

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE *OFFICIAL
LANGUAGES ACT OF NEW BRUNSWICK*
2024-2031**

Evaluation Report

2024-2025



Secretariat of Official Languages
Department of Intergovernmental Affairs

Secretariat of Official Languages

Intergovernmental Affairs

EVALUATION REPORT 2024-2025

Province of New Brunswick

P.O. Box 6000, Fredericton (New Brunswick) E3B 5H1 CANADA

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Transmittal Letters

From the Premier to the Lieutenant Governor

■ **Her Honour The Honorable Louise Imbeault**

Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the evaluation report on the Government of New Brunswick's Implementation Plan for the *Official Languages Act* for the period of June 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



The Honourable Susan Holt

Premier

Minister responsible for Official Languages

From the Deputy Minister to the Premier

■ **The Honourable Susan Holt**

Premier and Minister responsible for Official Languages

Premier Holt:

It is my privilege to submit the evaluation report on the Government of New Brunswick's Implementation Plan for the *Official Languages Act* for the period of June 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



Hélène Bouchard

Deputy Minister responsible for Official Languages

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Secretariat of Official Languages

The Secretariat of Official Languages, a central agency of the Government of New Brunswick (GNB), was established on April 1, 2023, in response to the 2021 review of New Brunswick's *Official Languages Act*. The eight employees of the Secretariat report to the Deputy Minister responsible for Official Languages.

The Secretariat's mandate is to oversee the full implementation of the *Official Languages Act (OLA)* within the government. Its mandate also includes public outreach campaigns to promote respect, knowledge and communication between the two linguistic communities and the economic benefits of bilingualism in the province.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1

To create cultural change within government and communities by focusing on positive aspects of bilingualism, and to maintain the level of bilingualism within the public service.

2

To provide co-ordination and support related to the implementation of the *Official Languages Act* within the government of New Brunswick while promoting the positive aspects of bilingualism.

VALUES



RESPECT AND
TEAMWORK



POSITIVE AND
EFFICIENT
COMMUNICATIONS



OPENNESS TO
CHANGE AND
EXCELLENCE



CONTINUOUS
IMPROVEMENT



INNOVATION
AND CREATIVITY



The Secretariat's Role

COORDINATION:

GUIDING AND
COLLABORATING

Expert Advice:

Collaborate with government institutions to provide strategic guidance on the *Official Languages Act*.

Community Engagement:

Maintain active dialogue with key partners on the ground to address real needs.

Strategic Planning:

Develop and assess comprehensive action plans to ensure effective implementation of the *Act* within departments and agencies.

SUPPORT:

ASSISTING AND
EMPOWERING

Employee Empowerment:

Create a workplace environment where public servants can thrive in both official languages.

Policy Implementation:

Ensure adherence to standards for service and working languages while fostering a culture of respect and linguistic diversity.

PROMOTION:

INSPIRING AND
RAISING AWARENESS

Dynamic Campaigns:

Highlight the importance of bilingualism through engaging initiatives that strengthen ties between the linguistic communities.

Economic Opportunities:

Raise awareness among both linguistic communities of the economic benefits of bilingualism.

Proactive Collaboration:

Conduct regular discussions with key stakeholders to build a strong linguistic future together.

GNB Official Languages Implementation Plan

2024-2031 LAUNCHED ON JUNE 1, 2024

01

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE # 1

ENSURE HIGH QUALITY, EQUAL BILINGUAL SERVICES TO ALL NEW BRUNSWICKERS.

↓ 10%

By 2031, decrease the number of public complaints to the Commissioner of Official Languages by 10% annually (97 complaints in 2022-23).

↑ 90%

By 2031, maintain over 90% the percentage of New Brunswickers that are satisfied with the provincial government bilingual services in terms of equality and quality (89% in 2024).

↑ 90%

By 2031, active offer in both languages is made in 90% of interactions between provincial government offices and New Brunswickers (86% in 2024).

By 2031, revise and update, if necessary, the government of New Brunswick policy on signage and official languages.

Goals and objectives

1

To create cultural change within government and communities by focusing on positive aspects of bilingualism, and to maintain the level of bilingualism within the public service.

2

To provide co-ordination and support related to the implementation of the *Official Languages Act* within the government of New Brunswick while promoting the positive aspects of bilingualism.

Values



RESPECT AND TEAMWORK



POSITIVE AND EFFICIENT COMMUNICATIONS



OPENNESS TO CHANGE AND EXCELLENCE



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1

Ensure high quality, equal bil

OUTCOMES

1

By 2031, decrease the number of public complaints to the Commissioner of Official Languages by 10% annually (97 complaints in 2022-23).

2

By 2031, maintain over 90% the percentage of New Brunswickers that are satisfied with the provincial government bilingual services in terms of equality and quality (89% in 2024).

3

By 2031, active offer in both official languages is made in 90% of interactions between provincial government offices and New Brunswickers (86% in 2024).

4

By 2031, revise and update, if necessary, the government of New Brunswick policy on signage and official languages.

02

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE # 2

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES CAN WORK AND PURSUE A CAREER IN THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THEIR CHOICE.

↑ 90%

By 2031, maintain over 90% the percentage of government of New Brunswick employees that are able to work in the official language of their choice (92% in 2024).

↑ 80%

By 2031, 80% of government of New Brunswick employees are satisfied with the second language training (77% in 2024).

↑ 75%

By 2031, 75% of government of New Brunswick employees use and practise their second official language (71% in 2024).

03

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE # 3

NEW BRUNSWICKERS UNDERSTAND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF BILINGUALISM THROUGH IMPROVED AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND BETTER SUPPORT.

↑ 70%

By 2031, 70% of New Brunswickers understand the main objectives of the *Official Languages Act* (currently 66%).

By 2025, commission a study on the economic impact of bilingualism on the province's GDP.

04

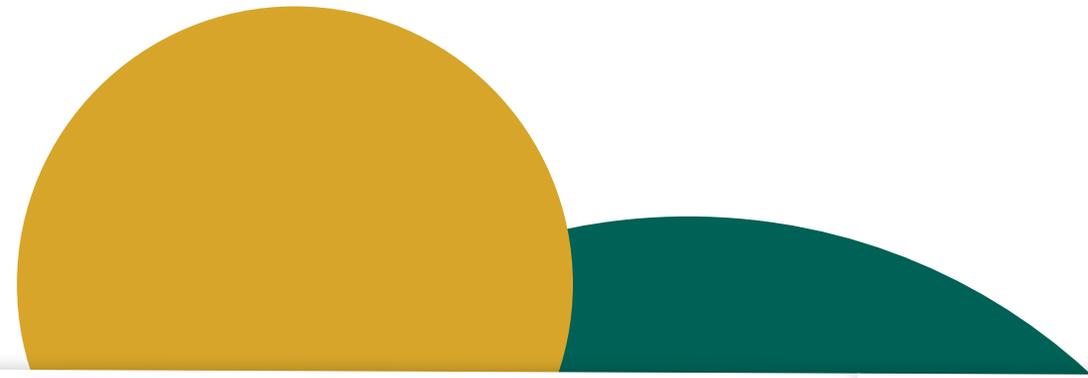
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #4

POSITIVE MEASURES ARE IMPLEMENTED TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOTH OFFICIAL LINGUISTIC COMMUNITIES.

↑ 35%

Increase the level of bilingualism in NB to 35% by 2031 (34% in 2021).

Develop partnership with community organizations that will help promote the vitality of each official language community.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2

Provincial government employees are able to work and pursue a career in the official language of their choice

OUTCOMES		ACTIONS	
<p>1</p> <p>By 2031, maintain over 90% the percentage of government of New Brunswick employees that are able to work in the official language of their choice (92% in 2024).</p>	<p>2</p> <p>By 2031, 75% of government of New Brunswick employees use and practise their second official language (71% in 2024).</p>	<p>Ensure that each employee understands the language of work policy and that each department and agency understands its obligations.</p> <p>Develop an internal communications strategy to encourage provincial government staff to work in the language of their choice.</p> <p>Ensure that all departments include language of work initiatives in their annual work plans and meet these objectives.</p>	<p>Develop and make available new technologies and tools to enable government of New Brunswick employees to work in the language of their choice.</p> <p>Make available to provincial government employees new technologies and tools to help learn a second official language.</p> <p>Develop a tool to measure progress and results of employees who take language training.</p>
<p>3</p> <p>By 2031, 80% of government of New Brunswick employees are satisfied with the second language training (77% in 2024).</p>			

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3

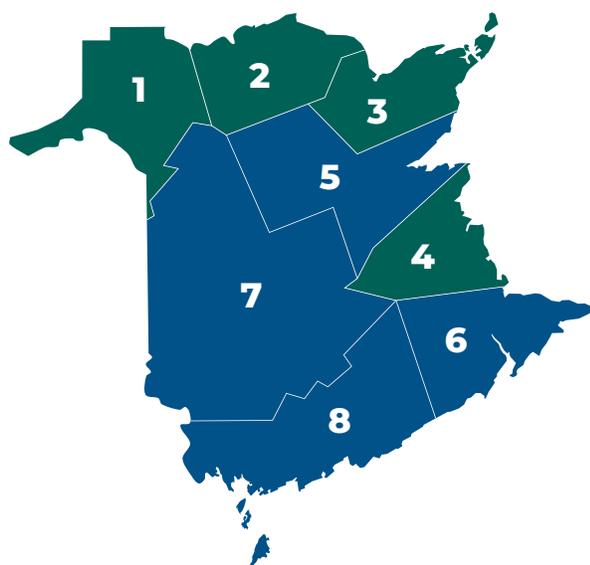
New Brunswickers understand the socio-economic impact of bilingualism through improved and better support

OUTCOMES	
<p>1</p> <p>By 2031, 70% of New Brunswickers understand the main objectives of the Official Languages Act (currently 66%).</p>	<p>2</p> <p>By 2025, commission a study on the economic impact of bilingualism on the province's GDP.</p>

Bilingualism in New Brunswick

OVERVIEW

69% ANGLOPHONE¹ | **30%** FRANCOPHONE¹ | **34%** BILINGUAL¹



- 1** Northwest: 88 % Francophones²
- 2** Restigouche: 58 % Francophones²
- 3** Acadian Peninsula: 96 % Francophones²
- 4** Kent: 67 % Francophones²
- 5** Greater Miramichi: 89 % Anglophones²
- 6** Southeast: 66 % Anglophones²
- 7** Capital: 92 % Anglophones²
- 8** Southwest: 98 % Anglophones²

80% of New Brunswickers support the *Official Languages Act* and bilingualism.³

59% of New Brunswick's Anglophones aged 25 to 54 who attended French immersion are bilingual.¹

89% of New Brunswickers say they have received quality government services in the language of their choice.³

37% of New Brunswick's Anglophone students aged 5 to 17 are in an immersion program.¹

86% of members of the public received an active offer when interacting with a GNB office.³

20% of New Brunswick's French immersion graduates regularly use their second language at work.¹

¹ Statistics Canada, 2021 Census

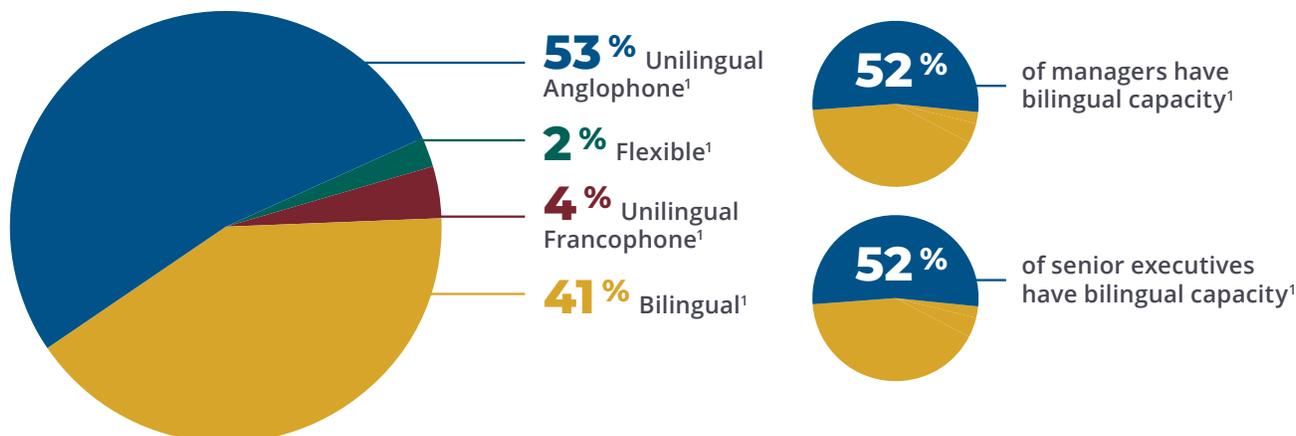
² Finn, Y., McLaughlin, J. (2021). Report on the 2021 Review of the Official Languages Act of New Brunswick – Organization, Communication and Engagement. <https://www.gnb.ca/en/org/languages/report-review-languages-2021.html>

³ GNB, Secretariat of Official Languages

GNB Bilingualism

OVERVIEW

LANGUAGE DESIGNATION
OF POSITIONS IN PART I



450

GNB employees have received second-language training²



2,857

language evaluations were completed²



92%

of employees feel comfortable using the official language of their choice in the workplace (81% of Francophones).²



85%

of employees feel comfortable speaking the official language of their choice in professional meetings (62% of Francophones).²



75%

of employees who have completed second language training say the training met their expectations.²



93%

of employees can communicate with their supervisor daily in the official language of their choice (82% of Francophones).²



93%

of employees can produce documents in the language of their choice (83% of Francophones).²



32%

Reduction in public complaints received by the Commissioner of Official Languages (97³ to 66⁴)

¹ GNB, Finance and Treasury Board, 2021

² Secretariat of Official Languages, 2024

³ Commissioner of Official Languages for New Brunswick. 2022-2023 Annual Report. https://languesofficielles.nb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Annual-Report_2022-2023.pdf

⁴ Commissioner of Official Languages for New Brunswick. 2023-2024 Annual Report.

<https://languesofficielles.nb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2023-2024-Annual-Report.pdf>



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE # 1

ENSURE HIGH-QUALITY, EQUAL BILINGUAL SERVICES TO ALL NEW BRUNSWICKERS.

As part of its 2024–2031 Implementation Plan for the *Official Languages Act*, the Secretariat is committed to taking the necessary measures to ensure that the people of New Brunswick receive high-quality, bilingual government services in all sectors and all regions of the province. Through its ongoing collaboration with GNB departments and agencies, it ensures that provincial public service employees have the tools and skills they need to serve the public in both official languages, thus reflecting the reality of New Brunswick.

Through specific actions, the Secretariat believes it is in a position to meet its short-, medium- and long-term objectives.

ACTIONS

Provide annual training to provincial government employees on the content of the Language of Service and Active Offer policies.

Review the role of official languages co-ordinators and second-language co-ordinators in departments and agencies to ensure efficiency and consistency across the government of New Brunswick and to offer them more support.

Ensure that departments and agencies include specific targets in their annual action plans.

Implement a pilot project to review the linguistic profile requirements.

Establish checks and balances for departments and agencies to ensure that initiatives have been implemented in their annual action plan to reduce the number of complaints.

Include linguistic requirements in all government of New Brunswick job postings.

Provide effective training programs in English and French to facilitate all provincial government employees, including senior management, to learn a second official language to provide quality services in both official languages.



HIGHLIGHTS

The Public Service is Aware of and Understands its Official Languages Responsibilities

EMPLOYEE TRAINING ON THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT AND THE LANGUAGE OF SERVICE POLICY

GNB recognizes the essential role its employees play in applying the *Official Languages Act*. To support them, the Secretariat has modernized the training modules to clarify language responsibilities at all levels. The updated modules were launched on May 5, 2025. This training is mandatory for all new Part I GNB employees and must be retaken by all employees every five years. It aims to strengthen the understanding of linguistic obligations, thus ensuring that the public receives quality bilingual services.



Module 1:
Official Languages Act



The origins of the Official Languages Act

Recognizing the social and economic inequalities between the English- and French-speaking regions of the province, the government of the time enacted its Equal Opportunity Program in the 1960s. The *Official Languages Act* was adopted in 1969, making English and French the two official languages of New Brunswick. The enactment of this Act made New Brunswick the first officially bilingual province in Canada. Today, more than 50 years later, New Brunswickers are still proud of their province's unique status.

The Act recognizes the right of New Brunswickers to receive services from the provincial government in the official language of their choice.

Click [here](#) for a short video on the *Official Languages Act*.





Module 2:
Lesson 1 - Introduction to the Language of Service Policy



Hello! Bonjour! – What is active offer?

Active offer means taking the necessary steps to actively inform the public, from the first point of contact, that services are available in both official languages.

Services in both official languages must be actively offered in all situations. This includes:

- Telephone greeting
- In-person service
- Visual appearance
- Correspondence (including e-mail)
- Electronic service

Click Public to learn more.



Public

NEW ACTIVE OFFER POSTERS

New Brunswick's *Official Languages Act* requires GNB departments and agencies to clearly indicate that services are offered in both official languages. An active offer of service is a clear way to inform the public that service is available in both official languages. In 2024, the Secretariat distributed new active offer posters to all departments to ensure people understand they are entitled to quality bilingual services. This campaign has been successful, with the new posters visible in GNB offices across the province.



TRAINING FOR HUMAN RESOURCES EMPLOYEES

The provincial public service has the great responsibility of implementing the key components of the *Act*. One key component in ensuring the commitments and objectives of the *Act* are met is hiring a diverse and skilled workforce and providing employees with ongoing training. To ensure consistency across GNB departments and agencies, the Secretariat provided human resources employees with training sessions on the content of the *Official Languages Act* and the associated Language of Service and Language of Work policies. A total of over eight hours of training were offered to about 50 GNB human resources professionals. This partnership encouraged participants to share ideas, tools and best practices. Other initiatives are also being planned for the coming years to continue raising awareness and to strengthen the corporate culture around official languages.



Teams Available to Provide Quality Services in Both Official Languages

TEAM LINGUISTIC PROFILES

Since 1990, all government departments have used a team approach to serve the public in both official languages. This approach involves leveraging the language skills of all members of a group of employees to serve the public in both official languages. A linguistic profile is generated for each team to determine the number of unilingual Anglophone, unilingual Francophone and bilingual employees required.

This exercise reduced the steps involved in generating linguistic profiles by 60%, to the great satisfaction of the participants and the employees responsible for the composition of work teams in the departments. It also demonstrated the need for standardization and improvements to the computer systems used to classify existing positions and linguistic profiles. The Secretariat is working on this in collaboration with experts from GNB's Office of the Chief Information Officer.

Although GNB's corporate target of **90%** was met in 2024-2025, the process of generating and maintaining linguistic profiles is cumbersome and complex.

As indicated in the implementation plan under the list of actions to be taken, in January 2025, the Secretariat launched a process improvement exercise to simplify team linguistic profile generation procedures. Three key departments agreed to participate in the exercise, which was led by professionals from the Project and Advisory Services team within the Department of Finance and Treasury Board. Representatives from the Departments of Social Development, Service New Brunswick and Finance and Treasury Board shared their challenges, constraints and recommendations during four work sessions.



SECOND LANGUAGE TRAINING TO ENSURE QUALITY BILINGUAL SERVICES

To ensure it can provide services in both official languages, GNB hires bilingual staff and offers non-bilingual employees the opportunity to learn the second official language. Over 450 public service employees (Part I and Part III) took part in second-language training in 2024-2025. Second-language training for GNB employees is provided by the Université de Moncton.

Employees who have direct contact with the public can apply for second-language training. Their application must be approved by their manager.

Courses are offered online, and the number of hours varies based on the learners' needs. Registration takes place in the fall and winter. Courses start in September and end in June. Learning levels range from basic to advanced. Learners can also choose to take group or one-on-one (tutoring) courses.



LANGUAGE EVALUATION PROGRAM

To ensure quality bilingual service, a language evaluation is conducted at the beginning of the hiring process for any position designated as bilingual. It confirms that the successful candidate has the required second official language skills to meet the requirements of the position.

The language evaluation is an assessment of an individual's overall ability to communicate in English or French in a professional and social context.

Proficiency is a person's ability to speak, read or write in English or French, based on the following criteria:

Functions or Tasks – the ability to describe events, give explanations, express opinions, and justify a position.

Accuracy – the quality and precision of the message conveyed (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and overall ability to communicate).

Content – refers to topics related to professional and social life.

GNB has three accredited language evaluators, who conducted 2,857 evaluations in 2024-2025. Evaluators also offer a service for employees to track and evaluate their progress if they wish to do so.



Support to Departments

QUESTIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

The Secretariat responded to 13 requests for information from departments and Crown corporations on various topics related to official languages and the Language of Service Policy. These questions mainly pertained to customer service, document translation, team linguistic profiles, calls for tenders and communications with the public.



DEPARTMENTAL ACTION PLANS

As stipulated in the *Official Languages Act*, departments must develop their own action plan on official languages based on GNB's global plan. In the past, each department developed its own document without using an established template. To ensure coherence and, most importantly, across the entire government, the Secretariat, in partnership with the departments, has developed a standardized, uniform template for official languages work plans. This template includes performance indicators that departments must meet annually, thus ensuring that the *Official Languages Act* and the Language of Service and Language of Work policies are applied effectively and uniformly across GNB. Departmental action plans include, performance indicators for employee training, the composition of team linguistic profiles, employee onboarding, and communications with the public.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE # 2

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ARE ABLE TO WORK AND PURSUE A CAREER IN THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THEIR CHOICE.

As part of its 2024–2031 Implementation Plan for the *Official Languages Act*, the Secretariat is committed to taking the necessary measures to ensure that all GNB Part I employees enjoy an environment and climate that encourages them to use the official language of their choice in their workplace. Through its ongoing collaboration with GNB departments, it ensures that provincial public servants feel comfortable using the official language of their choice.

Through specific actions, the Secretariat believes it is in a position to meet its short-, medium- and long-term objectives.

ACTIONS

Ensure that each employee understands the language of work policy and that each department and agency understands its obligations.

Develop an internal communications strategy to encourage provincial government staff to work in the language of their choice.

Ensure that all departments include language of work initiatives in their annual work plans and meet these objectives.

Develop and make available new technologies and tools to enable government of New Brunswick employees to work in the language of their choice.

Make available to provincial government employees new technologies and tools to help learn a second official language.

Develop a tool to measure progress and results of employees who take language training.

HIGHLIGHTS

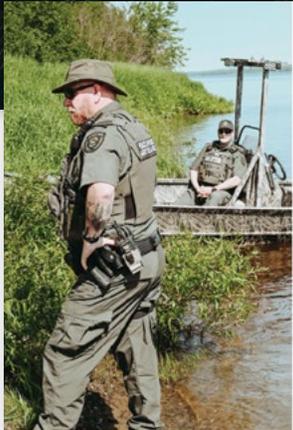
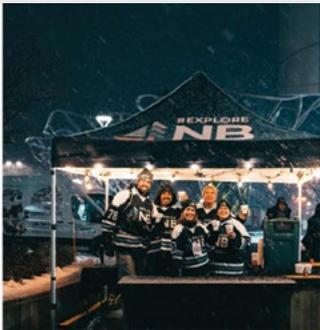
The Public Service is Aware of and Understands its Official Languages Responsibilities

STAFF TRAINING ON THE LANGUAGE OF WORK POLICY

GNB recognizes the essential role its employees play in applying the *Official Languages Act*. As with the modules on the *Act* and Language of Service Policy, the module on the Language of Work Policy was updated and launched on May 5, 2025. It is also mandatory for all new Part I employees and will need to be retaken every five years. This module is intended to help all employees, regardless of their position, better understand how to create a respectful work environment where English and French can be freely used.



Module 3:
*Introduction to the
Language of Work Policy*



To whom does the Policy apply?

The Policy on Language of Work applies to Part I (departments and agencies) of the Government of New Brunswick.

The Policy applies to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. However, it does not apply to departmental divisions organized on the basis of either official language. The Policy does not apply to schools and school district offices.

The Policy applies to the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, but it does not apply to community colleges organized based on either official language.

SECOND LANGUAGE TRAINING: LEARNER PROGRESS REPORT

The Secretariat is proud to have worked in collaboration with the Université de Moncton in 2024-2025 to develop a progress report for all GNB employees enrolled in the second language training program. The progress report, which supports the actions required to achieve objective 2 of the implementation plan, is a valuable tool for both second-language learners and their managers. It allows employees to track their learning progress, emphasizing the skills they have learned and areas for improvement. For managers, these reports facilitate strategic planning for language resources within their teams and help ensure that bilingual services are sustainable. This initiative has been successful with both students and managers.

CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTISE THE SECOND LANGUAGE

Second language training and learning allows employees to progress in their careers and provide quality services to New Brunswickers. However, practice is just as important as training itself, if not more important. To achieve another action in its implementation plan, the Secretariat worked closely with departments and agencies to encourage them to develop initiatives allowing employees to practise their second language in the workplace.



DICTÉE P.G.L. DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

For the second year in a row, the Secretariat joined the *Dictée P.G.L. de la Francophonie* to create an opportunity for Part I employees to participate in a dictation exercise in March, the Month of La Francophonie. This activity was designed to bring Francophones, Francophiles and French-language learners together in person in a friendly, non-competitive atmosphere. Suitable for all levels of language proficiency, the dictation was delivered by the Minister responsible for La Francophonie and broadcast live in conference rooms across the province.

In 2025, the participation rate increased by 25% over the previous year, with a notable increase of 12% among Francophiles and learners.

Participants expressed pride despite any mistakes they made and were motivated to keep learning. This positive feedback underscores the importance of the Secretariat's initiative, which is helping to create an environment conducive to French and second-language learning.

The University of New Brunswick's Department of French and St. Thomas University's Department of Romance Languages also took part in GNB's Dictée P.G.L. de la Francophonie for the very first time. A total of 29 students and a few French professors took part in the activity. This friendly competition between students and professors was well received by all participants, who promised to return for the 2026 edition.



Many GNB employees take advantage of the Dictée P.G.L. activity to improve their knowledge of French or test their abilities in their second language. Participants registered from across the province, including GNB offices in Moncton (left) and Fredericton (right).

The Public Service Has Tools to Work in the Language of Its Choice

TOOLKIT

As part of the support it offers to employees, the Secretariat is committed to researching and developing best practices that promote working in the language of choice in a bilingual environment.

An intranet site was developed to facilitate internal communications for all Part I GNB employees and to provide a directory of official languages tools.

This toolkit includes resources about the active offer, communication between regional GNB offices, second language training, bilingual meetings and online dictionaries. All new employees are informed about this tool during onboarding.

EMAIL SIGNATURE AND VIRTUAL BACKGROUNDS

To address the issue of linguistic insecurity and encourage GNB employees to use their second language, the Secretariat has developed a series of email signatures. Employees who wish to do so can officially display that they are learning English or French or are bilingual.

Since virtual meetings are the new norm at work, the Secretariat has also developed virtual background that allow GNB employees to openly display their language status.

The site has received more than

8,000

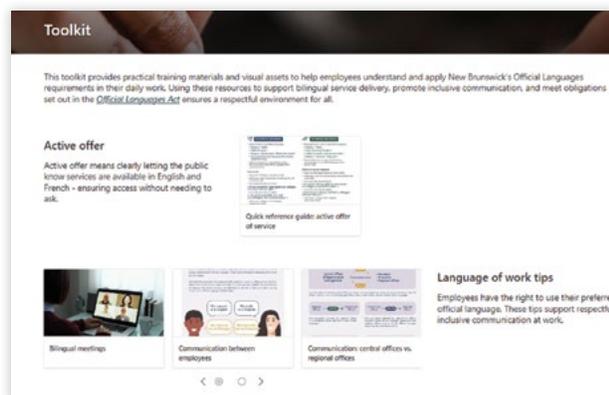
visits in English and over 1,100 in French.



Je suis bilingue
I am bilingual



I am learning
English



03

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE # 3

NEW BRUNSWICKERS UNDERSTAND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF BILINGUALISM THROUGH IMPROVED AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND BETTER SUPPORT.

Bilingualism has significant economic benefits for individuals, businesses and the province. People who are bilingual often have better career prospects. For companies, bilingualism helps open up new markets and strengthens competitiveness. Finally, New Brunswick, which has a large bilingual population, benefits from an increased contribution to GDP and a more dynamic workforce. As part of its 2024–2031 Implementation Plan for the *Official Languages Act*, the Secretariat is committed to taking the necessary measures to inform New Brunswickers about the economic benefits of bilingualism.

Through specific actions in 2024-2025, the Secretariat was in a position to meet some of its short-, medium- and long-term objectives.

ACTIONS

Develop a biennial survey to measure support from the public toward bilingualism and official languages.

Develop promotional campaigns and tools for both the public and the civil service.

Develop internal communications strategies to ensure government of New Brunswick employees understand the *Official Languages Act* and their role.

HIGHLIGHTS

New Brunswick, Leader in Bilingual Economy

STUDY ON THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF BILINGUALISM IN NEW BRUNSWICK

In May 2025, the Secretariat hired experts from the Conference Board of Canada to conduct a study on the economic impact of bilingualism on the province's GDP. The study will update existing data on the economic impact of bilingualism and provide evidence to inform the Secretariat's public policies and strategies for promoting bilingualism in the future.

It will also provide a detailed picture of bilingual workers in New Brunswick and the jobs they hold in both the public and private sectors. This socio-economic portrait of bilingual New Brunswickers will make it possible to better understand their contribution to the province's economy. The final report will be available by the end of 2025.

A 2019 pan-Canadian study conducted by the Conference Board of Canada on bilingualism found that bilingual workers in New Brunswick accounted for

38%

of the province's GDP.

BILINGUALISM – A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW BRUNSWICK'S TOURISM SECTOR

In November 2024, the Secretariat presented on the benefits of bilingualism for the province's tourism sector at the annual meeting of the Tourism Industry Association of Brunswick (TIANB). The Secretariat took this opportunity to share some interesting information with the hundred participants present, including that, of the provinces, New Brunswick is the second-largest beneficiary of Quebec tourism per capita, just after Prince Edward Island, with approximately 140,000 Quebec tourists visiting each year. The possibility of being served in French is one of the main reasons why Quebec tourists choose New Brunswick for their vacations. The 2029 Canada Games and Acadian World Congress, which will both be held in the province, will also draw thousands of Francophone and Anglophone tourists from across Canada and beyond.



From left to right: Johanne Bérubé-Gagné (TIANB), Vicky Deschênes (Secretariat), Ginette Doiron (TIANB).

FRANCOPHONE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - 2024 RENDEZ-VOUS ACADIE-QUÉBEC (RVAQ)

The Secretariat worked closely with its partners, the Bureau du Québec dans les provinces atlantiques, the Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick and the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec, to organize the ninth edition of the Rendez-Vous Acadie-Québec, which took place on the Acadian Peninsula in 2024. More than 210 entrepreneurs and economic players from New Brunswick and Quebec came together at this networking event to discuss new business opportunities and build partnerships. Over 300 B2B (Business to Business) meetings took place and 81% of participants surveyed indicated that they had entered into collaborative agreements as a result of their participation.

Preparations for the 2026 edition, which will be held in Quebec, have already begun.

The RVAQ was founded in 2005 and is held every two years, alternating between New Brunswick and Quebec. It is a business conference aimed primarily at entrepreneurs and managers of Francophone businesses in Quebec, New Brunswick and other Atlantic provinces, particularly SMEs. The objective of the conference is to facilitate partnerships and alliances and develop more ties, networks and forums for exchange to promote economic development and growth. It enables participants to share information and best practices while encouraging them to conduct business in French.

MINISTERS' COUNCIL ON THE CANADIAN FRANCOPHONIE - AGORA ON THE FRANCOPHONE ECONOMY

In August 2024, the Secretariat participated in the Ministers' Council on the Canadian Francophonie's Agora on the Francophone Economy in Halifax. The purpose of this event was to identify avenues to better support the contribution of the Francophonie and bilingualism to Canada's prosperity.

New Brunswick's Minister responsible for La Francophonie took part in the event and gave a speech to more than a hundred private, academic, associative and government stakeholders on the economic benefits of bilingualism for New Brunswick and the Canadian Francophonie.



RVAQ 2024



Economic Agora



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE # 4

POSITIVE MEASURES ARE IMPLEMENTED TO PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOTH OFFICIAL LINGUISTIC COMMUNITIES.

As part of the 2024–2031 Implementation Plan for the *Official Languages Act*, the Secretariat is committed to encouraging any government initiative that contributes to the cultural, economic, educational and social development of official linguistic communities.

Through specific actions, the Secretariat believes it is in a position to meet its short-, medium- and long-term objectives.

ACTIONS

Support Education and Early Childhood Development through the Centre of Excellence in Language Learning in improving access to second language learning in the school system.

Support Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour through the Immigration Division in its efforts to increase francophone immigration.

Support official language learning for New Brunswick adults and students in collaboration with post-secondary institutions.

Support the implementation of strategies to promote access to second language training and practice in communities.

Develop collaborative agreements with community partners to develop bilingual projects.

In collaboration with the Government of Canada, increase funding for French services and official languages programs.

Continue to work with francophone communities to achieve true equality for both linguistic communities.



HIGHLIGHTS

New Brunswick Embraces its Role as a Leader in Bilingualism

MANDATE LETTERS FOR MINISTERS, DEPUTY MINISTERS AND AGENCY OFFICERS

In November 2024, the Secretariat of Official Languages worked closely with employees of GNB's Executive Council to draft mandate letters for ministers, deputy ministers and heads of crown corporations. The letters included a reference to New Brunswick's *Official Languages Act* and the importance of demonstrating leadership in this area, not only within GNB but in all communities across the province.

Signed by the premier, the mandate letters clearly defined the expectations, priorities and responsibilities of elected and senior officials as they carry out their duties. In 2024, mandate letters for ministers, deputy ministers and agency officers included responsibilities under the *Official Languages Act* for the first time.

“The Official Languages Act, which guarantees the equality of our official languages and linguistic communities, is an integral part of our culture, our history and our future as a province. I expect us all to work together to show leadership to enable New Brunswick to fulfill its role as a leader in official languages in the country and the world.”

– EXCERPT OF THE MANDATE LETTERS

Partnerships and Information Sharing

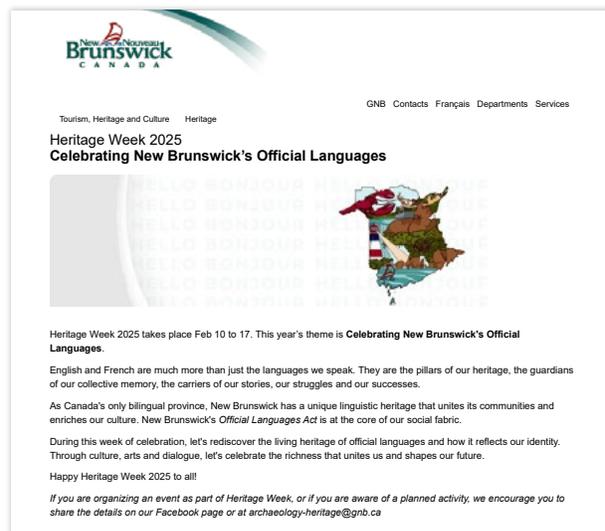
IMMERSION AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SECTORS 2025 HERITAGE WEEK

To increase the level of bilingualism in New Brunswick to 35% by 2031, the Secretariat has established strategic partnerships with the Centre of Excellence for Language Learning of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Anglophone sector, the University of New Brunswick (UNB) and St. Thomas University (STU). These partnerships are intended to strengthen the vitality of official linguistic communities and create activities that promote authentic French as a second language learning while encouraging community engagement and helping to achieve bilingualism objectives in the province.



From left to right: Ginny Steeves (EECD), Vicky Deschênes (Secretariat), Ransford Lockhart (EECD)

The provincial theme for 2025 Heritage Week was official languages, thanks to a partnership between the Secretariat and the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture. The event took place from February 10 to 17, 2025, with the theme of *Celebrating New Brunswick's Official Languages*. Social media posts and communications with various cultural organizations were shared to encourage the development of special events to highlight the province's bilingual character.



Collaboration with Community Partners

DISCUSSION ON BILINGUALISM

In 2024, the Secretariat organized a discussion forum in Moncton on bilingualism and coexistence between Francophones and Anglophones in New Brunswick. Led by a change management consulting firm, the forum brought together around fifty representatives from 20 Francophone, Anglophone and bilingual organizations from across the province. Several sectors were represented: education, post-secondary, municipal, cultural and social. The objective of this activity was to facilitate positive and constructive discussions on bilingualism and to identify initiatives and tools to bring the two official linguistic communities closer together. Following this forum, various initiatives were identified by the groups that attended. To follow up on the ideas put forward, the Secretariat has introduced several activities, including a discussion and knowledge-sharing committee that virtually exchanges information on their progress, achievements and challenges three times a year; an informational newsletter for bilingual groups and organizations; a program to fund bilingual activities; and partnerships with post-secondary institutions to support and encourage post-secondary students who went to French immersion to continue using their second language.



NEW BRUNSWICK BILINGUALISM SUPPORT PROGRAM (NBBSP)

The Secretariat has established the New Brunswick Bilingualism Support Program. This funding program is primarily intended to support groups wishing to organize activities that promote respect, communication and closer ties between the two linguistic communities in New Brunswick. In 2024-2025, the Secretariat invested in more than 30 projects from across the province aiming to bring the two official linguistic communities together. This funding has enabled organizations such as Jeunesses Musicales Canada, ArtsLink NB, the Frye Festival, French for the Future, the Kent Regional Service Commission and the Association Heritage New Brunswick to launch initiatives that promote cooperation between the two linguistic communities.

SUCCESS STORIES: BECCA PLAY

For the first time in New Brunswick, two theatre companies—the Théâtre Populaire de l'Acadie, based in Caraquet and Theatre New Brunswick, located in Fredericton—joined forces to create a bilingual theatre production.

Thanks to the support of the NBBSP program, this production was able to project surtitles onto a screen during performances, facilitating comprehension for an audience with varied language skills. The play has been presented 18 times in 10 communities across the province, including Fredericton, Tracadie, Caraquet, Miramichi, Moncton, Edmundston, Saint John, Sackville, Bathurst and Dalhousie, drawing approximately 2,800 spectators.

This collaborative project was applauded by both theatre companies and the public, who greatly appreciated the inclusive and innovative initiative.



The play Becca



The play Becca

Intergovernmental Agreements

CANADA – NEW BRUNSWICK AGREEMENT ON FRENCH FIRST-LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND SECOND-LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

This multi-year multilateral agreement between the Government of Canada and the provinces and territories sets out the key parameters for collaboration between the two levels of government on official languages education. It provides a mechanism through which the federal government contributes to the costs incurred by the provinces and territories to provide minority language and second language education. Under this agreement, each province and territory negotiates a bilateral cost-sharing agreement that reflects its specific priorities.

Through a partnership between the Secretariat, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour, the Government of New Brunswick has ratified a new four-year \$133 million agreement with the federal government. These funds will be invested in Francophone education programs, the French immersion program and postsecondary institutions in New Brunswick.

CANADA – NEW BRUNSWICK AGREEMENT OF FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

This program aims to support initiatives that enable the provincial government to improve services in French and contribute to equality between the two official linguistic communities.

The Secretariat has renewed the agreement that expired in 2024 until 2028, guaranteeing annual funding of \$7 million for GNB initiatives to improve services in French and assist minority language communities.



Thanks to the Canada-New Brunswick Agreement on French Language Services, people across the province can receive quality services in the language of their choice anywhere in the province.

INTERPROVINCIAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS

The Secretariat manages the Francophonie cooperation agreement with Quebec. In 2024, discussions began to renew the current agreement, which was concluded in 2018.

A joint declaration was also signed with Ontario in 2024 to strengthen cooperation within the Francophonie and prepare for the potential signing of a formal agreement in 2026. The declaration addresses economic, educational and cultural exchanges, as well as research, higher education, the municipal sector, the arts, digital technology, communications, tourism and youth. The Secretariat is also in discussions with Manitoba to renew the 2002 Francophonie cooperation agreement.

These three agreements involve a total investment of nearly \$300,000 per year for social and economic development projects for the Francophone minority.



Promoting the Education and Community and Cultural life of Francophone Minorities

FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY CENTRES IN MINORITY SETTINGS

The Secretariat contributes \$1.8 million annually to the three Francophone community centres in New Brunswick. The concept of school-community centres was introduced in the province in 1978 to promote the education and community and cultural life of Francophone minorities. There are three Francophone community centres in New Brunswick: the Centre communautaire Sainte-Anne in Fredericton, the Centre scolaire communautaire Samuel-de-Champlain in Saint John and the Carrefour Beausoleil in Miramichi. These centres house multiple Francophone services under one roof, serving as a central meeting point for young people and their families from the Francophone minority community where the vitality of the community is expressed and is an asset to its development. The three centres contribute to the economic ecosystem of their regions by serving as economic drivers and catalysts for Francophone immigration.

Following meetings and discussions between the Secretariat and the leaders of the three centres, it was agreed that a study on long-term funding for the centres would be launched in 2025. An external firm was hired to provide an overview of the current operations of the three school-community centres, identify current and future needs and challenges, and propose a viable, stable and predictable funding formula for operations. A final report is expected by the end of 2025.



FIRST OFFICIAL LANGUAGES DAY IN NEW BRUNSWICK

On September 14, 2023, the Government of New Brunswick officially declared the second Thursday in September as *Official Languages Day in New Brunswick*. This day is also celebrated by the federal public service and other bilingual community organizations across the country. Through this annual declaration, as the only officially bilingual province in Canada, New Brunswick is thus fulfilling its role as the country's leader in official languages.

On September 12, 2024, the Secretariat organized New Brunswick's first ever *Official Languages Day* in the provincial capital of Fredericton. The event included an a webinar, a quiz on the *Official Languages Act* for GNB employees and, handing out flags and pamphlets to passersby on the Greens in downtown Fredericton. The quiz had a good turnout, drawing a total of 208 participants. The 2024 edition was also celebrated by Horizon Health Network hospitals, the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick and French immersion classes.



The Secretariat of Official Languages and the Heritage NB Association



Horizon – Saint John Regional Hospital

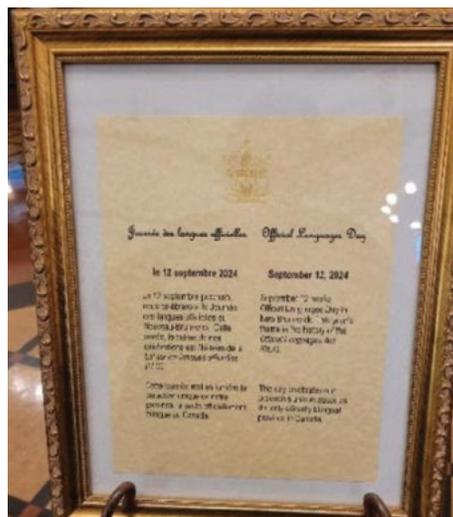


Exhibit at the Legislative Assembly

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS

Following the discussion forum on bilingualism and coexistence in 2024, and to maintain open communication with the participants, the Secretariat produced and distributed quarterly newsletters. These newsletters included information on the Secretariat's activities and funding available for events, as well as success stories from participating groups. Feedback on the newsletters was very positive.

Newsletter

JUNE 2025
VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

The Secretariat of Official Languages had a fun and busy spring, full of bilingual activities that celebrate bilingualism and help bring English and French speakers together. In this edition, you'll find cool stories and easy tips to help you practice your second official language!

Bulletin

JUIN 2025
VOLUME 2, NUMÉRO 1

Le Secrétariat aux langues officielles a eu un printemps bien rempli, avec plein d'activités bilingues pour célébrer le bilinguisme et rapprocher les communautés anglophones et francophones. Dans cette édition, vous trouverez des histoires inspirantes et des idées simples pour pratiquer votre deuxième langue officielle.

DICTÉE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE 2025: A GREAT SUCCESS!

On March 14, over 165 employees took part in the 2nd edition of the Dictée, hosted by the Minister responsible for Francophonie, Robert Gauvin. With a 60% participation rate and a strong presence of second-language learners, the event was an inspiring example of inclusion.

UNB and STU also joined the initiative: 29 students took part in the dictation simultaneously with GNB employees.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS:

- **Advanced French:** Isabelle Bélanger-Brown (Department of Aboriginal Affairs)
- **Second language:** Robin McLeod (Service New Brunswick)
- **Participation:** Kissi Kaba Kamano (Service New Brunswick)

Thanks to all the volunteers and congratulations to the winners! See you next year!

DICTÉE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE 2025 : UNE BELLE RÉUSSITE !

Le 14 mars, plus de 165 employés ont pris part à la 2^e édition de la Dictée, animée par le ministre responsable de la Francophonie, l'honorable Robert Gauvin. Avec un taux de participation de 60% et une forte présence d'apprenants en langue seconde, l'événement a été un bel exemple d'inclusion.

L'UNB et STU ont aussi joint l'initiative : 29 étudiants ont pris part à la dictée en simultané avec les employés du GNB.

FÉLICITATIONS AUX GAGNANTS :

- **Français avancé:** Isabelle Bélanger-Brown (Ministère des affaires autochtones)
- **Langue seconde:** Robin McLeod (Service New Brunswick)
- **Participation:** Kissi Kaba Kamano (Service New Brunswick)

Merci aux bénévoles et félicitations aux gagnants! On se retrouve l'an prochain!



Moncton and Fredericton
Moncton et Fredericton

SPECIAL BILINGUAL EDITION OF [EDIT] CULTURAL MAGAZINE

The Secretariat team had the original idea of publishing a special edition of [EDIT] magazine to present the topic of official languages to the public in a positive light. Recognized for the quality of its publications, [EDIT] agreed to publish an edition fully dedicated to bilingualism. The special edition tells the stories of New Brunswickers who have benefited from their bilingualism and are still making a positive contribution to our communities' development.

"One language sets you in a corridor of life. Two languages open every door along the way"

– Frank Smith

Canadian contemporary psycholinguist recognized for his contributions in linguistics and cognitive psychology.

« Une langue vous place dans un couloir pour la vie. Deux langues ouvrent toutes les portes en chemin. »

– Frank Smith

Psycholinguiste contemporain canadien reconnu pour ses contributions en linguistique et en psychologie cognitive.



[EDIT]

SPECIAL ISSUE • 2025 • ÉDITION SPÉCIALE



[EDIT]

CELEBRATING BILINGUALISM
CÉLÉBRER LE BILINGUISME

[EDIT]



SPECIAL ISSUE • 2025 • ÉDITION SPÉCIALE



WIT, MODESTY AND WISDOM FROM ATLANTIC CANADA

MESSAGES TO GNB EMPLOYEES

Several times a year, the Secretariat sends mass emails to all Part I public service employees to keep them informed of the latest official languages initiatives and thank them for their professionalism and excellent work.

These mass emails are sent out during Francophonie Month, to invite GNB employees to practise their second language; on New Brunswick Day, to remind employees to be proud of the work we have accomplished and of being the only officially bilingual province in Canada; on National Acadian Day, to remind employees (especially new and Anglophone ones) that August 15 is an important date for their Francophone colleagues; and, of course, on Official Languages Day, to invite employees to reflect on the importance of official languages and their role in the public service.




Mois de la Francophonie
Francophonie Month
2025

This March, New Brunswickers will proudly celebrate Francophonie Month 2025, joining Canada and 92 other members of the [Organisation internationale de la Francophonie](#) in honoring French language and culture. On March 20, International Francophonie Day, over 300 million Francophones worldwide will celebrate the day under the theme of « Je m'éduque donc j'agis ». Schools across the province will celebrate the 36th annual [Provincial French Pride Week](#), from March 17 to 21, under the theme "Ma Francophonie en harmonie!".

To add to the celebrations, the second edition of the Dictée P.G.L. will take place on March 14, 2025, providing Part I employees, whether Francophones, French second language learners or Francophiles, an opportunity to test their French grammar and spelling skills in a friendly competition. Good luck to all participants!

Happy Francophonie Month 2025!

*The Secretariat of
Official Languages*

En mars, les résidents du Nouveau-Brunswick célébreront fièrement le Mois de la Francophonie 2025, se joignant au Canada et à 92 autres membres de l'[Organisation internationale de la Francophonie](#) pour honorer la langue et la culture francophone. Le 20 mars, Journée internationale de la Francophonie, plus de 300 millions de francophones dans le monde souligneront cette journée dont le thème est « Je m'éduque donc j'agis ». Les écoles de la province célébreront la 36e [Semaine provinciale de la fierté française](#), du 17 au 21 mars, dont le thème est « Ma Francophonie en harmonie ! ».

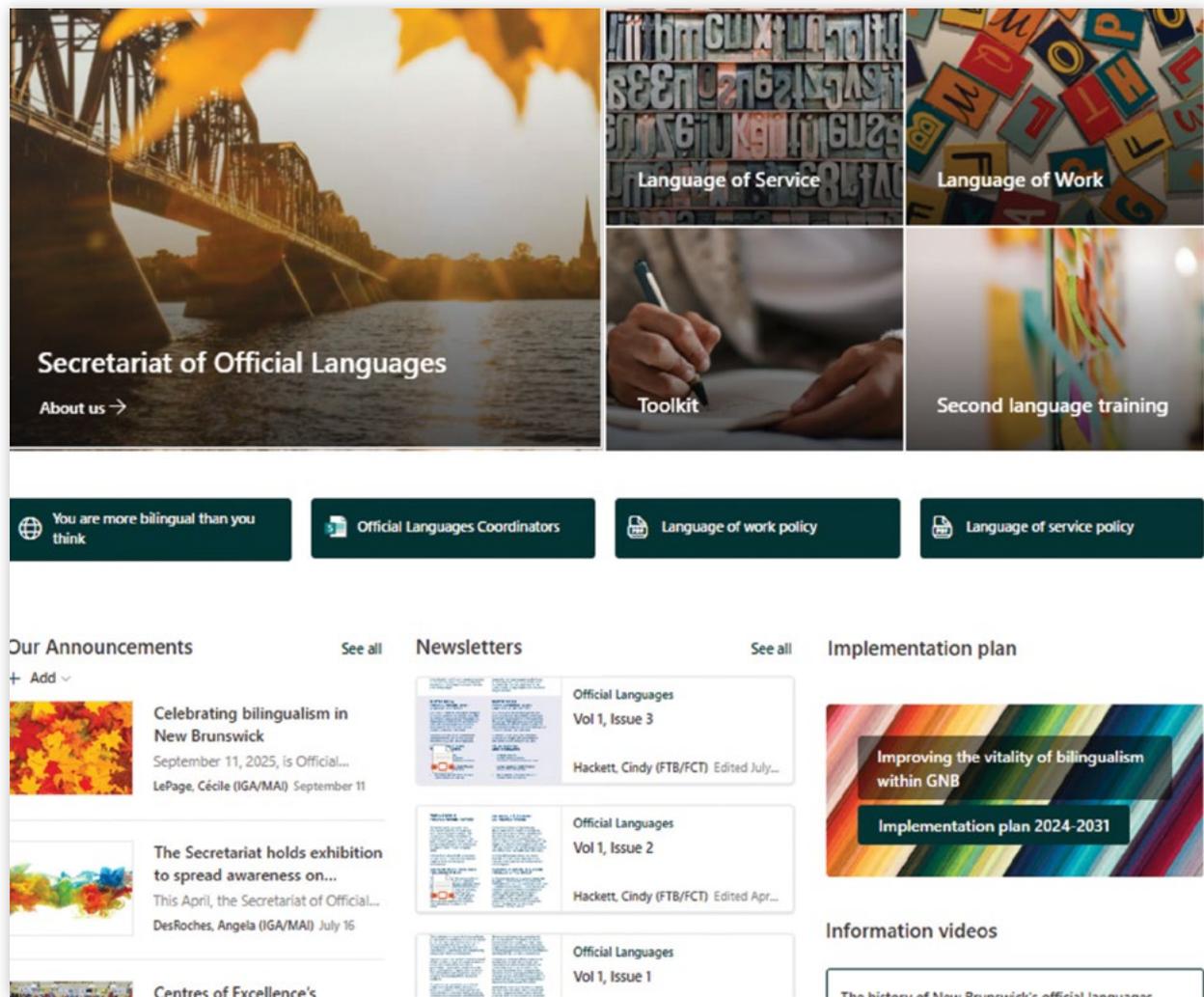
Pour ajouter aux célébrations, la deuxième édition de la Dictée P.G.L. aura lieu le 14 mars 2025, offrant aux employés de la Partie I, qu'ils soient francophones, apprenant de la langue seconde ou francophiles, l'occasion de tester leurs compétences en grammaire et en orthographe françaises dans le cadre d'une compétition amicale. Bonne chance à tous les participants !

Joyeux Mois de la Francophonie 2025 !

*Le Secrétariat aux
langues officielles*

INTRANET PAGE

In 2024-2025, the Secretariat spent many hours developing an Intranet page accessible to all Part I employees to share as much official languages-related information as possible and make practical documents and tools available to assist with their work. The Secretariat has published 20 or so articles on various topics, such as the active offer, National Acadian Day, tips and tricks for practising your second language in the office and at home, quizzes on the Act and official languages, success stories and much more. In total, more than 4,700 unique visitors and over 28,000 visits were recorded on the Secretariat's intranet page from June 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025. The Toolkit section is the busiest portion of the page.





Secretariat of Official Languages
Department of Intergovernmental Affairs
January 2026