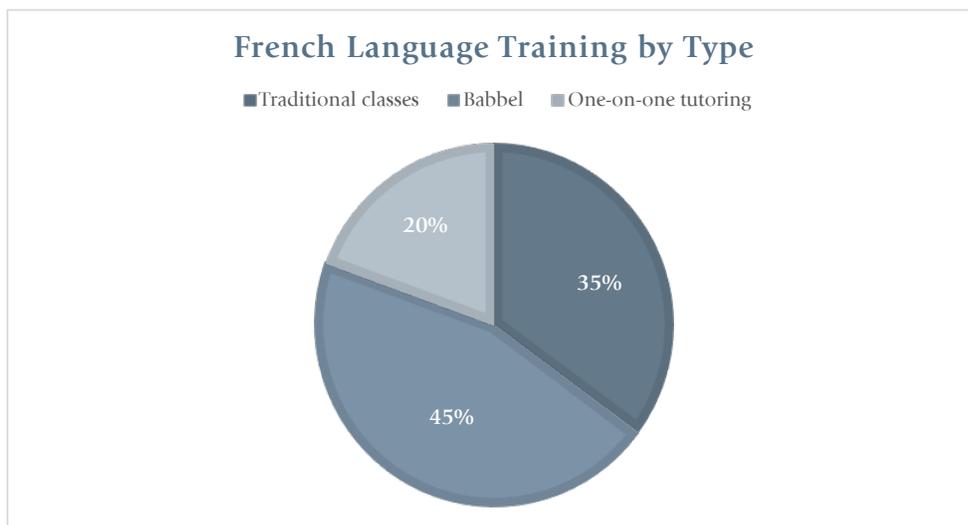
In 2020-2021, 49 oral proficiency assessments were done, compared to 70 in 2019-2020. Thirty-four of these assessments were done for staffing purposes, while 15 were done on a voluntary basis. Thirty-four of these assessments were done for new hires, 10 for employees being assessed for the first time, and finally, 5 for renewals. Due to the restrictions on in-person meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as significantly less hiring, fewer French proficiency assessments were required during the reporting period (except for the health sector, which was prioritized). This resulted in the number of assessments being lower than in the previous year.

There were 65 registrations for French-language training in 2020-2021, compared to 175 in 2019-2020, largely because the spring 2020 courses normally offered by the Collège de l'Île were cancelled due to the pandemic.

Following a request for proposal process for French-language training, the Public Service Commission (PSC) signed a contract with the University of PEI (UPEI) in August 2020. In 2020-2021, five (5) courses were offered by UPEI: "Introduction to French Language and Culture" in two (2) parts, "Intermediate French Language" in two (2) parts and "Communication en français".



In the spring of 2020, in addition to in-class French language training, the PSC purchased 50 Babbel subscriptions that have been allocated to civil service and Health PEI employees who are in positions where they interact with the public regularly. In addition to the Babbel self-directed learning, the PSC signed an agreement with UPEI to hire an instructor who could provide one-on-one tutoring to employees enrolled in the program. Furthermore, the PSC collaborated with UPEI to offer virtual conversation groups for employees who were graduates from immersion programs. UPEI students enrolled in the Education program facilitated 30 and 45-minute sessions for the beginner, intermediate or advanced employees for a total of 5 hours a week. Employees could choose and join a group virtually based on their proficiency level.



French language training is available to all employees, but enrollment is limited for some courses. In cases where the number of applicants exceeds the availability, registrations are prioritized based on the four (4) priority areas previously mentioned: Health, Education, Access to Information and Social Services. The PSC has also been in discussions with UPEI about the possibility of offering a program tailored to the needs of employees working in the health sector. Such a program would accommodate rotating schedules and focus on language skills relevant to the sector.



Future Direction

In 2021-2022, the Acadian and Francophone Affairs Secretariat will be reviewing its strategic plan and staffing key positions on a permanent basis to address operational needs in a more sustainable fashion. The focus of these initiatives will be to enhance employee engagement, realign the work of the Acadian and Francophone Community Advisory Committee (AFCAC) and increase strategic support to the French Language Services Coordinators Committee.

A strong team with in-depth knowledge of and multifaceted linkages into the Island's Acadian and Francophone community is a key component to achieving the Secretariat's mandate. Productive relationships with the French Language Services Coordinators of institutions subject to the Act and with senior management and program delivery teams within these organizations is equally crucial. In the coming year, the Secretariat will continue to cultivate and leverage these strengths.

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