



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Official Languages

LANG • NUMBER 018 • 2nd SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, April 3, 2014

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Chair

The Honourable Michael Chong

Standing Committee on Official Languages

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•(0845)

[Translation]

The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)): Welcome, everyone, to the 18th meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages. Today is Thursday, April 3, 2014.

We are here, pursuant to Standing Order 108 to study the economic situation of Canada's minority linguistic communities.

We have six groups with us today.

[English]

We're going to begin with the Department of Industry, along with the federal economic development initiative for Northern Ontario, but before we do, Monsieur Godin....

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin (Acadie—Bathurst, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

On which date does the commissioner appear to talk about the main estimates?

The Chair: On May 8.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Thank you.

The Chair: Ms. Campbell, Ms. Perreault, you have the floor.

[English]

Ms. Krista Campbell (Director General, Strategic Policy Branch, Department of Industry): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good morning.

[Translation]

Mr. Chair, members of the committee, thank you for giving us the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the economic situation of official language minority communities.

My name is Krista Campbell, Director General of Strategic Policy at Industry Canada, and this is my colleague, Lucie Perreault, Director of Programs and Corporate Services at FedNor.

[English]

We're also joined here by representatives of Canada's regional development agencies, who will be able to provide some valuable on-the-ground insights.

My remarks might be a little bit long. You have copies of the remarks and I've shortened them in a couple of places.

[Translation]

Industry Canada is proud of the progress that has been made in promoting the development of francophone and anglophone minority communities in Canada.

As you know, Industry Canada is mandated to help Canadians to be more productive and more competitive in the knowledge-based economy, thereby improving the standard of living and quality of life of all Canadians.

[English]

To fulfill our mandate and responsibilities towards official language minority communities, I will be speaking to you about three major *volets* at Industry Canada: first, our commitment to the economic development of official language minorities communities, which is entrenched in our mandate; second, the targeted coherent approach to economic development for the communities that is provided by the road map and the economic development initiative and; lastly, the key asset that official language minorities represents in the federal tourism strategy.

[Translation]

Let's talk about commitment first of all! This is the standpoint from which we recently undertook to work with RDEE Canada and CEDEC on drafting the first economic development plan for official language minority communities.

Our participation in this wide-ranging initiative will focus particularly on a study of trends in enterprise ownership in official languages minority communities.

[English]

The research we have funded will be used in part to help RDÉE Canada and CEDEC raise awareness among business owners and communities to determine what actions need to be taken. The recommendations and conclusions that will emerge from the economic development plan will be shared with the regional development agencies and FedNor to ensure they are taken into account in relevant programming.

[Translation]

In the same vein of business development, the Canada Business Network, part of Industry Canada, offers webinar sessions in collaboration with national agencies representing official language minority communities.

Canada Business Network's objective is to promote the growth and prosperity of enterprises by providing them with the resources they need, including a broad range of intelligence on the services, programs and regulations established by governments.

As part of the 2009 economic action plan, the government committed \$5.1 billion to science and technology initiatives. The knowledge infrastructure program, for example, a component of the economic plan, provided financing to support deferred maintenance, repair and expansion projects in universities and colleges.

● (0850)

[English]

These investments will help attract new students and offer better educational experiences to tomorrow's highly skilled workers. Industry Canada was able to allocate nearly \$65 million to French-language institutions outside Quebec and more than \$86 million to English-language institutions within Quebec.

[Translation]

On March 28, 2013, the Government of Canada announced that it was renewing the Roadmap for the next five years. The economic development initiative (EDI), one of its economic components, is delivered by Industry Canada, FedNor and the regional development agencies.

The amount committed totals \$30.5 million over five years, and Industry Canada gets \$6.05 million.

The EDI has enabled us at Industry Canada and our partners in the regional development agencies to apply a targeted and logical approach, coast to coast, for the economic development of official language minority communities.

While FedNor and the regional development agencies deliver programs in the regions, Industry Canada coordinates research and economic development, national consultations and assessments.

The EDI takes account of regional needs and thus enjoys a certain flexibility.

[English]

In terms of research, you may be familiar with a study entitled *Canada, Bilingualism and Trade*, that was carried out by The Conference Board of Canada in partnership with RDÉE Canada and CEDEC, and funded by Industry Canada as part of the EDI road map. We have copies that we can provide to the clerk.

For Industry Canada, this study is an important example of how research can influence policy development, and emphasizes the value added—for example, in this instance—that bilingualism represents when it comes to trade.

[Translation]

Coming back to the direct impact of the EDI, here is an example: in northern Ontario between 2008 and 2013, beneficiaries of the 51 projects funded report that a total of 208 jobs were created and 384 were maintained. Quite apart from job creation, the EDI contributes to the vitality of official language minority communities in northern Ontario.

Moreover, FedNor has taken further measures for mobilizing official language minority communities. FedNor has winnowed the results of the contextual study undertaken by the Institut franco-ontarien, among other studies and polling reports, so that the priorities of official language minority communities are better reflected in its new EDI programming.

What is more, FedNor is preparing to launch a new initiative: FedNor's Dialogue Day with the official language minority communities in northern Ontario, to be held every two years.

Lastly, I would like to talk to you about the tremendous asset that official language minority communities represent in the federal tourism strategy, coordinated by Industry Canada.

With the backing of official language minority communities and of the Transat Chair of Tourism at the University of Quebec in Montreal, we have undertaken a range of research to gain a better understanding of tourism development opportunities in official language minority communities. This is one of the things that has enabled RDEE Canada to develop a national tourism strategy for official language minority communities, enshrined in a memorandum of understanding with the Canadian Tourism Commission.

The objective of this strategy is to integrate certain existing tourist attractions in francophone communities into the “signature Canadian experiences”. CEDEC is doing the same thing, with financial support from Industry Canada.

● (0855)

[English]

In conclusion, I would say that Industry Canada is a partner of choice when it comes to economic development of official language minority communities. We maintain a regular dialogue with community leaders, like FCFA and QCGN, through our follow-up committees, which are standing consultation mechanisms that provide us with a better understanding of the issues facing French- and English-speaking minorities. In recent years, just under \$200 million has been invested through various programs in the economic development of official language minority communities. This shows that Industry Canada takes its obligations seriously when it comes to economic development of minority language communities.

We're pleased to be here and to answer your questions.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

We will now turn the floor over to Ms. Fairman and Mr. Robineau, both from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency.

Ms. Kimberly Fairman (Senior Advisor to the President, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency): Good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Kimberly Fairman. I am senior advisor to the president of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, or CanNor, Mr. Patrick Borbey. I am accompanied by Mr. Yves Robineau, CanNor's Chief Financial Officer and Director of Corporate Services. He is also our official languages coordinator.

First of all, I would like to thank the Standing Committee on Official Languages for the invitation to appear here today to discuss CanNor's work as it relates to fostering the economic development of official languages minority communities in Canada's north.

Let me begin by briefly speaking to our agency's *raison d'être*.

Created in August 2009 with its headquarters in Iqaluit, CanNor is the only federal department with an exclusive mandate for Canada's three northern territories. With a presence in each territorial capital and a liaison office in Ottawa, CanNor works to help develop dynamic, diversified and sustainable economies north of the 60th parallel, while improving socio-economic outcomes for those who live and work in the north.

CanNor delivers a number of economic development programs, which focus on growing key areas of the northern economy, such as resource development, tourism, fisheries, cultural industries, as well as support and development of small and medium enterprises.

Two of CanNor's programs specifically apply to the francophone community. They are Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED) and the Economic Development Initiative (EDI), as part of the renewed Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018: Education, Immigration, Communities.

As a designated institution under section 41 of the Official Languages Act, CanNor supports socio-economic development of official language minority communities across the north.

With 3% of the total northern population, the francophones are active participants in the local economy, experiencing high employment rates and higher than average levels of income.

Our agency has consistently engaged in close collaboration with francophone associations and francophone economic development organizations in the three territories. This collaboration allows us to understand and respond to economic development needs of official language minority communities.

Since its creation in 2009, CanNor has invested more than \$2 million in francophone-related economic development projects across the territories through its SINED and EDI programs.

With CanNor's funding contributions, territorial francophone associations, together with their partners, are developing services and tools to support local employment, attracting investment from Quebec and France, as well as fostering economic integration of newcomers, entrepreneurship and community economic development.

CanNor supports the talent, experience and knowledge of its francophone community partners to contribute to social-economic development of francophones in Canada's north, creating opportunities for prosperity and a promising economic future.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, thank you again for this invitation to appear before the Standing Committee on Official Languages. We would be pleased to answer your questions.

• (0900)

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we will hear from Ms. Guimond, of Western Economic Diversification Canada.

Ms. France Guimond (Director General, Operations-Manitoba, Western Economic Diversification Canada): Mr. Chair, members of the committee, thank you. I am pleased to appear before your committee today.

My name is France Guimond. I am the Director General, Operations—Manitoba for Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD).

As you know, WD is the regional development agency responsible for promoting the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy, for facilitating federal economic activities in the west, and for reflecting western Canadian interests in national decision-making.

As our minister has stated: "Our goal is to let the world know that the west means business".

It is well recognized by my department that, by achieving the objectives of the Official Languages Act, and in particular Part VII, we can help western francophone communities contribute to a vibrant and diverse regional economy.

Under the Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages 2013-2018, WD continues to deliver the \$3.2 million Economic Development Initiative (EDI) for western Canada.

Under WD's own programming, we provide ongoing core funding for the francophone economic development organizations (FEDOs), with an annual funding of more than \$2.1 million.

[*English*]

WD received an exemplary rating from the Commissioner of Official Languages in his latest review of the department's management of its programs, and the Commissioner has said that the francophone economic development organizations, or FEDOs, are the best practice and a model.

[*Translation*]

WD regularly communicates with our FEDOs and with a wide range of francophone stakeholders in the west, including post-secondary institutions and francophone organizations. This allows WD to take into consideration the economic development priorities of official language minority communities in the west with regard to entrepreneurship, skills training, innovation, and trade and investment.

Moreover, senior management is committed to enhancing the vitality of the French language by supporting participation of WD staff in an official languages twinning program to maintain their language skills.

A few years ago, WD created the official languages lens to ensure positive measures are undertaken during project development. The official languages lens allows project officers to take into account official language minority communities' priority areas, thereby contributing directly to francophone community development.

A recent project that benefited from the official language lens is the Manitoba Music Industry Association. In 2013, WD provided nearly \$1.4 million towards a \$3.4 million targeted international trade initiative. The project includes an initiative that will help support the global expansion of francophone music SMEs in the west.

if you permit, I would also like to provide two EDI success stories from the previous Roadmap.

In 2009, WD invested \$840,000 in the Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba, or CDEM, for a project that supported three priority areas for official language minority communities in Manitoba: youth retention, entrepreneurship for new Canadians, and community economic development. CDEM worked with over 133 youth on a number of entrepreneurship initiatives, supported 63 new immigrant start-up businesses, and contributed to the development of nine green community economic development plans.

● (0905)

A second great example is the Francophone Tourism Smartphone Application project, through which four western FEDOs collaborated to promote francophone tourism in Western Canada. The project involved implementing a French smartphone application to promote francophone tourism attractions and French-speaking tourism businesses in western Canada. As of March 2014, the application has been downloaded almost 6,000 times and used over 25,000 times by users from North America, Europe and other countries.

[English]

By way of summarizing the overall results of WD's EDI, our investment of a little less than \$3 million leveraged approximately \$4.6 million, or about 160%, in other investments for OLMCs.

[Translation]

Going forward, WD will build on our past efforts and successes by using our programming and economic development initiatives funds to strategically leverage other funding.

[English]

WD will continue to undertake targeted outreach to and consultations with francophone communities as we launch new initiatives and ensure that projects take into consideration the impacts on OLMCs.

[Translation]

WD will continue to focus on building SME capacity and supporting business and economic development projects that ensure these communities continue to flourish.

Thank you for your time today. I am ready to answer your questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Guimond.

I now give the floor to Ms. Anzolin and Mr. Chayer, from the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.

Ms. Susan Anzolin (Acting Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Services Branch, Federal Economic Development Agency for

Southern Ontario): Good morning, Mr. Chair, and committee members. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you.

My name is Susan Anzolin. I am currently the chief financial officer. I have previously been the director general responsible for community programming at the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, or FedDev Ontario. I am joined by Paul Chayer, who is our person responsible for official languages.

FedDev Ontario was launched in 2009—a time marked by global economic challenges and a time when southern Ontario was experiencing economic hardship. Our role was to address immediate needs and contribute to job creation, focusing on activities to strengthen the southern Ontario economy.

The agency was renewed through Budget 2013. Today, we work strategically and collaboratively to be an agent of transformative change.

We are pleased to be here today to share lessons learned and ways we are working to meet the needs of official language minority communities in southern Ontario.

Francophone communities are an important component of our region's economy. More than three-quarters of Ontario's francophone population lives in southern Ontario—the largest outside of Quebec—and continues to grow through immigration.

In 2009, we were learning about the challenges these francophone communities face, and we adjusted our delivery of the economic development initiative to better meet their needs.

We conducted studies and engaged various francophone organizations, and learned three important things.

First, a lack of educational and entrepreneurial opportunities in francophone communities (especially small and rural communities) drives youth away.

Second, francophone immigrants struggle to launch businesses partly because of language barriers.

Third, francophone businesses have limited access to financing and business counselling information in French.

We engaged Ontario francophone economic organizations to support the delivery of key strategic projects. We work hard to ensure that official language minority communities have access to funding opportunities available, which includes all our programming.

Furthermore, FedDev Ontario will continue to engage the francophone community to address their issues so that our efforts are relevant to their specific needs. Their success is ultimately ours.

Thank you.

● (0910)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Anzolin.

[English]

Now we'll have Monsieur Tanguay and Madame Goulet for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Tanguay (Director General, Regional Operations Branch, Operations Sector, Canada Economic Development): Good morning. Mr. Chair, members of the committee, thank you for welcoming us here today.

My name is Serge Tanguay. I am Director General, Regional Operations Branch at Canada Economic Development. I would like to start by introducing my colleague, H el ene Goulet, Acting Director General, Policy, Research and Programs Branch.

During our appearance, we will present an overview of the status of English-language minority communities, or official language minority communities in Quebec, and explain how the agency provided assistance.

There are close to 1 million anglophones in Quebec. This minority represents 13% of the total population of Quebec.

The socio-economic status of official language minority communities is comparable throughout Canada. However, the isolation of anglophone communities in the regions makes it more difficult for them to become an integral part of local business networks. This is precisely the type of situation that makes the Roadmap for Canada's Linguistic Duality particularly meaningful.

[English]

Now let me say a few words about the agency.

The agency's mission is to promote the long-term economic development of the regions of Quebec by giving special attention to those in which slow economic growth is prevalent or opportunities for productive employment are inadequate. As the Official Languages Act requires federal institutions to deliver the road map, the agency has done so in Quebec by such means as the economic development initiative, or EDI. The evaluation conducted by Industry Canada in 2012 of the road map noted with respect to the agency that the agency had achieved several of its established targets, that the EDI has resulted in positive benefits, and finally that dialogue among the agency, OLMCs, and fellow partners had been successful.

[Translation]

Since 2008, through the economic development initiative (EDI), the agency has funded 34 projects in nearly 80% of the official language minority communities identified in Quebec. This has resulted in investments totalling \$22.9 million.

Apart from the EDI, the agency supports official language minority communities through its regular programming. In particular, the agency has signed agreements with 58 organizations that are committed to providing access to their services in both official languages. These agreements are a success factor for the promotion of Canada's linguistic duality.

In addition to providing funding, it was crucial for the agency to maintain ongoing dialogue with official language minority commu-

nities, to understand and respond more effectively to their needs and priorities.

Since 2010, some 50 meetings and discussions have thus been held, such as with anglophone communities on the Lower North Shore, the Dobson-Lagass  Entrepreneurship Centre in the Eastern Townships or the Gaspesian British Heritage Village in the Gasp  Peninsula.

[English]

I would also like to mention the "dialogue day with the English linguistic minority of Quebec" project, which allows ongoing dialogue between OLMCs and government representatives.

Another fine example of success stems from consultations held with CEDEC, which led to the implementation of the small business support network in seven administrative regions of Quebec. Among other things, this initiative made it possible to organize 92 events and four webinars relating to regional entrepreneurship, reaching more than 1200 participants.

[Translation]

In conclusion, we are committed to generating investment and creating jobs through the EDI, but also through our regular programs. In 2014-2015 alone, the agency plans to invest more than \$2.6 million through the EDI.

Rest assured, Mr. Chair and members of the committee, that the agency plans to continue working with community stakeholders and to maintain the best practices established in recent years. This enables the agency to be well acquainted with the needs of official language minority communities and to monitor their changing priorities. It also promotes partnership with other donors.

I will be happy to answer your questions. Thank you.

• (0915)

The Chair: Thank you.

To conclude the presentations, we will hear from Wade Aucoin, from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.

Mr. Wade Aucoin (Director General, Policy, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

First, like all my colleagues before me, I would like to begin by thanking the committee for inviting ACOA to appear before you today to talk about what the agency is doing to support official language minority communities in Atlantic Canada.

[English]

I will deliver my presentation in French but will be happy to answer any questions in English or in French.

[Translation]

The ACOA is an economic development agency serving the four provinces of Atlantic Canada. The Honourable Rob Moore is the Minister of State responsible for the ACOA. Like the other regional economic development agencies, ACOA manages its own budget and programs.

Our mandate is to create opportunities for economic growth throughout Atlantic Canada by helping businesses become more competitive, innovative and productive; by working with communities to develop and diversify local economies; and by championing the strengths of Atlantic Canada. This includes providing services to official language communities under the Official Languages Act.

From a human resources perspective, the agency's staff is capable of serving the public in both official languages. Over half the positions at ACOA are classified bilingual.

We have a very vibrant francophone community in Atlantic Canada, living in all four provinces of our region. Acadians and francophones make up approximately 12% of the region's population. This also represents about one-third of Canada's French-speaking official language minority population.

Most Atlantic Canadian francophones live in New Brunswick, which has a francophone population of more than 235,000 people—just under 32% of the province's total population.

According to the 2011 census, francophones and anglophones in Atlantic Canada have similar wage profiles, although younger francophones tend to have higher average wages than anglophones.

In recent years, census statistics showed that the unemployment rates tended to be lower for francophones than anglophones in most provinces of Atlantic Canada.

ACOA contributes significantly to the region's francophone community with project funding coming from the agency's business development program, Atlantic innovation fund and innovative communities fund. In total, between 2009 and 2013, ACOA invested more than \$200 million in regions of Atlantic Canada with a strong proportion of francophones, on both commercial and non-commercial projects, under these programs.

ACOA was also very pleased to be involved in the Government of Canada's first Roadmap for Canada's Official Languages from 2008 to 2013 by delivering the Atlantic component of the economic development initiative. In total, the agency invested \$6.2 million in support of 47 projects throughout Atlantic Canada under the first EDI, leveraging an additional \$6.6 million for total investments of \$12.8 million. ACOA is committed to maintaining this level of funding under the new 2013-18 roadmap.

The 2012 evaluation of the EDI in Atlantic Canada concluded that the initiative's results were largely attained in the following areas: increased community capacity, dollars leveraged and number of companies having strengthened their capacity for development.

These contributions to official language minority communities by ACOA have not gone unnoticed. In fact, in 2010-11, the Commissioner of Official Languages gave the agency an exemplary mark for its performance in support of positive measures for the development of OLMCs in Atlantic Canada.

ACOA has also established partnerships with other federal and provincial departments and with regional organizations such as the Community Business Development Corporations, or CBDCs.

Under a new funding formula, ACOA provides operational funding to CBDCs, including an allocation for bilingual services in areas with sufficient demand for services in French.

The agency has also undertaken special projects with CBDCs in predominantly francophone areas. In New Brunswick's Acadian Peninsula, in 2012-2013, ACOA funded a project aimed at improving business skills of entrepreneurs. In the Restigouche region of New Brunswick, in 2012-2013, ACOA funded a project aimed at enhancing the IT skills of entrepreneurs.

ACOA also works to help develop industries that are important for Atlantic Canadian OLMCs. Take New Brunswick's maple industry for example, keeping in mind that over 80% of the association's members are located in official language minority communities in northern New Brunswick.

Under the 2008-13 roadmap, ACOA invested \$295,000 to help the New Brunswick Maple Syrup Association grow its membership and improve its marketing and export readiness. The association grew from 30 members to 125 and at least two members have begun exporting internationally.

This work is complementary to the assistance provided by the agency to maple syrup producers in support of productivity improvements, modernization and equipment purchases.

In carrying out its activities, ACOA endeavours to take into account the nature and the specific needs of the official language minority communities in each of the four provinces.

The agency will continue to work with francophone businesses, leaders, community groups and other OLMC stakeholders to support economic development initiatives that will strengthen the economic outlook of French-speaking people in Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Chair, I will be happy to answer any questions that committee members may have.

• (0920)

The Chair: Thank you.

We now move on to questions and comments from committee members.

Mr. Godin.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As you know, we don't have a lot of time and we have a number of witnesses. I think it would be nice to spend four hours with you, instead of just two. It would be nice for us, anyway. The idea is not to bombard you with questions, but to have a good discussion with you on economic development in our regions.

My first question is for you, Mr. Aucoin. You said that the unemployment rate tended to be lower for francophones than anglophones. You know that I am from a region where 80% of residents are francophone. In my opinion, the only real reason for this is that our francophones have gone to work in Alberta. Economic development isn't the reason. Would you agree?

If what you say is true, I would like you to provide some evidence by sending the clerk some supporting documents. I would really like to know which sectors your agency has contributed to in order to reduce this unemployment rate because our fish processing plants have closed, the pulp and paper mills in Miramichi, Dalhousie and Bathurst have closed, the Brunswick mine is closed. It's distressing.

So when you say that the unemployment rate has dropped, it's certainly not because ACOA has created jobs for everyone in our communities. Would you agree with my comment?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: Thank you, Mr. Godin.

The remarks I made in my speech are accurate, but New Brunswick is the exception to this trend when comparing the rate of unemployment between anglophones and francophones. Indeed, the unemployment rate among francophones in New Brunswick is slightly higher than the average for anglophones.

As I mentioned, we are working hard to foster economic development in the northern part of the province and in all the OLMCs in New Brunswick. However, we recognize that there are strong trends in a number of rural regions, including regions in northern New Brunswick.

We remain focused on our mandate, which is to foster the development of small and medium businesses, to foster the development of community infrastructures and to work with community groups, including the CBDCs, to encourage investments and improve the development of businesses.

We are most definitely aware of the significant challenges in your region and in others. I can assure you that we are continuing to work hard to improve the economic situation.

• (0925)

Mr. Yvon Godin: Actually, I want to make sure you don't think that everything is going well in our regions. Every day, two airplanes leave for Alberta, not to mention the two more that leave from Moncton. I wouldn't want anyone to think that everything is going well and that we are living in paradise. People in our regions are leaving.

Still, it is a paradise. I invite you to visit, even if there is a lot of snow. If it melts, we'll be able to send you some maple syrup, but the sap isn't running yet.

I'll ask my other questions. If you don't have time to answer, I would appreciate it if you could send your answers to the clerk. It is important.

In terms of implementing the roadmap, what mechanisms do you use to plan the economic development for a community?

How are communities consulted on this? Who takes part in these consultations?

Do you all provide services in both official languages when you deal with organizations that receive funding from the economic development initiative?

Do you have enough analysts to provide services in French in predominantly English-speaking regions and in English in Quebec?

I'll give you another example, Mr. Aucoin. I don't want to look like I'm picking on you, but people in Newfoundland and Labrador tell me that key individuals in ACOA who can help them in French are in Moncton. We aren't talking about northern Ontarians being helped by southern Ontarians, or another region of Manitoba when the person is elsewhere in the province. In this case, people are required to trust individuals in another province.

I would like you to answer my questions, which are also for Industry Canada. However, if you don't have a chance to answer, I would ask that you send your responses to the clerk. It's important for our study.

[English]

Ms. Krista Campbell: I'll start with the first part about the planning tools and the consultations with respect to building economic development plans for official language minority communities.

At Industry Canada, our role is foundational with respect to some of the research that is done for supporting a better understanding of what the conditions are for official language minority communities, how various tools are effective in building economic development plans, and best practices with respect to what communities, businesses, or individuals could be doing to support official language minority community economic development.

Over the five years of the "Roadmap", there were a considerable number of studies done. All of the studies that have been finalized to date have been made public; I think there are a couple that are still being finalized. We have used this work to both inform and work with the regional development agencies to ensure that they have the information, suggestions, and ideas before them in terms of their own planning for their specific programs and services, as well as using these research projects as tools with the communities that we consult with regularly.

We have two regular consultation mechanisms. One is the biennial—every other year—consultations with the official language minority communities, both the anglophone communities and the francophone communities. These are valuable opportunities for bringing groups together. Our regional offices and regional development agencies participate, sharing information.

The communities had noted that meeting every other year does not provide necessarily enough of a continuity of dialogue, so we've also implemented follow-up committees that meet on an ad hoc basis more regularly throughout the year, potentially a couple of times. We try to use conference calls and technology to be efficient in terms of bringing communities together at different points so that there's a more regular dialogue that goes on with the communities to share information.

With respect to services in both official languages, Industry Canada has been, as many departments have been, the subject of audits. We have had a number of recommendations made with respect to what we, as a department, could be doing to ensure that we provide services in both official languages.

We have done regular reviews of our own work as a result of an audit that was focused mostly on Part VII, official language minority communities and economic vitality, but we went a bit broader and looked at official languages throughout the department.

We implemented both an action plan and a policy statement on official languages, so these have been very foundational with respect to ensuring that we have good tools to go out to our employees to explain to them things like linguistic duality positive measures and what your obligations are.

I'll leave it at that at this point.

• (0930)

The Chair: Okay, thank you very much.

Monsieur Gourde.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jacques Gourde (Lotbinière—Chutes-de-la-Chaudière, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I would like to thank all the witnesses for being here this morning.

My first question is for Mr. Tanguay, but can certainly be for all the witnesses, if they wish to answer.

Since 2006, I have had the opportunity to make a lot of announcements in the regions of Quebec for the Economic Development Agency of Canada. Quebec has a well-established network in its various regions, and we have employees who are very committed to economic development. We have had some successes. In fact, most of our announcements are about success stories. However, some files sometimes seem to take longer to get going because of challenges, and we are learning from those challenges.

Do you think that there are more challenges for our minority communities when the time comes to launch projects? Do you think it depends on the leadership in the community or the leadership of the entrepreneurs? There are challenges, but there are also advantages. For example, economically speaking, being an anglophone is an advantage in Quebec for exporting.

Could you explain what these leaders can do to make their projects successful and to deal with the challenges they face?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: Thank you for your excellent question.

The anglophone community in Quebec is distributed as follows: 80% of anglophones are in the greater Montreal region, and 10% are in the three major urban regions, which are Quebec City, Sherbrooke and Gatineau. The remaining 10% are in the more remote rural regions, and that last segment is the most difficult to reach and consult.

The advantage of Economic Development Canada lies in its organizational structure. We have business offices in all regions of Quebec. We have an immediate point of contact with our business offices and they can provide services in both official languages in

most cases, which allows us to connect with these groups. It often helps us to consult the community and to help promoters and clients develop and implement projects.

The other advantage that came out of Industry Canada's most recent summative evaluation, and that stems from the network of business offices, is that our communication mechanisms and approach with the OLMCs are very good, and we are doing this in various ways. For example, we have the dialogue day, which was just mentioned. We held one two years ago. The event was an opportunity to bring together some fifty organizations representing the OLMCs and government representatives. It is an excellent forum for connecting with the communities and to help us better understand their needs. In fact, it is the preferred mechanism for reaching out to our OLMCs.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: What observations can be made from the approved projects and the rejected projects? What are the advantages and challenges facing entrepreneurs in official language minority communities? How is it that some entrepreneurs are successful and some are not? How could entrepreneurs who are having difficulty be better supported?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: I would like some clarification. Are you talking about entrepreneurs who manage to get a project going or entrepreneurs who are successful in business?

Mr. Jacques Gourde: They often go hand in hand. If someone manages to get a project going, he or she forms a business. However, some are successful, while others are not. Sometimes it's a matter of chemistry.

Is it because of the entrepreneur's leadership, skill set, training or seed money? How is it that it goes well for some, but others have more difficulty?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: You've just listed the winning conditions.

It may be the financial outlay or the participation of various stakeholders and the various levels of government in the project. The involvement of financial institutions is often crucial to a project's success.

There is also the advice given to promoters for developing and presenting their projects, be it about the business plan or marketing expertise.

These are all things that contribute to a business' success, whether it is in an OLMC or not. For example, this is also the case for a business in Quebec's francophone linguistic majority.

• (0935)

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Is there a mentoring service to help entrepreneurs in our official language minority communities to work their way through their business plan?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: Yes. I can't remember the exact name of the organization just now, but I will be able to give you that information later.

As I said in my opening remarks, the CEDEC has entrepreneurial support groups in seven regions. Our network should be expanding to include all regions of Quebec. That's one of the preferred tools we have to help entrepreneurship.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Do minority anglophone businesses in Quebec have export projects? Is it easier for them than for other organizations in Quebec to export abroad?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: As Mr. Godin said, when you speak English, everything related to exports, particularly to the United States, becomes much easier. For instance, the Gourmet du Village project in Morin-Heights, which was approved under EDI, sought to market products outside Canada, to the United States in particular. The goal of the project was to support its marketing efforts. It might seem that language was not an obstacle in this case, but the promoter needed our help to structure its marketing efforts in order to be able to sell products to the United States.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Do you think that minority anglophones in Quebec have less of a challenge than francophones outside Quebec to bring their business plans to fruition?

Others could answer this question as well.

Mr. Serge Tanguay: On the Quebec side, I think the challenges are comparable, but I wouldn't be able to speak for the other provinces. Perhaps my colleagues could tell us what the situation is in the other provinces.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Ms. Guimond, would you like to share your thoughts with us?

Is it more challenging for francophone communities in your province than for anglophone communities in Quebec to have a business plan and be successful?

Ms. France Guimond: It depends on the business and its situation. A business that receives enough support to prepare its business plan and to form partnerships in order to secure funding can make it just as easily as a business from another region.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Do I still have time, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: Your time is up.

Mr. Jacques Gourde: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Ms. St-Denis, go ahead.

Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.): Thank you for joining us.

I don't intend to put anyone on the spot with my question, as was tried earlier with Mr. Aucoin. I would like everyone to answer. We will end with the representatives from Quebec, given that I am familiar with the situation there. As for Mr. Aucoin, instead of talking about New Brunswick, I would like him to tell me about the three other provinces in eastern Canada.

What is the future of the francophonie in each of your regions?

You are saying that things are going well, funding is available, businesses are being created, and so on.

What do the rest of you think? Do francophone communities have a future in English-speaking regions?

Could each of you answer the question?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: I will try to answer your question.

You may know that I come from another province, not New Brunswick. I live in New Brunswick right now, but I come from the Acadian region of Chéticamp, on Cape Breton Island.

I am familiar with what can happen in a minority francophone community largely surrounded by anglophones. However, I will not speak about my home community only. I can tell you that ACOA has communication, interaction and dialogue networks with a number of francophone organizations in each province to identify priorities, visions and profitable economic projects.

There are economic development organizations in each province. Just think of the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse. We support the council with a view to helping francophone entrepreneurs in particular. The same is true for the other provinces.

The simplest answer to your question is that the future is different for each province. However, one thing has stood out in all our discussions with the representatives of francophones from each of the Atlantic provinces, with the exception of New Brunswick, as requested by Ms. St-Denis. We are seeing some very interesting projects and entrepreneurs are anticipating a better future based on the exciting industrial and sectoral prospects for francophones.

We hear a lot about diversification. People are aware of the challenges facing traditional industries. Sometimes, they suggest value-added or innovative projects in traditional sectors. We find that very appealing. Some have been very successful with those projects. They are going to work with us to open up international markets for those traditional industries and other industries.

● (0940)

Ms. Lise St-Denis: I would like everyone to have a chance to answer my question. Remember that my speaking time is limited.

Ms. Susan Anzolin: According to the data, the situation of francophone communities in southern Ontario, in general, is comparable to that of all the communities in southern Ontario. I think those communities have a bright future.

However, some specific communities are faced with challenges. That is specifically the case of rural communities or small francophone communities.

That being said, we are seeing an improvement in the situation of all francophone communities in southern Ontario. As my colleague Mr. Tanguay was saying, the diversity of the population is important for free trade around the world.

[*English*]

We're living in a world where trade is important.

[*Translation*]

Francophone communities in southern Ontario have the advantage of knowing another language, which allows them to trade with other francophone countries. I think the future of the francophone community in southern Ontario is good.

Ms. France Guimond: My answer is that the future is bright. We are actually talking about what to do to prepare for the future. For WD, when we support our communities, we are also helping small and medium-sized businesses, including young people and francophone newcomers, to contribute to the economic development of their communities.

However, it is important to do so on an ongoing basis and to always form partnerships. The resources are limited and they must be invested in projects that will have the best possible benefits on communities.

Ms. Lise St-Denis: Can people from New Brunswick who go to work in your region be integrated into your francophone community?

Ms. France Guimond: Yes. For instance, I am not from Manitoba. However, my children went to Université de Saint-Boniface, and my grandchildren are going to Les Tournesols daycare, a French-language institution.

So I am an example; I live in a minority community.

• (0945)

[English]

Ms. Kimberly Fairman: Thank you.

I would say that people are often surprised to hear what a strong francophone community we have in each of the three territories. They are concentrated in the capitals of the territories, so we don't face some of the rural challenges, although in the territories we have the same problems in reaching rural entrepreneurs, and they have some challenges in terms of being able to access service to be successful. I would expect the trend to continue.

The francophone communities have a strong cultural presence in each of the territories, and at CanNor we continually engage with the communities to discuss opportunities for collaboration with other organizations, including the territorial governments. The chambers are a strong partner in economic development in all three territories. The education system supports the francophone community as well.

We see them as a very strong partner, but as my colleagues have pointed out, consistency is important, and we are continually engaging in looking for opportunities to partner with the francophone communities in the territories.

[Translation]

Ms. Lucie Perreault (Director, Programs and Corporate Services, Federal Economic Development Initiative for Northern Ontario): In northern Ontario, official language minority communities are in rural areas. So they are dealing with the challenges we are discussing.

What we are seeing is that these communities are made up of primary industries.

[English]

They are like single-resource communities.

[Translation]

This type of economy, which characterizes these communities and is cyclical, is problematic for both francophones and anglophones.

However, we see that our communities are starting to diversify and develop. With the support of programs such as the economic development initiative or the services provided by CFDCs, FedNor encourages the development and diversification of our communities.

Each community has its leaders who are mobilizing. By coming together, they are creating movements that will ensure that the communities survive and flourish.

That is our reality in northern Ontario.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Bateman now has the floor.

Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My thanks to all the witnesses. I know how important their work is. Their reality sometimes seems very complex.

First, thank you, Ms. Campbell. In your presentation, you explained your recent commitment to work with RDEE Canada and CEDEC in preparing the first economic development plan for official language minority communities. As far as I know, Employment and Social Development Canada supports your system. It is good to work together like that.

During this study, we have heard from community groups such as FCFA, economic development groups such as RDEE, but also many leaders from business communities. At our last meeting, one of the witnesses made a list of 60 different sources of funding available for francophone entrepreneurs in Ontario.

How do you ensure that economic diversification agencies from across Canada are not doing the same job as other organizations and, as a result, placing excessive burden on entrepreneurs, meaning your clients? That is very important.

Since I come from the west, we will start with Ms. Guimond.

• (0950)

Ms. France Guimond: Thank you, Ms. Bateman. That is a very good question.

We are working closely with the departments to ensure that our clients are not doubling up on the same jobs. That is very important. When we initiate or change programs, we make sure that we exchange information and that we communicate it to our clients. Communication is very important. We hold information sessions for clients about the programs.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Does WD take part in developing the plan Ms. Campbell talked about? I think it is the first economic development plan for official language minority communities.

Ms. France Guimond: We have a group in our department that meets and shares information on a daily basis.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Are each of you participating in that study?

Ms. Anzolin, would you like to answer?

Ms. Susan Anzolin: I would like to answer the first part of your question regarding the exchange of information among all the organizations.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Go ahead.

[English]

Ms. Susan Anzolin: In Ontario we are working with the Province of Ontario, because we know that just trying to navigate all of these government programs and services is an issue among a number of organizations.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Well, it certainly sounded difficult to us, last meeting. It's tough enough to be an entrepreneur, and then to have 60 funding sources—

Ms. Susan Anzolin: —exactly, and especially for a small business....

We are working with the province and a number of our local organizations that are not-for-profit organizations, such as the Community Futures Development organizations or the Small Business Enterprise Centres that provide services to small businesses. We're working together so that when a small business or an entrepreneur is looking for information, they just go to one point, to a single contact. We work behind the scenes to try to make sure that they get the information.

We're not there yet, but we're working towards it. I think all of us recognize that we're here to serve Canadians. Canadians don't often distinguish between orders of government, so we need to find a way to work together, and we are doing so.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Okay, that's great.

Krista?

Ms. Krista Campbell: It is definitely one of the frustrations we hear from businesses most often, speaking to the point that was just made—

Ms. Joyce Bateman: We hear it too.

Ms. Krista Campbell: —that entrepreneurs don't distinguish between the levels of government and don't really care who's asking you to fill out what form or where your regulations are or what your permits are. “Just tell us what the rules are and tell us once; coordinate among yourselves and make it easier. Stop putting up so many roadblocks to my getting my business started.”

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Absolutely.

Ms. Krista Campbell: I would say a couple of things.

One is that Industry Canada has a number of initiatives that we have worked on with other federal departments, the regional development agencies, the provinces and territories, or municipalities, to simplify some of the information that's available to businesses.

One good example is a product called BizPaL. BizPaL covers all the permits and licences you need to start a business, and it's in one spot. It looks at federal, provincial, municipal permits and licences. You can type in, “I want to start a hair salon in downtown Toronto” and it will spit back the information on what you need across the board.

That interface, BizPaL, is taken up by other departments and agencies, provincial organizations, the regional development agencies. They put it up on their site, and it is integrated with some of the other things that are done, so that when businesses go there it's a sort of a one-stop shop, because you don't want to know just about

permits and licences, but might want to know about regulations or might need to know how to get help with a business plan or might think you need help with financing.

Trying to integrate all of those types of programs and services together is one of the things Industry Canada coordinates, working with, for example, the regional development agencies to say to businesses that here is a concierge-type suite of information.

It's a continuous work in progress, but it is one of which we can say that such things as BizPaL, the Canada Business Network, the CommunAction website on Industry Canada, which tries to be a single portal—things like these—are really making a difference for businesses in terms of being able to—

Ms. Joyce Bateman: [Inaudible—Editor] ...on your website. I know you serve all of Canada, but for Ontario, there were—I'm going back to my notes—just for francophone businesses 60 organizations funding them, just in Ontario.

Do you gather that information to help all these people in the regional—?

• (0955)

Ms. Krista Campbell: More of the on-the-ground, in-community work is done by the regional development agencies at the federal level. Industry Canada helps with coordination, sharing information, best practices, pulling the groups together so that the relevant people who work on the ground in communities, who might be business advisers, get a chance to talk to each other and think about what some of the best practices are—“How can I take your good idea and implement it in my region?”

We tend not to host the site. Industry Canada isn't necessarily the place our businesses would think to go first; they would go to ServiceOntario or ACOA. Those are often the more front-line, in-the-community, very flexible service providers that are on the ground, whereas we're often the coordinator.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mr. Tanguay, would you like to add anything?

[English]

Mr. Serge Tanguay: Maybe I could just add one practice that we've done that I mentioned in my opening notes, the dialogue day that's been organized in conjunction with Industry Canada. We grouped, obviously, all interested groups within the OLMCs, but also a whole array of federal departments. And that's actually proven to be a good forum to discuss different programs where we can reach our different clients.

So I think it's another good practice that tends to clear the air at least into this array of government programs. We're also working with the Government of Quebec, so we're obviously in very close contact with them to help potential entrepreneurs to find their way into this array of government programs.

The Chair: Okay, thank you very much.

Now we'll go to Mr. Chisu.

Mr. Corneliu Chisu (Pickering—Scarborough East, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

[Translation]

Thank you very much for your testimony.

[English]

I have a question related to the free trade agreement with Europe. During your discussion with the communities, are you being asked about the free trade agreement in Europe? Are Canada's minority linguistic communities preparing themselves for the new economic opportunities that will be created by this agreement?

Why I'm saying this is because in the CanNor presentation I have seen you are saying that with CanNor's funding contributions, territorial francophone associations, together with their partners, are developing services and tools to support local employment, attracting investment from Quebec and France—but there are many other countries in Europe that speak French, and I just mention right away Switzerland, Belgium, and Monaco—as well as fostering the economic integration of newcomers, entrepreneurship, and community economic development.

So are you limiting yourself only to France? Or are you thinking about the greater input on 500 million people who can do business, and where the community can access that?

Second, when you were speaking about the exports, there were some maple syrup exports in New Brunswick. There were two companies that were exporting maple syrup. So how would this free trade agreement help the communities to export more?

The Chair: Okay, why don't we begin with the second question with Monsieur Aucoin? And then we'll go to the first question with the rest of the witnesses.

Mr. Wade Aucoin: In response to the member's question, I don't have specific information on where these two companies have directed their exports. We've gotten positive reports that they are now exporting, but I think it's still a bit too early to tell exactly how the agreement in principle with the EU would help these two companies in particular. That said, I can find out and get back to you with a specific response.

In response to the member's first question, Mr. Chair, it's very interesting. There is a lot of interest across Atlantic Canada, but I'm seeing it especially within the francophone community in a number of ways. There are francophone economic development groups, such as the one that I just mentioned, le Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse, that have organized workshops and information sessions with ACOA support to reach out to entrepreneurs to get them to start thinking about how they could be exporting to the European market in light of the agreement in principle.

However, I want to mention one example in particular that I find very interesting. It's a new project that we just launched, and it's in cooperation with the territory of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, which is just off the shores of Newfoundland and Labrador. We've launched a joint economic observatory that has a Canadian component and a European component. The Canadian component is based out of the Université de Moncton, campus de Shippagan. We have a lady there who prepares economic information on the Canadian part, but we have a French component that looks at economic information, not just from France but from all of Europe. We put this together in a

number of bulletins that come out regularly and are distributed through a network of chambers of commerce across Atlantic Canada and across France and the European Union. The next bulletin that's planned—in fact I think it might have come out last week—is to focus on opportunities around the new proposed trade agreement with the European Union, and we're planning to have a seminar with business people to talk about the information in that bulletin. This is a very unique arrangement where we're combining Canadian and European information and making it available to business people in Atlantic Canada and the European Union to see what kinds of opportunities there are out there. We're seeing quite a bit of interest in that respect.

• (1000)

Mr. Serge Tanguay: I have a very quick answer. Through our regular programming, we support the regional export promotions organizations throughout Quebec. Their main mandate is to help developers of small and medium-sized enterprises to develop their expertise. That's how it's being done in our organization.

Ms. Susan Anzolin: Quickly, I know that there's one to respond.

With the renewal of the agency of FedDev Ontario, one of our areas of focus is, in fact, trying to increase the diversification of markets for businesses in Southern Ontario, and that obviously applies to francophone businesses. As I indicated earlier, I think that francophone businesses have an advantage in terms of having another language. France is a great partner, but, as you indicated, there are other partners, and the trade agreement that we just signed with Europe is a good platform for Canada and our businesses to get access to the European market. We are working with our partners in terms of looking at other markets across the world, and RDÉE—le Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité—has really done some good work in terms of providing some symposiums for francophone business to see how they can access trade across the world.

Ms. France Guimond: I think francophone companies in the west are very well positioned to take advantage of this agreement. Through our own programming, we support export activities, of course.

A good example is in Manitoba. We have the only world trade centre that's a bilingual world trade centre. They already have established relationships with many countries that do business with the French communities. They deliver our new CBN programming in the region so going back to the question to you about duplication and that. It's centralized and it helps business. It's the next step.

Ms. Kimberly Fairman: I would say the context in each of the three territories is quite different. We don't consider our export market a driver right now in terms of the economy. A big driver for us is mining. In the Northwest Territories in particular the francophone association began this outreach to Europe. It's very new for us. But they have been attracting.... I'm not sure; I would describe the investments as small and medium-sized enterprises that see an opportunity to expand their business in the territories. That's more the type of investment we're attracting at this point.

Certainly the francophone association has been active in promoting tourism, and tourism becomes a vehicle for some small export businesses like cottage industries and arts and crafts. The GNWT and the territorial governments are quite focused on this sort of offshoot of the tourism piece, but as I say, it's a very new initiative. They have started to expand not only the participants in the outreach but the countries they are reaching out to as well, so it's exciting.

• (1005)

Ms. Lucie Perreault: For northern Ontario our statistics show that our organizations are behind in what they can do as far as exporting, so it has been identified as a priority for us in the last couple of years in order to help assist that.

Our focus is on innovation, on assisting these small businesses to develop what they need from a marketing perspective or from a manufacturing perspective in order to be able to better access the markets and to export more. Knowing that a lot of them are working in the fields of mining and forestry, there is certainly opportunity to expand on that front.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We'll now go to Mr. Nicholls.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My questions are for Mr. Tanguay and Madame Goulet.

As you know, the QCGN has done a lot of work with the English-speaking community of Quebec. They came up with a document outlining priorities and strategies for this community.

My first question would be, how are the investment decisions made by Canada Economic Development guided by this document, the "2012 to 2017 Community Priorities and Enabling Strategies of the English-Speaking Community of Quebec"?

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Tanguay: I am not very familiar with that document. However, I can say that the projects that are submitted and developed are approved with the EDI in mind. I can forward you the details of the QCGN report later.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: That document was developed in 2012 over a six-month period, in consultation with the organizations and communities, and your department is not very familiar with it. Is that correct?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: I am the one who is not familiar with it. I am not saying that CED is not familiar with it. I would like to be able to give you a much more specific answer soon.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Okay, thank you.

[English]

What outreach is undertaken by Canada Economic Development to ensure that access to available resources is widely and equitably available to the many community groups working in the economic development sector to enhance the vitality of the English-speaking community of Quebec?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: As I mentioned previously, we have had a number of meetings with community groups. We have had over 50

meetings with community groups in the past two years including QCGN, including YES, including the dialogue day. That's how we gather the information on a macro scale.

As I also mentioned previously, where we also have an advantage are the links we have in every region of Quebec by our representatives on-site in the *bureaux d'affaires* or business offices that are in constant communication with minority groups and OLMC groups on a regular basis because they are our clients.

Specifically with respect to those rural communities, we have the outreach program, and the Gaspésie regional office has been particularly active in the past few years in reaching those groups because they are dispersed in some very small communities.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: When you say "regular basis", what are we talking about in terms of frequency for consultation with these groups? How closely does CED consult with them?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: I would have to get back to you, but I would assume they're regular forums. With the dialogue days, they're every two years because it's a fairly large event, but with respect to some of the smaller organizations there are lots of forums in which these groups will be represented, along with other economic development actors. So I would presume that there are contacts there, but I couldn't give you a precise answer as to the frequency.

• (1010)

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: In terms of resources in your consultations with these groups, do they often say they have inadequate resources to meet the needs of their users and community members? Is that often something that is said to CED, that they need more resources, either financial or manpower resources?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: It's often the case that, yes, more resources are needed. As with any other areas of economic development, obviously there's never enough, but our role is to obviously try to maximize and optimize those resources to the best of our ability.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Right, and those organizations are also doing the same thing. We've had them at committee and they've talked about improving their efficiencies in the rollout of their programs. But given that even at the end of those exercises of increasing their efficiency they're still saying they need resources, wouldn't you recommend to the government, perhaps, in speaking for them, that they actually do need these financial resources to meet their needs?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: Well, the resources are needed. Everybody needs resources, I would agree with that.

The advantage that we do have, as a few of my colleagues have mentioned, is we can also revert back to our regular programming to help out some of these organizations via some other projects also. That's the safety valve we have, which is why we're quite confident that demand has been quite high with respect to *Feuille de route* number 2, 2013-18, and we're quite confident that we have already at least 10 to 12 projects in the making in our pipeline. Some of these projects are very long to develop, but we're quite confident we're going to have great success in the next phase.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Does CED recognize the importance of arts and culture for the English-speaking community in Quebec and how that contributes to the creative economy in the province? Is there a special section or *volet* in CED's programs for arts and culture?

Mr. Serge Tanguay: There is in our regular programming, but it's always with the bias, or the *lorgette*, if you want, of economic development. It's how these events will generate economic activity, will generate dollars being spent in the regions that we're targeting. It's within that component.

Madame Goulet.

Ms. Hélène Goulet (Acting Director General, Policy, Research and Programs Branch, Policy and Communications Sector, Canada Economic Development): If I may add, it's also like our funding of tourism activities, festivals, and things like that, and we choose to fund them when they do bring money inside Quebec, for example, with tourists outside Quebec. So that benefits all communities, and those kinds of events are funded throughout the province, but I would say there are more in Montreal, but we have that. It's also within our own programming.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: Once you confer with the department about the QCGN's 2012-17 report, could you keep my office in the loop of the collaboration that's gone on? I'm sure our partners would appreciate the feedback.

Mr. Serge Tanguay: Absolutely.

Mr. Jamie Nicholls: I'll pass the rest of my time to Monsieur Godin.

[Translation]

Mr. Yvon Godin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question is for the representative from FedNor.

Do you grant funding to anglophone organizations that wish to provide French-language services to help them translate their websites, documents and so on?

Let me give you an example. I went to Sudbury a few weeks ago.

Actually, I will let you answer, Ms. Perreault.

Ms. Lucie Perreault: When we prepared the programming for our new EDI plan, linguistic duality became a priority for us, because of examples like the one you just gave us. As a result, if an anglophone company wants to have its documents translated into French in order to open up new markets, FedNor could provide that support.

Mr. Yvon Godin: FedNor would provide some support.

Ms. Lucie Perreault: That's right.

Mr. Yvon Godin: Furthermore, in addition to the \$4.5 million that you receive through the economic development initiative, do you put aside a certain amount from your own money to subsidize francophone organizations in northern Ontario?

Ms. Lucie Perreault: The entire amount of \$4 million is for funding francophone communities in northern Ontario and for supporting their development.

Does that answer your question?

Mr. Yvon Godin: So that is what the money is really for?

Ms. Lucie Perreault: Yes, the program is specifically designed for the development of francophone communities.

FedNor has three programs. First of all, the northern Ontario development program provides funding to cover economic devel-

opment in its entirety, including francophone communities. EDI, which is a continuation of the first program, is specifically designed for the development of francophone communities and includes the \$4 million you mentioned.

• (1015)

The Chair: Okay, thank you.

[English]

Mr. Daniel.

Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, witnesses, for being here.

I'm going to start with more of a general question about skills and some of the young people. One of the things we've heard from many witnesses is that most of the young people, regardless of which minority language they are in, have to go away for higher education and quite often don't return back to their communities to continue doing things there.

My question is, what programs are in place for young people to learn and master necessary skills for a good job or for entrepreneurship in any part of the minority linguistic communities in Canada?

Ms. Krista Campbell: Thank you.

I'll start with perhaps a couple of general observations and then others may have something they would like to contribute.

Much of the skills agenda falls to counterparts in Employment and Social Development Canada who have more direct levers with respect to some of the activities.

I would say that for a department like Industry Canada, the skills gap overall is an important issue that we spend a great deal of time thinking about and thinking about how to assist with skills gaps either in various sectors or various regions.

We have, as a government, different ways that we work with provinces and territories; for example, supporting post-secondary education. One of them is the recent knowledge infrastructure program. And as I mentioned in my opening remarks, a significant amount of money went to official language minority communities, universities, or colleges. That greatly enhances the ability for young people to get education in the language of their choice, often in the community of their choice, and to stay in that community if they put down roots or decide to move back to wherever they came from.

I think that broadly it's an important area that we're thinking about, and there are some direct tools that we can use, such as supporting some of these universities and colleges. But much of the direct programming falls to counterparts in other departments.

[Translation]

Ms. Lucie Perreault: FedNor has programs for young interns.

[English]

So we have youth entrepreneurship programs that assist youth to remain in our communities by offering them employment coming out of their university programs.

What we're seeing from results is that the programs are successful and the students are successful and they are staying in our communities.

Ms. Kimberly Fairman: For the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, we don't have programs aimed specifically at minority groups for skills, but we do have a program that focuses on skills development between high school and going into the workforce and that program has been quite successful. In fact, we're coming up to a symposium some time this month so we can discuss some of the outcomes there.

Ms. France Guimond: At WEDC, we respond to industry demand through our own programming. So if industry tells us there is a gap, we'll work with industry to see how we can work, so it's kind of push and pull.

In terms of francophone communities, a good example of a project we did was with Université de Saint-Boniface where they identified that they needed some lab equipment to train students in media. We would not support the curriculum, but for example we would support buying the equipment for the project. That's a way of really supporting the youth to get the training they need to get really good bilingual jobs.

Ms. Susan Anzolin: It is an important area for us in southern Ontario because we do see some of the statistics in terms of young francophones having to leave their communities, especially rural or smaller ones, to access opportunities in larger urban centres. Like my colleague at FedNor, we've looked at working with businesses because our mandate is to work with business and economic development. We focus on internships and providing that opportunity for young people to get a work assignment or a work term with a small or a big business. Reciprocally, the business gets the advantage of having a young person, so there's that great exchange between the two. I think internship is a good example of what governments can do. But as Ms. Campbell has said, skills are really the mandate of our sister agency, Employment and Social Development Canada.

Madame Guimond talked about working with colleges and universities. That's the other thing that we do at FedDev. We work with post-secondary institutions to provide those opportunities for satellite offices so that young people can stay in their communities.

The third thing we do is provide entrepreneurial counselling or services to young people so they can start their own businesses in their own communities.

• (1020)

Mr. Serge Tanguay: One of the very successful programs that we have instituted in Quebec is with the youth employment services program, the YES organization, which has had an entrepreneurship program in the greater Montreal area for quite some time. The objectives of the program are to provide coaching, guidance, help, and assistance with respect to starting a business. The program has been so successful that now they have started to spread out in other areas of Quebec, and have started to develop the e-ship program, which is basically a virtual entrepreneurship program. So this has been quite successful and we'd like to think that it's retaining some of our youth in the regions where they're from.

Mr. Wade Aucoin: ACOA has a strong focus on business skills development. Within that we have a pretty strong component that's

targeted at promoting youth entrepreneurship, so when we talk about skills development for youth, we, at ACOA anyway, tend to focus on promoting entrepreneurship among youth. There are a number of other elements that we have. We have the productivity in business skills initiative under the business development program that will help companies hire staff to improve productivity and business skills. We work with CBDCs, for instance, to put in place an entrepreneurial training fund that CBDC then provides to entrepreneurs, both young and old, with an emphasis on the young there.

I'd like to just talk about two specific initiatives that ACOA has funded that are targeted at youth because they address an important issue that has affected many rural areas.

[*Translation*]

One of those initiatives is called Je reviens! J'y reste! and it is offered

[*English*]

in the northeastern part of New Brunswick.

[*Translation*]

The other initiative, which is called PERCE, is offered

[*English*]

throughout P.E.I., but is targeted mainly at the western part of P.E.I. where the francophone population is targeted.

These two initiatives help to attract young francophones back into their communities. They connect them with businesses that may have opportunities for them. But part of the program is to help educate them about how they could apply their skills in their community of origin. It's been a pretty successful approach in those areas.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Madame Perreault.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Manon Perreault (Montcalm, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

There are a lot of you here this morning. It is very nice.

I will probably not have time to hear all your answers. So I would really appreciate it if you could forward them to the clerk in writing.

Recently, we met with a representative from the Association franco-yukonnaise. She told us that CanNor was not paying for the operating costs of the projects it was funding, which surprised me a great deal.

Why is CanNor refusing to fund those costs? To your knowledge and based on your personal experience, what are the consequences of that policy on official language communities in the region you are serving?

My next question is for all the witnesses.

Do you fund the operating costs of projects that receive funding through the roadmap? If so, there is sort of a lack of coordination between the two. I would like someone to explain that to me.

•(1025)

[English]

Ms. Krista Campbell: Thank you for that question. Maybe if I could, I'll make an overarching statement and then the more specific answer.

One of the things that we see when we look at the data and information on official language minority communities is how diverse they are, that there is no one portrait. There is no one defining set of characteristics for official language minority communities, that they really vary across the country in terms of what they need, and how they respond to different government programs.

So under the road map, the way that the economic development funding is allocated reflects and supports that diversity among official language minority communities. Industry Canada has an overarching role with respect to some coordination, pulling organizations together and the regional development agencies together for discussions around priorities and planning and evaluation.

But it's really up to the regional development agencies to understand on the ground what the needs are for their various communities, to take a look at their existing programs and services and what works well and what could be developed and adapted for the official language community needs.

The result is that the exact same program and service might not be available in every single community across the country because of the flexibility afforded to the regional development agencies, that are supposed to be the eyes and the ears on the ground for the Government of Canada with respect to, for example, economic development.

So that's a broad statement on some of the rationale for why you hear some of these comments from stakeholders. I'll turn it over to my colleagues to talk to the specifics.

[Translation]

Ms. Lucie Perreault: FedNor certainly wants to encourage development in the longer term. We could cover the operating costs to support an organization temporarily until it becomes self-sufficient.

Those costs are in a different continuum when it comes to economic development. It depends on where those organizations are in the continuum, the economic benefits that they will generate and the time they will need to be self-sufficient.

Ms. Manon Perreault: Some projects do not get off the ground because the operating costs are not covered.

Ms. Lucie Perreault: That can happen. When we analyze a project and determine that the organization would not be able to survive in the long term without the government's ongoing support, we might reject it. Our decision would depend on the benefits and on what the organization is asking for.

Ms. Manon Perreault: Okay.

In that case, could another agency make up for the operating costs of a project?

Ms. Lucie Perreault: All economic development agencies can cover the operating costs up to a certain extent. The decision to fund the operating costs of a project really depends on the results of the organization and the time it will need to achieve them.

Ms. Manon Perreault: In other words, the other agencies or departments agree to pay for the operating costs.

I was also told that Employment and Social Development Canada had reduced the funding for the Enabling Fund for Official Language Minority Communities, which is now at 58% of the total budget. Of course, I have a few questions about that.

I would first like to know whether the departments were informed of the changes made to the Enabling Fund for Official Language Minority Communities and whether those changes have significant consequences on the programs, more specifically on the economic development initiative.

•(1030)

Ms. Hélène Goulet: Thank you.

That actually comes under another department's jurisdiction. The goal is to help minority associations. We are more involved in economic development. Our budgets have not changed compared with the old roadmap. Over the past five years, Canada Economic Development received \$9 million in contribution funding and \$1 million in operating costs. The same amounts are planned for the 2013-2018 period.

We will continue to have the same budgets for economic development and the fostering of development in Quebec's anglophone communities.

Ms. Manon Perreault: Okay, but you have probably heard that cuts would be made to that funding.

Ms. Hélène Goulet: Are you talking about the other fund, the Enabling Fund for Official Language Minority Communities?

Ms. Manon Perreault: Yes.

Ms. Hélène Goulet: That fund is not really related to what we do. In other words, it's not part of our mandate, but of another department's mandate. We have actually heard about this, since we work with associations to keep abreast of what is happening, but we work directly with promoters—the non-profit companies or organizations that provide services to businesses.

Our mandates are not quite the same; we are not in the same line of work. We are continuing to do what we were doing before. Associations are more affected by the cuts. There is no impact on the work we do at our business offices in terms of economic development.

Ms. Manon Perreault: In other words, these are two completely separate things.

Ms. Hélène Goulet: Exactly.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Williamson, go ahead.

[English]

Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC): Thank you, Chair, and thanks to all the witnesses for coming in today.

Mr. Aucoin, I'm going to begin with you. You had some interesting stats, which Mr. Godin questioned.

I want to look at the situation in New Brunswick. When you look at the cities of Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John, how is unemployment in those areas? Can you comment on that—or the job growth or the opportunity that exists there—in particular as compared with rural New Brunswick?

I would ask you to keep your answer short, if you could, please.

Mr. Wade Aucoin: The unemployment levels in the larger cities of New Brunswick are generally lower than in other parts of the province. In fact, this morning in *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, I think on page 4, there was a full-page article that said that bilingualism in the southeast of New Brunswick is a very profitable thing in the Moncton area.

Mr. John Williamson: That's right. In fact, it's not just that francophones are heading to Alberta; they are heading to places like Moncton and Saint John, where there is opportunity, and jobs particularly in the energy sector.

Would you agree with that?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: There has been quite a bit of intraprovincial migration within the province of New Brunswick.

Mr. John Williamson: Can you comment on the unemployment in the south as well, say in Charlotte County? I don't know how specifically you know the province in the south.

Or rather, are you aware that high unemployment is also a problem in the rural anglophone areas as well as in the francophone north?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: Of course. We're aware of the unemployment challenges across Atlantic Canada, and we're doing, as I mentioned, what we can to address those challenges.

Mr. John Williamson: Yes. I'm just trying to get a few facts out there.

In fact, the unemployment rate in our cities in Atlantic Canada is lower than it is in Ontario; there are some remarkable success stories of job creation and opportunities.

This is a challenge that we have—I'm going to focus on New Brunswick—in rural New Brunswick that is really outside any linguistic issue.

Mr. Wade Aucoin: As I mentioned in my answer earlier, there are some very strong trends affecting rural areas not just in Atlantic Canada but across the country and affecting both anglophone and francophone communities in our region, and we're doing all we can to counter this trend.

Mr. John Williamson: I'm going to come back to you. I have a few questions for Ms. Guimond from Western Economic Diversification.

Could you talk to me a little about what is happening in Saskatchewan? We had a group in a few weeks ago who said that the labour force participation of minority language groups in Saskatchewan is very high, in line with what we see for the majority language group, the idea being that as people work in this province there are opportunities, and francophones are participating at higher levels

than elsewhere in the country. By that, I mean that the labour force participation rate is higher in Saskatchewan because of the opportunity, and we're seeing this with both English-speaking and French-speaking groups.

Do you agree with that? Can you comment on it? I'll leave it at that, because I want to ask other questions.

• (1035)

Ms. France Guimond: Yes, there are opportunities for both francophones and anglophones. Actually, in the west there are some really good opportunities and good jobs. The west is doing well in small and medium-sized businesses, and there are strong resource sectors, with lots going on. We've mentioned Alberta quite a few times.

Mr. John Williamson: The business opportunities and the growth seem to be, in Saskatchewan, with potash, natural gas, and resources in general. Is that correct?

Ms. France Guimond: Yes, I'd say those are the major areas, absolutely.

Mr. John Williamson: And because of that we're seeing that growth and labour participation rates are quite high—

Ms. France Guimond: Yes.

Mr. John Williamson: —and unemployment ultimately is very low, the lowest in the country, I believe.

Mr. Aucoin, I'll come back to you. What is New Brunswick doing in terms of its natural gas and some of its resource development?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: Do you mean...? I'm sorry, Mr. Chair—

Mr. John Williamson: Just give it to me in terms of your expertise. I'm not asking about government policy, but could you compare a little bit? We see what's happening in Saskatchewan with resource development. What is going on in New Brunswick with shale gas, for example?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: Mr. Chair, it's very difficult for me as a federal public servant to comment on the actions of another level of government; however, I can say—

Mr. John Williamson: No, I'm not asking about the policies of government. I'm asking what kind of resource development is occurring in New Brunswick—just an economic fact. Is it as active there as it is in Saskatchewan? Is there anything happening there?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: There are a number of efforts being made in New Brunswick to develop that sector of the economy. ACOA has done a number of studies to look at the economic impact. It's difficult for me to compare how active it is or how different it is from

Mr. John Williamson: Perfect.

Here is one last question. Do you believe fracking shale gas holds potential in New Brunswick to create jobs and opportunity?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: Based on the studies we have seen, there are indications of potential economic impact.

Mr. John Williamson: Do you mean positive impact?

Mr. Wade Aucoin: Yes, I mean positive impact.

Mr. John Williamson: Thank you very much.

Just for the record, I would like to highlight that while Mr. Godin seems to believe it's the job of the federal government through its regional development agencies to create jobs, I would like to put on the record that it is also the job of governments, federal or provincial, to ensure that we have resource development. One way to minimize the flow of English and French who are moving to western Canada is to develop our own resources in our own backyard.

He might agree with that, but his provincial colleagues do not.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair: Okay, thank you very much, Mr. Williamson.

Our last person for today is Monsieur Godin.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Yvon Godin: In the fall of next year, we will see what Canadians will decide on election day. Our government must represent its people. If the government forgets the people, it will find itself in the back seat.

Mr. John Williamson: Those people are going to Alberta.

Mr. Yvon Godin: I would like to come back to Mr. Aucoin. The question was an important one. ACOA is working in the regions and has been helping them for a long time. I want people to understand what has happened.

When investments were made in southern New Brunswick, jobs at the Air Canada call centre in Saint John were paid over \$20 an hour. One week later, people from Air Canada were in northern New Brunswick to recruit francophones and bring them to work in Saint John, without bothering to set up a call centre in the north. Francophones are used to pressing number two on the telephone to have a francophone answer them, and number one for an anglophone. People were moved to Saint John.

Moreover, CIBC was brought to Fredericton. That's another place where telephones could have been installed, so that people could stay at home.

The Xerox company has jobs in Moncton that are paid at least \$20 an hour. The Royal Bank also has some jobs available in Moncton. That's why francophones from Acadia have moved to Moncton. All those good jobs were created there.

When I asked Air Canada representatives why the company did not set up in northern New Brunswick where the francophones were living, I was told that the government provided more money for wages if the company set up in the south instead of the north of the province. This was even said in Ottawa during a parliamentary committee's meeting.

This is why people did not only move to the west. They left northern New Brunswick to move to the south of the province, since the governments in place have done nothing for northern New Brunswick.

If you want to clarify things, Mr. Williamson, I will also add my two cents. I know my story. I know what kind of challenges my constituents are facing.

Francophone families from northern New Brunswick have been torn apart. Let's come back to the 80% of those people who are being

mistreated. We are constantly being mistreated. If you want things to be clear, I will add my contribution. I live in New Brunswick, and I receive the calls.

The government's job is to implement infrastructure for job creation, and not to create jobs for those who will be able to work for the government. You were elected to implement infrastructure and create an atmosphere conducive to job creation for communities.

This study was not commissioned by the opposition. We are conducting it because it was commissioned by the government. I am not saying this to praise the government, but to find solutions.

What recommendations likely to further help our minority communities across the country would you like to see in the report? That's this study's mandate. Could someone answer me? What else could you do, aside from taking away money reserved for communities? We need to work with those communities and organizations.

● (1040)

[*English*]

Ms. Krista Campbell: Maybe I would start with just an overarching statement from the departmental perspective and invite the regional development agencies to chime in as well.

I think that the exercise that we went through with respect to renewing the official languages road map really is the foundation of what it is that we can do in working with communities. The point was we have a five-year plan; we evaluated the five-year plan; we consult regularly, formally and informally, with communities; we try to track what best practices are, what works, what doesn't work; we promote trying different approaches. Failure may happen at certain points. Every business doesn't take off, whether it's in an official language minority community or elsewhere, but it's the idea of trying some innovative new products, services, getting on the ground, thinking about how we use things like new technologies; it's the broad policy suite that the government has, as well as the more tailored ones that can happen in communities.

It's that constant tweaking of what it is that we try to do, lining it up with whether it works or not, trying to replicate what works, tweak what doesn't, and then come back in five years and present it all over again to ministers in the form of, say, a new proposal or a budget proposal that parliamentarians can then vote on and say, yes this works or no it doesn't.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Lucie Perreault: I think that the EDI initiative is a positive measure that could help support what you said. The program is specifically targeting the development of francophone communities.

We had a fair amount of flexibility in terms of development, and we used a lot of research provided by a number of individuals. We are in a position to develop a program that will really meet the needs of francophone communities with regard to that aspect. This program includes certain components, such as linguistic duality, that help communities develop and achieve real results.

[*English*]

Ms. Kimberly Fairman: I would agree with what my colleagues have offered here.

Certainly, in the three territories, the success of the francophone communities is well documented. In some places, like Nunavut, for example, the rate of income is 80% higher than the other communities in Nunavut, for the francophone community.

So we really see them as a partner in terms of—

Mr. Yvon Godin: I'm sorry, I'm just looking for extra recommendations that you need to do your job. For example, the people who came in two weeks ago were talking about getting cut in their own operation. What can't you do? What could your organization do to help those communities in a minority language place, like in your area? They were talking about getting cut and they will not be operational if it continues like that when they get cut—like this 80%? One said it was not your responsibility, but at the same time you have certain responsibilities for the minority group in your area too.

• (1045)

The Chair: We're running out of time, so why don't we get feedback from Mr. Aucoin.

[*Translation*]

There are a lot of francophones in New Brunswick.

[*English*]

We would also like to hear from Mr. Tanguay, because there are significant anglophone minorities right next door in the Gaspé, both of which are, in many cases, struggling economically.

[*Translation*]

So we will hear from Mr. Aucoin, and then Mr. Tanguay.

Mr. Wade Aucoin: Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to make one last statement.

I agree with what my colleagues have said so far. We have to continue along the path we have created with the EDI and other initiatives. The only thing I would add is that we should think about the potential of innovation and R and D in the area of technology and new products, as well as about the economic potential this could have for Atlantic Canada, but also for other regions of the country.

The Chair: Mr. Tanguay, the floor is yours.

Mr. Serge Tanguay: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would say that the renewal of the roadmap is good news. Its permanent funding until 2018, and beyond, will help us plan over a much longer term and structure our interventions even better.

In Quebec, we are reaching 99% of our OLMCs. I think that prosperity goes through economic development for our OLMCs and for our other communities. From there on in, the key to success is economic development, the same as for remote regions that would not necessarily be part of an OLMC.

I think that economic prosperity, through the EDI initiative, will help us achieve goals. Continued funding is very good news for us, at Canada Economic Development.

The Chair: Thank you, everyone.

[*English*]

Thank you for your cooperation with such a large panel today.

Without further ado, this meeting is adjourned.

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