

Media Release

For immediate release

Équipe francophonie 2025: An unprecedented mobilization for Manitoba's Francophone community

Saint-Boniface, le 17 mars 2025 – On March 20, 2025, in recognition of the International Day of La Francophonie, the Société de la francophonie manitobaine (SFM) is hosting Équipe Francophonie 2025 at the Manitoba Legislative Building. This event will bring together elected officials and key representatives from the community, economic, and institutional sectors to strengthen the role of the Francophonie in Manitoba's development. Decisions that matter to all Manitobans will be made during this crucial meeting.

Since the province's inception, the Francophonie has played a fundamental role in its economic, social, and cultural growth. A strong and well-supported Francophone community directly contributes to Manitoba's prosperity and attractiveness as a place to live and do business. Supporting the Francophonie means investing in a more inclusive and competitive Manitoba that is better positioned on the national and international scene.

Manitoba's French language and Francophone community are major assets for the province's competitiveness at both regional and international levels. In a rapidly evolving economic landscape, where Manitoba must diversify its markets in response to increasing competition from the United States, investing in the Francophonie means investing in the province's future.

On the agenda for the day, the Équipe francophonie team will seek the support of members of the Legislative Assembly on the following recommendations:

- Creating a joint (government-community) working group to review the *Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act* and to co-create the resulting regulations and policies
- Strengthening of genuine consultation processes with the French-speaking community, particularly during the drafting of bills, in order to ensure that its needs are better taken into account.
- Including in the *Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act* the obligation for the Treasury Board Secretariat to consider the impact of its decisions on the Francophonie when evaluating Treasury Board submissions.
- Applying a Francophone lens in provincial strategies for the recruitment and retention of a bilingual workforce, essential to the economic development of Manitoba.

Quotes :

“Équipe Francophonie 2025 is a pivotal moment not only for our community, but for our province. It is an opportunity to emphasize how the Francophonie actively contributes to Manitoba's growth and why it must be fully integrated into public policy.” Jean-Michel Beaudry, Executive Director of SFM.

"French in Manitoba is not just a minority language issue. This event is about raising awareness among all government members on the importance and role of the Francophonie in Manitoba. A stronger Francophonie means a stronger province." Derrek Bentley, SFM Board President.

"We must not forget that the province has an obligation, with the *Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act*, to support the Francophone community in its development. And it's our responsibility as a community to share our needs, challenges and aspirations. In sectors like healthcare, for example, we face a critical shortage of qualified bilingual professionals. We hope that the discussions on March 20 will lead to concrete action." Daniel Lussier, Executive Director of Réseau Compassion Network.

"Our participation in Équipe francophonie is a testament to our shared desire to promote our French language and culture and to make Manitoba a truly bilingual province. We call for continued close collaboration between the government and our organizations on any changes to this system that is vital to our community." Ruphine Djuissi, AJEFM lawyer

Members of the media are invited to attend and engage with Francophone leaders driving these conversations.

Date and place: March 20, 2025, starting at 9 a.m., Manitoba Legislative Building, 450 Broadway.

The Société de la Francophonie manitobaine (SFM), an organization representing the Manitoba Francophone community, ensures the development of this community and demands full respect for its rights.

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