



# Strategic Plan for Manitoba's Francophone Community

Together towards 2035...

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**DOCUMENT PREPARED BY THE TEAM AT**



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# Companion Document

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND: THE CSP – A CITIZEN-LED EFFORT ..... 2

VISION 2035 – A SOCIAL AGENDA..... 6

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS ..... 7

**1. Vitality and longevity** ..... 9

**2. Services** ..... 10

**3. Diversity and inclusion** ..... 11

**4. Pride, celebration and participation** ..... 12

**5. Social, community and institutional capacity and structures** ..... 13

CONCLUSION ..... 15

APPENDIX – SOME DEFINITIONS..... 17

## BACKGROUND: THE CSP – A CITIZEN-LED EFFORT

The États généraux de la francophonie manitobaine (EG) citizen-based consultation exercise was organized by the Société franco-manitobaine (SFM) in response to a formal proposal at its annual general meeting on October 24, 2013.

At that time, the SFM, as the official voice of Manitoba's Francophone community, was tasked with working together with community organizations and their members to hold the EG, with public consultations on:

- The current situation of Manitoba's Francophone community (new context, realities, needs and challenges);
- The resources available for its development in the face of these new realities;
- The development tools at its disposal;
- Streamlining those resources and tools for current and future community development;
- A plan for implementing the recommendations resulting from the consultation exercise;
- Establishing a follow-up mechanism to assess recommendation implementation and report to the community annually.

The members of Manitoba's Francophone community recognized the need to have a conversation with citizens about their future, given the many changes in the community since the last EG in 1987-1988, including:

- The creation of new community-based infrastructure such as the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine (DSFM), the Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (CDEM), Santé en français, and others;
- The increased diversity of members comprising and contributing to the vitality of Manitoba's Francophone community;
- Budget cutbacks at all levels of government that increase the vulnerability of Francophone institutions and organizations and threaten the development and influence of the French fact in Manitoba.

After receiving this mandate, an EG steering committee of six Franco-Manitobans was set up to oversee the consultation process. The committee felt it was appropriate to confer with the members of the Francophone community to get a better sense of their wishes and concerns about the future of the Manitoba Francophonie. The desired approach would focus on citizen

participation and encourage constructive and positive dialogue among members of the French-speaking community on their collective future.

It was decided to collect data via citizens' cafés (*cafés-citoyens*) and online surveys, given their logistical simplicity and ability to stimulate candid discussions in a convivial atmosphere, two elements that would promote high levels of participation.

The consultations were carried out by a team of researchers from Université de Saint-Boniface (USB) under the direction of Danielle de Moissac. They were responsible for the logistics, note taking and ensuring compliance with the established framework. The discussions covered four main areas:

- *Who we are:* Personal experiences and paths
- *How we think:* Values and what matters most
- *What we do:* Challenges and hurdles
- *What we dream:* Hopes and aspirations

The following questions were asked:

1. *As a Franco-Manitoban, what are some of the personal experiences that have helped develop your attachment to the French language and Francophone culture? Do you feel a sense of belonging or attachment to Manitoba's Francophone culture? Why?*
2. *What do you feel are the most important aspects in "your" Francophonie? What do you value the most?*
3. *In your view, what are the greatest current and future challenges to overcome to ensure that the Manitoba Francophonie continues to thrive?*
4. *Imagine it is 2035 and think about the greatest achievements of our province's Francophone community in the wake of the 2015 États généraux de la francophonie manitobaine. What has been created? Changed? Improved?*

The goal of these questions was to look for, share and exchange the information required to guide Francophones, their organizations and the community as a whole in order for them to live and thrive in French, in Manitoba. They drew inspiration from a Métis philosophy that the steering committee members used to nurture positive discussions that opened up a world of possibilities.

From December 2014 to September 2015, 146 citizens' cafés were held, and a total of 1,533 people took part in the exercise. The content of these discussions was analyzed by USB researchers and published on April 6, 2016 in the *Voices United: Identity Paths, Challenges and Aspirations of Manitoba's Francophonie* report.

The steering committee and the SFM also issued a request for proposals for a consultant to (1) facilitate the EG, and (2) develop a five-year community strategic plan (CSP). The RFP's description of the scope of the work included:

- Validating emerging themes/issues (seeking consensus rather than a vote);
- Identifying target outcomes;
- Identifying and validating strategic directions in response to the desired outcomes;
- Developing a community engagement process through this strategic planning exercise;
- Developing a five-year community strategic plan.

PGF Consultants was hired for the job as detailed above and subsequently:

- Facilitated the Grand Rassemblement de la francophonie manitobaine – held on April 23, 2016 at Centre scolaire Léo-Rémillard in Winnipeg, with close to 720 participants, (over 350 in person and more via the live webcast);
- Drafted a community strategic plan to 2035 based on the content of the citizens' cafés and strategic discussions that took place during the EG;
- Facilitated the community's validation of this draft and helped the steering committee and the SFM develop an implementation plan.

Following the Grand Rassemblement, PGF prepared the first draft of the CSP that was made public on June 3, 2016, ahead of the five validation meetings held on June 20-23, 2016 with the Francophone community, its organizations and institutions. The community meetings open to the public were held in St. Boniface, St. Pierre Jolys, Ste. Anne and Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, and were attended by around 90 people. The members of Manitoba's Francophone community had until July 7, 2016 to provide feedback on the CSP.

The citizen-led approach and the level of participation in all steps of the process show that the community strategic plan outlined in this document truly belongs to Manitoba's Francophonie as a whole.

It should also be noted that the purpose of this community planning document is to provide the *strategic* details of the social agenda resulting from the citizen consultations. It is supported by real objectives and results that can bring about the change required to achieve the Manitoba Francophonie's desired vision for 2035. Seen in this light, the CSP becomes a roadmap that should allow Manitoba's Francophone community to achieve its aspirations. The CSP focuses on the "what?" and is therefore not an *operational* plan. Rather, it precedes such a plan, clearly setting out the priorities to guide the community's efforts to achieve the desired vision. The operational plan focuses on the "how?" and identifies the actions that need to be taken to achieve the outcomes targeted in the CSP.

## VISION 2035 – A SOCIAL AGENDA

A vision statement typically provides a stimulating – but realistic – picture of the desired future. A vision must mobilize and call to action, describing the expected outcome within a specific timeframe. *Vision 2035* therefore indicates what Manitoba's Francophone community aspires to become in the next 20 years.

The vision of Manitoba's Francophone community for 2035 is:

### A SOCIAL AGENDA

"Manitoba's richly diverse and inclusive Francophone community of 2035 is proud and thriving; it influences, attracts and inspires in an environment where each of its members can live in French in all aspects of daily life."

This vision contains all of the key elements for taking Manitoba's Francophonie to a new level of development and impact in the province.

- **Richly diverse** means that Manitoba's Francophone community is inclusive and that its diversity is an asset for its demographic, cultural and economic development and influence.
- The concepts of **thriving** and **pride** mean that all Manitoba Francophones are confident in their identity, have access to services as well as opportunities to thrive in all aspects of their daily lives.
- **Influence** suggests the increased presence of Manitoba's Francophone community with a view to normalizing its participation in the public sphere and supporting its efforts to become an officially bilingual province.
- The idea of **attraction** underscores the renewed capacity of the Manitoba Francophonie to appeal to and attract members of other communities and build lasting relationships with them.
- The ability to **inspire** refers to the positioning of today's Francophonie in Manitoba as an influential and respected player in the province.

## STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The data collected at the citizens' cafés and the feedback from the Grand Rassemblement identified five main strategic directions for Manitoba's Francophonie. These directions, which address the main issues raised by the community, are cross-cutting rather than tied to any specific sectoral silo (health, education, arts and culture, the economy, and more) with a view to strengthening the community's overall capacities and allowing it to achieve the desired level of vitality and visibility.

For the purposes of this plan, these directions are called strategic "pillars."

The development of Manitoba's Francophonie depends on its vitality and, ultimately, its longevity. The vitality of a community, especially one in a minority situation, can be measured by aspects such as population and economic growth, resiliency of language and bilingualism, standard and quality of life, social and family opportunities, and the equitable distribution of that growth and the opportunities it generates, both geographically (in rural and urban areas) and from an intergenerational perspective (early childhood and youth as well as the working population and retirees). – **Pillar: Vitality and Longevity**

An essential condition for this vitality is having province-wide access to services (health, education, day care, justice, government services, culture, leisure/recreation, businesses, etc.) that are appropriate to beneficiaries' location (rural or urban) and circumstances, in order to create an environment where community members can thrive and live fully in French – **Pillar: Services**

The ability to attract and/or retain a growing population of French-speakers from many different backgrounds, integrating them, providing them with ways to live well in society, and valuing their contribution, is also a critical aspect of the vitality and longevity of a minority community. The same is also true for remaining open to the majority and other communities who also demonstrate openness (e.g., Métis and immigrant communities). – **Pillar: Diversity and Inclusion**

The extent to which people identify with their community, are proud of their identity, socialize, participate in activities, and are committed to ensuring its sustainability and well-being are also important factors for vitality and longevity. – **Pillar: Pride, Celebration and Participation**

Another determining factor involves the nature and quality of the mechanisms used by the community to organize and coordinate its action, to communicate, and position itself "politically" so that its interests are taken into account by those whose decisions will have a lasting impact on its future and that of its members. This pillar deals with traditional community structures (provincial representative organization (SFM) and not-for-profit community organizations) as well as institutions (bilingual municipalities, school board, health organizations, etc.) and the private sector – ***Pillar: Social, Community and Institutional Capacity and Structures***

These five pillars are highly complementary and are primarily aimed at giving Manitoba Francophones what they need to lead successful lives, take pride in their culture and actively engage in and contribute to cultural transmission and the community's development.

## 1. VITALITY AND LONGEVITY

All members of Manitoba's Francophonie thrive in an environment that promotes their well-being, personal growth and quality of life in French, where gains are firmly entrenched and provide a solid foundation for increasing the Francophone presence.

Vitality and Longevity		
Ultimate outcome	<b>1. Manitoba's Francophonie is thriving, prosperous and vibrant across the province</b>	
Themes	Consolidating gains	Building on gains
Intermediate outcomes	1.1. The linguistic security of Manitoba's Francophone community is improved.	1.4. Manitoba is recognized as an officially bilingual province.
	1.2. Families and individuals have the ability to pass on the French language and related cultural heritage.	1.5. The socio-economic, linguistic and cultural gains of Manitoba's Francophone community are expanded, both in terms of numbers and their geographic coverage across the province.
	1.3. Educational institutions advance the use and quality of the French language.	1.6. The Franco-Manitoban economy receives the support it needs and its impact is recognized. Bilingual economic stakeholders are valued for their contribution to Manitoba's vitality and raising the profile of the Francophone community.
	1.4. The population, socio-economic and cultural gains of Manitoba's Francophonie are acknowledged and effectively safeguarded.	1.7. The importance of the role of the workplace in language and cultural transmission is recognized, and labour stakeholders are actively committed to supporting the vitality of Manitoba's Francophone community and culture.

## 2. SERVICES

The vitality and longevity of the community depend on an environment in which being able to live, socialize, receive services, consume and have fun in French has become the norm rather than an aspiration.

Services		
<b>Ultimate outcome</b>	<b>2. Access to quality French language services and their use is standardized. There is an active offer of and demand for such services.</b>	
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Offer</b>	<b>Demand</b>
<b>Intermediate outcomes</b>	2.1 Decision-makers, leaders and staff of public and parapublic organizations are aware of and prepared for the importance of actively offering French language services.	2.5. Manitoba's Francophone community is aware of and prepared for the importance of requesting services in French. It is also sufficiently aware of the availability of French language services.
	2.2 Public organizations and private companies promote their ability to offer services in French.	
	2.3. More and better quality public and private services are available in French.	
	2.4 All of Manitoba's Francophone population, from early childhood on, has access to services that are appropriate to the rural or urban context, and beneficiaries' age and personal circumstances.	

### 3. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The ability to attract, receive, integrate and retain new citizens is critical to the vitality of the Francophone community. The richness of the Manitoba Francophonie depends on the diversity of its members. Regardless of their background or cultural identity, it is their desire to lead full lives in French that brings Francophones together. However, this diversity requires continuously probing how we (re)define ourselves as Franco-Manitobans (definition as broad as possible) and our ability to demonstrate openness and build bridges with the majority and other interested communities (Métis, immigrants, other minorities, etc.).

Diversity and Inclusion			
Ultimate outcome	<b>3. Manitoba's Francophonie is inclusive and diverse.</b>		
Themes	Inclusivity – "we/us"	Attraction and retention	Openness – "others"
Intermediate outcomes	3.1. The Francophonie values the rich diversity of all its members, regardless of age, gender or ethno-cultural background.	3.2. The province has established appropriate Francophone immigration targets and has the means to achieve them.	3.4. Partnerships and contributions to and from Manitoba's Francophone community and the English-speaking majority are promoted in an objective, fair and impartial manner.
		3.3. Attracting and retaining French-speaking newcomers is facilitated by an effective, appropriate reception structure and access to attractive living conditions.	3.5. Manitoba's Francophonie has an increased number of innovative partnerships with non-Francophone stakeholders.

## 4. PRIDE, CELEBRATION AND PARTICIPATION

It is important to strengthen the sense of pride and belonging as well as the active participation of Manitoba's Francophones in their community's vitality. Celebrations and symbols are used to expand the Manitoba Francophonie's foothold in the public sphere and support the active participation of Francophones in this vitality.

Pride, Celebration and Participation			
<b>Ultimate outcome</b>	<b>4. Manitoba's Francophonie celebrates its pride, asserts its presence in the public sphere and mobilizes all Francophones to foster its development.</b>		
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Pride and Celebrations</b>	<b>Constructing Identity</b>	<b>Participation</b>
<b>Intermediate outcomes</b>	4.1. The Manitoba Francophonie seizes every opportunity to celebrate its pride, language, (multi)-cultural heritage and successes through the arts, cultural events and other channels.	4.2. Manitoba Francophones identify with the community's history and contribute to the development of the modern-day Francophonie in the province.	4.5. Manitoba Francophones participate individually and collectively in community development.
		4.3. Manitoba's Francophonie has inclusive and mobilizing symbols and its new branding reflects its diversity.	4.6. The involvement of youth and young professionals (aged 15-35) in Manitoba's Francophonie has increased.

## 5. SOCIAL, COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND STRUCTURES

Supporting the community's vision hinges inextricably on the ability to:

- improve communication – both within and outside the community;
- develop leadership to ensure its continuity;
- continue to provide Manitoba's Francophone community with effective intervention structures that are aligned with the need to promote Francophone interests; and
- ensure that these structures have the resources they need.

<b>Social, Community and Institutional Capacity and Structures</b>			
<b>Ultimate outcome</b>	<b>5. Building the social, community and institutional capacity and structures of Manitoba's Francophonie helps move its agenda forward, raises its profile and strengthens its contribution to the community and the province.</b>		
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Governance</b>	<b>Capacity</b>
<b>Intermediate outcomes</b>	5.1. Manitoba's Francophonie has credible and recognized leadership that effectively promotes its interests.	5.3. The community governance of Manitoba's Francophonie is strengthened by innovative models of consultation and collaboration.	5.6. Renewing the base of volunteers and leaders of all ages and backgrounds is facilitated by the openness and strategies used by organizations.
	5.2. The English-speaking majority, especially decision-makers, recognize the constructive and collaborative leadership of Manitoba's Francophonie.	5.4. Manitoba's Francophone organizations are more professional, efficient and effective.	5.7. Manitoba's Francophonie attracts more funding and diversifies its revenue sources.
		5.5. Manitoba's Francophone organizations and institutions have put in place mechanisms to enhance transparency and support accountability.	5.8. Evidence-based knowledge helps Manitoba's Francophonie position itself strategically.
			5.9. Francophones know the tangible and intangible assets in their community and how to use/optimize them to contribute to the vitality of the Manitoba Francophonie.
			5.10. The community has modern and appropriate institutional infrastructure.



## CONCLUSION

This strategic plan stems from an extensive consultation exercise and reflects the aspirations of Manitoba Francophones. It builds on the gains made over the years and identifies priority areas in light of the challenges identified. The plan truly and unequivocally belongs to the whole community.

The first stages of the EG leading to the development of this plan fuelled a great deal of passion and enthusiasm across Manitoba. The challenge, once the plan is formally approved, is to make sure it is more than just another document, but rather a tangible tool for aligning the efforts of community stakeholders around common goals.

In this context, neither the document's publication nor its final adoption in the fall should be seen as ends in and of themselves. The plan will only make sense if it is put into action.

In order for the community to take ownership of the plan and to facilitate its implementation, a number of initiatives should be taken following its approval:

- Create a **governance structure** that includes:
  - Identifying the institution overseeing implementation;
  - Establishing mechanisms and structures for coordination, decision-making/arbitration, monitoring, assessment and accountability;
  - Defining the governance structure membership, its mandate and operating procedures;
  - etc.
- Develop a **communication strategy** to ensure that all potential plan contributors are on the same page. This strategy should include an internal component (focused on community ownership of the Plan) and an external one (promoting the Plan to institutions of the English-speaking majority and other partners, including funders). The strategy should cover aspects such as Plan positioning/branding, key messages, spokespersons, target audiences and the most appropriate vehicles.

- Conduct an **environmental scan** for each of the five strategic pillars in order to:
  - Assess and provide an inventory of what has been done and what could/should be done for each;
  - Identify supporters/champions (current and potential) and determine the nature of their commitment to Plan implementation;
  - Identify and share best practices and lessons to be learned from potential failures; and
  - Serve as a benchmark for monitoring implementation progress.
- Prepare an **operational plan** to identify the milestones that should be tracked by organizations and institutions in charge of implementation. This operational plan should:
  - Identify the types of key initiatives that will support the achievement of CSP targets;
  - Set priorities;
  - Begin pinpointing the people or organizations who could potentially support and lead initiatives; and
  - Develop time frames and the strategic plan performance measurement strategy.

These implementation monitoring tools are critical for assigning responsibilities and for providing elected officials and organization leaders with a roadmap for tracking implementation and reporting annually on progress to the community and funders.

## APPENDIX – SOME DEFINITIONS

**The Manitoba(n) Francophonie**, in this document, includes people whose mother tongue is French, French-speaking newcomers, Métis, people who speak French, Francophiles, and those who espouse the collective aspirations of and have a special affinity for the French language.

The term therefore means all Manitobans who want to have the means to live, socialize and achieve their full potential in French, regardless of their origin, cultural background(s), mother tongue, geographic location, age or the reasons behind this motivation.

In the specific context of this document, the concept of "the Manitoba(n) Francophonie" is therefore used interchangeably with other similar terms, including "Manitoba's Francophonie," "Manitoba Francophones," "Manitoba's Francophone community," "Franco-Manitoban community," "bilingual Manitobans," "Manitoba's French-speaking community," and so on.

It is up to the community, when it puts the strategic plan into action, to decide what term(s) it wants to use to underscore its desire for inclusion and openness.

**Vision 2035:** Where Manitoba's Francophone community wants to be 20 years from now.

**Strategic pillar:** A fundamental priority on which the community wants to focus and devote its energies to make its vision a reality.

**Community strategic plan (CSP):** A community strategic plan is a roadmap adopted by the community with a view to realizing its full potential. In the case of Manitoba's Francophone community, it sets out the vision for the future and the main priorities on which the community has agreed to focus its efforts in the wake of dialogues and consultations held over the past few months.

**Operational plan:** The operational plan outlines how the community's priorities will be implemented, and how plan performance will be measured and assessed. In addition, in the specific context of an operational plan by and for an entire community, the intention is to encourage members' involvement and improve the consistency of actions taken to achieve the desired outcomes.