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**Tuesday, April 8, 2014**

—  
**Chair**

**The Honourable Michael Chong**



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Tuesday, April 8, 2014

•(0845)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Hon. Michael Chong (Wellington—Halton Hills, CPC)):** I would like to welcome you to the 19th meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages. We are here today, Tuesday, April 8, 2014, pursuant to Standing Order 108, to study the economic situation of Canada's minority linguistic communities.

Today we will hear from Mr. Corbeil and Mr. Lepage from Statistics Canada, and Ms. Lalonde from the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne.

[English]

Before we begin, I believe I have a notice of motion from Monsieur Godin, and I will give him the floor to give us that notice of motion.

[Translation]

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

I have a notice of motion that I want to present. It reads as follows:

That the Standing Committee on Official Languages invite the Minister of Canadian Heritage to appear before May 29th 2014 to discuss the Plans and Priorities for 2014-2015 of the department for a two-hour televised session.

**The Chair:** Thank you for your notice of motion, Mr. Godin.

We will now hear from Mr. Corbeil from Statistics Canada.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil (Assistant Director, Social and Aboriginal Statistic Division, Statistics Canada):** Good morning.

I would like to thank the members of the committee for inviting Statistics Canada to appear and offer input to their discussions on the current situation and historical evolution of the socioeconomic conditions of official-language minorities in Canada. With me today is my colleague, Jean-François Lepage.

Given the time we have been allotted, our comments will focus primarily on presenting a few key statistics related to education, representation in the employment sectors, income and unemployment, elements that indicate how some key socioeconomic characteristics of Canada's official-language minorities have changed over time.

We will also briefly describe the main sources of data in this area and some of the issues related to the statistical study on the socioeconomic situation of minority linguistic communities.

Historically, it is well documented that francophones in Canada had lower educational attainment, income, occupational levels and

industrial ownership than anglophones. Their situation has evolved a great deal over the past 50 years to the point where we have seen a gradual and marked decline in the socioeconomic inequalities between anglophones and francophones, both in Quebec and in the other provinces and territories.

However, we must point out that the gains that francophones have achieved over the years with regards to key socioeconomic indicators have been accompanied by a decline in the use of the French language, as evidenced by the increase in the use of English over time among those representing a very small proportion of the community in which they live.

[English]

Among the primary drivers of change is the fact that the level of education of French-speaking minorities has significantly improved since the 1960s, especially because of the obligation to remain in school until the age of 16, and the growing importance attributed to education by governments, employers, and the general population.

Thus, in the early 1970s the proportion of the population without at least a high school diploma was much higher among francophones than anglophones in almost all the provinces. Today the gaps have narrowed to the point where those that remain are due largely to the fact that francophone seniors are much less likely to hold a diploma or a degree than are their English-speaking counterparts.

The significant evolution in the education of francophones is especially evident in the 25 to 44 age group with a university degree. In 2011, among the people in this age group, only anglophones in Quebec were more likely than francophones to hold a university degree. In all other provinces, with the exception of New Brunswick where the two groups were equal, francophones surpassed anglophones.

The situation in Quebec occurred not because francophones in Quebec had less education than francophones in other provinces, but because anglophones who live in Quebec had higher levels of education than anglophones living elsewhere in Canada.

We should also mention that the gap between anglophones and francophones in Quebec can be explained in part by the fact that the anglophone population is largely urban and includes a significant proportion of immigrants, two subpopulations that generally have higher levels of education.

●(0850)

[Translation]

Francophone minorities are more concentrated in certain employment sectors than their English-speaking counterparts. For example, in all provinces and territories, there are proportionally more francophones than anglophones working in the public administration sector. Thus, 13% of francophones 15 years and older who worked during the reference period had worked primarily in this employment sector, compared with 7% of anglophones. In addition, they are overrepresented in this sector relative to their demographic weight in the population: while francophones represented 4.5% of the labour force in 2011, they accounted for 7% of employees in this sector.

The minority francophone labour force is also more highly concentrated in the educational services sector in all provinces and territories, except New Brunswick. In contrast, in several provinces, francophones are less concentrated in the retail trade industry and the accommodation and food services industry than their English-speaking counterparts.

The situation of francophones in New Brunswick is different from that of other francophones in minority communities in terms of their representation in certain industry sectors. For example, although they represented 32% of the population of that province in 2011, they accounted for 40% of the labour force in the primary sectors of agriculture, forestry, fishing and the extraction of natural resources as well as in the manufacturing sector. Conversely, they were underrepresented in such sectors as utilities, professional, scientific and technical services, management of companies and enterprises, and administrative and management services, accounting for between 19% and 24% of the workforce.

In Quebec, anglophones are more concentrated in such sectors as wholesale trade, professional, scientific and technical services, educational services and accommodation and food services. Moreover, although they represent 13.5% of Quebec's labour force, their representation in the information and cultural industries, real estate, professional and scientific services, and management of companies and enterprises varied between 17% and 21%.

However, they were underrepresented in certain industries, in particular the primary industries, natural resource extraction, utilities, and the provincial, municipal and local public administration sectors. In this regard, we found that 3.7% of jobs in the provincial government were held by English-speaking workers, compared with over 96% held by francophones.

[English]

Measuring the income gaps between linguistic groups is a generally more complex task and the results are likely to vary depending on the parameters that are included or excluded in the calculations. Nevertheless, the differences in income between anglophones and francophones are normally quite small in the provinces and territories outside Quebec, and generally to the advantage of francophones in terms of both median and average income. Once again, New Brunswick is the exception since the average income in that province was slightly higher for anglophones.

Several factors explain the income difference between anglophones and francophones. A more in-depth analysis of the census or

national household survey results reveals that these gaps are largely explained by age, sex, education, type of residence, industry sector, and immigrant status.

In Quebec, the differences in income between anglophones and francophones are also quite small. They tend to be higher in one group or the other depending on the indicator selected. For example, anglophones have a higher average income than francophones, but a lower median income. This is mainly due to the fact that the income gaps are higher within the anglophone group than the francophone group. In other words, English-speaking Quebecers are overrepresented in both the higher and lower income segments compared to the francophones. Regardless, the significant income advantage of anglophones in Quebec observed in 1971 no longer exists today.

Data from the national household survey show that overall, the unemployment rate of francophones outside Quebec was lower than that of anglophones in May 2011. For example, in Ontario, the unemployment rate of francophones was 6.5%, compared with 8.3% for anglophones. New Brunswick again was the exception, since the unemployment rate of francophones in that province was 12.4%, two points higher than that of anglophones. In contrast, in Quebec, in May 2011, the English-speaking minority posted an unemployment rate that was about two percentage points higher than that of francophones.

It is important to mention that the overall portrait presented here highlights an essentially provincial perspective. The overall statistical portrait, which reveals a more or less similar socio-economic situation for official language minorities and majorities based on the key indicators, sometimes hides disparities or gaps between provinces or within a given province. In other words, even though the overall portrait seems balanced or even favourable to official language minorities in some respects, the socio-economic situation of minorities in certain regions can be above or below average both inside and outside Quebec.

●(0855)

[Translation]

The main data sources that can be used to study the socio-economic conditions of official language minorities are the Canadian censuses and the 2011 National Household Survey. There is also the Survey on the Vitality of Official Language Minorities, conducted shortly after the 2006 census.

Statistics Canada has released a number of analyses based on these data, in particular a series of detailed provincial and territorial portraits released between 2010 and 2012. This survey still has a great deal of analytical potential.

We should also mention the survey for the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies conducted in 2011 and 2012, which has an oversampling of official language minorities in Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick and Manitoba. Analysis of these data will provide considerable insight into the relationship between the literacy and numeracy competencies of these populations, their labour force situation and practices, as well as the issues confronting these populations given an economy increasingly focused on knowledge and information technology.

The main data sources available make it possible to develop a fairly accurate portrait of the socioeconomic situation of Canada's official language minorities. However, the availability of linguistic information, sample sizes and the retrospective nature of the information will continue to create challenges. For example, in many regions, it is difficult to identify, let alone define, so-called anglophone or francophone businesses in minority communities based on available information.

[English]

Over and above the availability of data, there are other important challenges to accurately documenting the socio-economic situation of official language minorities. There is not necessarily consensus on the definition of an official language minority, as is evident from the many criteria available, nor is there a common definition of the concept of official language community.

Last, part of the improved socio-economic situation of official language minorities is attributable to changes in the composition of the minority population from international immigration and inter-provincial migration. Migrants and immigrants are generally concentrated in certain provinces or regions, and as a result, contribute to the evolving socio-economic portrait of official language minority communities in these regions.

Allow me, in closing, to state that Statistics Canada produces many studies on official language minorities in Canada. It will continue to provide data and analysis on their socio-economic situation. Through the ongoing support of the federal government and its community partners, Statistics Canada plans to continue adopting positive measures to inform public debate on this important topic.

[Translation]

My colleague, Jean-François Lepage, and I are available to answer your questions.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Corbeil.

I now give the floor to Ms. Lalonde from the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne.

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde (Director General, Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne):** Good morning, Mr. Chair, committee members and all participants.

On behalf of the Association des universités de la francophonie and the Consortium national de formation en santé, I would first like to thank you for the invitation, because I am now the Director General of both organizations. As I'm sure you understand, it is hard for me to separate the two in the context of your study.

I will begin by giving you a brief overview of the AUFC and the CNFS. I will then share a few observations regarding the important role our member institutions play in the economic development of francophone minority communities and I will conclude with a few recommendations.

The AUFC is a group of 14 francophone or bilingual universities in seven provinces outside Quebec. The programs offered by those institutions enhance the quality and scope of university learning, teaching and research in French, thereby contributing to the vitality and development of francophone minority communities. Every year, over 30,000 students enrol in the 750 programs offered in French at our member universities.

The CNFS is a group of 11 colleges and universities that offer programs in French in various health disciplines. The CNFS helps improve access to quality health services in French in francophone minority communities by training francophone and bilingual health care professionals.

Although your study is on the economic situation of official language minority communities, I should point out right from the start that our universities and colleges contribute enormously to the human, social, cultural and economic development of the Canadian francophonie and Canada as a whole. However, the reality is that they are recognized as the economic engine of francophone minority communities, and that is what I want to focus on today.

Our members' contributions to the development and enhancement of the francophone minority communities in which they are located are deeply rooted in the mission they are trying to achieve. Through both the quality of training they provide and the research they conduct, our post-secondary institutions use their knowledge to further promote their communities.

Economically speaking, post-secondary institutions are job creators as well as purchasers of goods and services. Just think for a moment about the economic contribution made by the 600 employees of the Université de Saint-Boniface in a community of 65,000 people.

Second, we must not forget the impact of basic and applied research. As hubs of research and innovation, our members contribute to the gains in productivity achieved in the economies of their communities, their regions, their provinces and the country as a whole. Our researchers do not conduct research just for the sake of making discoveries; they do their work for the benefit of their community.

Not far from here, the University of Ottawa conducted an economic impact study in 2012. The study found that that university alone contributes \$4.12 billion annually to Ottawa-Gatineau.

But beyond the numbers, there is the leadership provided by post-secondary institutions within francophone minority communities. When it comes time to develop a community economically, socially and culturally, our institutions are partners and catalysts, rather than ivory towers.

In the context of community-university-college partnerships, we get experts from several sectors to sit down together and come up with multi-disciplinary solutions to the issues facing the community.

Consider for example Laurentian University's School of Architecture and its impact on the revitalization of downtown Sudbury. Inaugurated just last September, this new architectural school is gradually transforming the downtown economy given that investors and businesses are following the school's example. The school is also training a new kind of architect versed in sustainable development and urbanization, and is introducing a new creative class into Greater Sudbury that is having a cultural and social impact.

When it comes to research, our francophone institutions transcend the language issue. They have adopted a much broader vision and welcome research chairs in many areas.

Our researchers will be the ones to produce tomorrow's breakthroughs and feed Canada's innovation ecosystem. As we already know, the most prosperous communities are those that have managed to shift to a knowledge-based economy. Job creation in francophone minority communities is therefore directly linked to our institutions' growing research capacity.

● (0900)

We recognize the federal government's vital role in research and hope that in its next five-year strategy for science, technology and innovation, the government will acknowledge the growing research capacity of Canada's francophone post-secondary institutions and its impact on economic growth.

In that context, the high level of cooperation between post-secondary institutions and businesses of all sizes deserves to be acknowledged. The many university-college-business partnerships contribute to developing the talent behind business innovation and promoting the technological transfer from post-secondary institutions to the private sector.

The government, especially through the National Research Council of Canada, has done a lot to increase the number of industrial internships and it must stay the course. The increased number of internships in francophone minority community institutions and businesses will make it easier to retain graduates who often enter the business community upon graduation. This in turn will also generate job-creating ideas.

The infrastructure used for education and research is another aspect that interests us. Recently, the government announced that for the next 10 years, its new building Canada fund would include an innovation component for which post-secondary institutions would be eligible.

I would now like to move on to the internationalization of our campuses and the important role that post-secondary education plays in immigration.

The aging population affects the country as a whole, but the demographic pressures are even more intense on the francophone minority communities. We are running the risk of no longer having enough available workers in those communities to build a modern, technology-driven economy. Immigration, and the economic integration of international students in our communities in particular, is becoming our only hope.

Canada has just come up with a new five-year strategy for international education. The primary objective is to double the

number of international students in Canada by 2022. It is clear that the international students in our institutions are the ideal candidates to immigrate to Canada and settle in francophone communities since they hold Canadian diplomas, master both official languages and, for the most part, have relevant work experience. Over the past few years, Canadian francophone colleges and universities have accepted more and more international students and provided them with various training and employability programs.

The demographic portrait of the student population in our institutions has changed quite a bit over the years and has become more diverse. For example, international students represent 18% of all students at the Université de Moncton and 15% of the student population at the Université de Saint-Boniface.

Canadian francophone universities want to do more in terms of international education and immigration to ensure the economic development of their communities. The government could support them by providing a broader range of training and related services to immigrant students, international students and French-speaking immigrants in francophone minority communities. What is more, the implementation of a targeted bursary program for post-secondary institutions in Canada's francophonie would be a step in the right direction for making it easier to recruit students.

Before moving on to solid recommendations, allow me to close by saying that our members hold a unique place in the francophone minority communities and play an essential leadership role. They are veritable economic engines in these communities, but they can only fulfill their mission in partnership with other players, including government.

Allow me to close with four recommendations.

First, in its next five-year strategy for science, technology and innovation, the government might recognize the growing research capacity of Canada's francophone post-secondary institutions and its impact on the economic growth of francophone minority communities.

Second, increasing the number of internships in businesses in francophone minority communities would make it easier to retain graduates in those communities.

Third, as far as the innovation component of the new building Canada fund is concerned, it will be up to Canada's francophonie institutions to put forward solid proposals in cooperation with the provinces, but federal decision-makers have to be aware of the economic impact of education and research on francophone minority communities.

● (0905)

Finally, the government could support Canada's francophonie institutions in providing a broader range of training and related services to immigrant students, international students and French-speaking immigrants. What is more, the implementation of a targeted bursary program might attract more international students to francophone minority communities.

Again, thank you for inviting us here today. I would be pleased to answer your questions.

• (0910)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Lalonde.

We will begin with Mr. Godin.

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

A number of things were mentioned.

I would like to begin by asking the representatives of Statistics Canada a question. In fact, I have a few questions for them.

The government changed the long form census. As you know, the minority communities fought to keep it. Is all that information available or are you missing what you need to conduct a proper study? I'm not sure if you understand my question.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** I understand your question perfectly.

All the data on the socio-economic characteristics or the economic development of the communities no longer come from the census, but from the national household survey. Having a provincial or regional perspective is not a major challenge. The information is good and, in my opinion, it is possible to come to solid conclusions with information from that data base.

The challenge lies elsewhere, with very small communities. Obviously, most of the francophones in minority communities are part of the overall picture of the province. However, if you are interested in a municipality, for example, in which there is a small number of francophones, it is very hard and even impossible to draw a conclusion or analyze their situation, including because of the lack of responses from these small municipalities. There are roughly 50,000 francophones in minority communities for whom we have no specific information about their communities. Statistics Canada was unable to provide information on their communities because the rate of response was far too low.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Would you recommend reverting back to the previous situation and going back to the tools that were available before?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** As you know, Statistics Canada cannot make recommendations on that. Often, we try to find other ways to answer those questions. Of course, for people...

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** You cannot make recommendations, but you say that you do not have information on 50,000 people.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** Yes, but...

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** If that recommendation is made, doesn't it follow that it would be included?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** I will give you an example.

On March 26, Statistics published an overview of Canada's official language communities. That overview included information on more than 5,000 municipalities across the country. Nonetheless, in the case of the municipalities where the numbers are quite low, we do not have that information. That is all I can say about that.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** You are talking about minority communities. When Statistics Canada is making its recommendations, how do you

count the people who work out west? We are talking about the economy, but many people are not taken into consideration.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** In that sense, this is not necessarily a problem since the people you are referring to, who work in those regions, are generally included in the national household survey. We do have information on them. As I was telling you, it is really in the very small communities that the situation is a problem. We know that some information could not be provided, but for those regions in particular, we generally have information on those communities.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Ms. Lalonde, we are talking about welcoming immigrants in the universities, in the small communities and so forth. Does that create a problem? I am asking you the question and I presume you will answer how you see fit. Doesn't this create a problem? The small rural regions have enough problems because there are no jobs. That's what our people are saying. They are talking about that and there's nothing wrong with that. People are wondering why we would want to bring in more people when they themselves have no work and are forced to go out west.

We see it. Just this week, the Société des Acadiens et Acadiennes du Nouveau-Brunswick called on the government to invite immigrants to Moncton to ensure employment and the future of the community. Other people say that they had to go university for four years and now they have to look for work elsewhere. Isn't that contradictory? I wonder what your thoughts are on that.

• (0915)

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** First, I would say that the situation may be quite different from one province to another. The situation in New Brunswick is different than that of the regions in western Canada.

We are talking about economic immigration and economic integration. The work is mostly done based the employers and people who want to immigrate to Canada. There are certain sectors where there is a labour shortage and others not. In some provinces, there is a major labour shortage and in others there isn't at all.

Immigration must be based on economic integration and the need for labour in certain regions and professions in particular.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Some universities offer numerous nursing courses. However, the hospitals then lay off the nurses. For a young person who spends \$5000 on their education, it is discouraging to know that in his or her region there are layoffs in his or her field of study. In the meantime, the government is saying it wants to bring in people from other countries to work in that field.

Sometimes the institution forgets that in addition to training, there needs to be jobs available. I am saying that because everyone is talking about it. It's as though the colleges and universities wanted to have students at all costs. It's as though they do not see any further than that. They are not concerned with whether or not they are offering the right courses.

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** In most of the universities and colleges in Canada's francophone and in our minority communities, college training is quite centred on the needs of employers. At the college level, it is much easier to determine whether there needs to be cuts in certain programs as a result of decreased demand for labour based on a number of factors.

University programs take four years. It takes time before the number of registrations can go down. Sometimes it can take quite a while. You gave the example of nursing programs. I can tell you that most of the nurses who graduate from our universities have no trouble finding work in Canada if they are bilingual.

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** In Canada, I agree.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Godin.

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

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

I want to thank our witnesses for being here with us this morning.

My first question is for Ms. Lalonde, but another witness can speak to it too.

Today we are talking about the economy. You talked about the employment situation in certain sectors. You said there was a skills shortage in some sectors in Canada and that we needed to recruit foreign workers. In other sectors, it seems there are enough.

Are the universities telling young people who want to attend university which sectors have a future and those that might not? We get the feeling that the universities are not necessarily doing that.

I have five children who are all doing post-secondary education. We give young people the freedom to choose what they like and want. If they can choose between four or five fields that they like, it would be best if they chose one where they have 100% chance of getting a job instead of one where they have only a 10% chance.

They take a four-year program to get a bachelor's. They might even do a master's afterward. They might devote six years of their lives to studying in a field where it will be practically impossible to get a job because the competition is so stiff. For every 10 jobs, there are 35 students graduating from university.

Is it possible to improve this situation?

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Young people choose a program of study in a given area because it interests them. We should be engaging with young people before they decide what area they want to pursue in their post-secondary education. Guidance counsellors should be able to help students before they determine what direction they want to take in their education.

Once they have started university, they can always change fields, but it would be better if they had that information before registering for university.

• (0920)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Can guidance counsellors rely on certain data from Statistics Canada or is that too hard in this case?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** This gives me a chance to promote our organization a bit.

Statistics Canada quite recently published the results of a study conducted on young graduates. The size of the sample was roughly 30,000 people. We have a lot of information of a linguistic nature. We also have data on their main area of study and on the sector in which they work upon graduation.

There are very few studies on this. These results are quite new. It would have been beneficial to develop this source of data in combination with other sources in order to shed more light on this problem.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Surely something will be published to that effect in the very near future. You are promoting this, but how? We do not hear much about it.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** The results were officially published on the Statistics Canada website. I recently learned of the results of this study and its potential, given the number of linguistic questions it leaves unanswered. Yes, we will discuss it with our partners. This data will certainly help us better understand the challenges related to people entering the workforce based on the fields of study that young people choose.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Does Statistics Canada conduct studies on the entrepreneurship in the regions where there are minority communities? Of course we want people to stay in their regions, but sometimes the communities have a hard time offering jobs.

Are there shortcomings with regard to entrepreneurship or is entrepreneurial leadership struggling to develop? Are there tools they can be given?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** The national household survey includes questions on the mobility of workers from province to province and on self-employed workers with or without work. There is quite a bit of information. We do not have any specific information on the entrepreneurship of official language minorities, but at least there is information on self-employed workers and those who start a business.

As I was saying earlier, the challenge is to find sources of data on the composition of the labour force, namely whether there are more francophones or anglophones, but there is enough information to at least study a significant part of this phenomenon. This should be studied. This issue is under-developed at this time.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Ms. Lalonde, we know that a young, educated Canadian will have more mobility than a young person who did not pursue post-secondary education. He will have more chances to...

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I'm sorry, but I'm having a hard time hearing you.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Young Canadians who have completed post-secondary education and have a bachelor's, a master's or a PhD are very mobile, both at home and abroad. This mobility often leads to a brain drain. We hope they'll come back one day, but the likelihood that they will is rather small since it will be hard for them to find a job in their home region.



If those young people decide one day to start a business, how might we encourage them to bring their skills back to their home region? Often, they bring back their skills and develop new niches, which in turn creates a new dynamic. Are there possibilities in that regard?

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Post-secondary education in French is not available in every province. In a number of regions, students have to leave their home province to go to Ottawa, Moncton or another city to pursue their education in French. We have to provide them with incentives to return to their home region upon graduation and to work there at a business. Of course, we can't force them to do that.

These days, the mobility of young students is very important because it gives them another perspective on certain aspects of life. A number of our students do internships throughout Europe, which gives them skills that they would not have acquired if they stayed home. We have to give young people incentives so that they can return to their home region.

• (0925)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Gourde.

Thank you, Ms. Lalonde.

I will now give the floor to Ms. St-Denis.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis (Saint-Maurice—Champlain, Lib.):** Hello. I want to thank the witnesses for being here with us today.

The committee is currently studying the socio-economic situation of francophone minority communities.

Mr. Corbeil, you presented a very good document. When I started reading it, I found it to be very interesting. However, in reading your document, I was expecting to find out about the real situation of the francophone minority communities. You'll be quick to say that Mr. Godin raised two important points.

We cannot determine the exact situation of the minority communities because their populations are not large enough, because they are too remote, because they do not answer the questionnaires. There is no shortage of reasons. Do you have any suggestions for us? Should different analytical parameters be used so that we, as members of the committee, can have a status report? We have been working on this file for three weeks and still do not have a status report. Yet, people come here and present fine documents, talk about what they're doing, talk about the socio-economic situation, industries and many other things.

However, there are things we do not know. We do not know the assimilation rate of people in small communities. You say that they earn roughly the same salaries, have roughly the same unemployment rate and the same employment rate. Is that because they are assimilating, because they are speaking English, or because they are succeeding?

I read that they are mostly in education. There is no doubt that in the francophone school boards there are people who live in French. It is hard to find them, but they do exist outside Quebec. That's it or they work for provincial organizations. They are public servants.

Other than that, what is the real situation? How might we get a real picture of the situation, of the wealth, of the poverty of these communities?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** Thank you for your question. It's an excellent question.

Before I give the floor to my colleague, Mr. Lepage, who worked hard on these issues, I want to clarify something. Between 2010 and 2012, Statistics Canada published 11 provincial and territorial portraits for a total of nearly 800 pages of analyses on each province. Among other things, we use those portraits to cover demographic and socio-economic situations, languages spoken, and education. For these portraits of each province, there is some very detailed information that I encourage you to consult.

Next week, a video synthesis will be published by Statistics Canada. It will be roughly 30 minutes long and will synthesize these 800 or so pages of analysis.

I must mention that when I appeared as a witness before this committee, I talked a number of times about the challenges involving assimilation into English. You know that outside Quebec, close to a quarter million francophones find that they are more comfortable speaking English than French. There are different challenges.

We might wonder what the current situation is in the communities, but first we must agree on what constitutes a community. There is really a very large diversity of communities. A significant proportion, or 40% of francophones outside Quebec, live in municipalities where they represent less than 10%, or even less than 5% of the population. Is that a community? What distinguishes them from those who live in a community where they represent 40% to 60% of the population?

In fact, when we talk about economic development, it is clear that there are many people who develop from a socio-economic point of view, but that is done mostly in English. You are absolutely right about that.

I would like to give the floor to my colleague.

• (0930)

**Mr. Jean-François Lepage (Analyst, Social and Aboriginal Statistic Division, Statistics Canada):** Obviously there's a lot to this issue. You raised a number of challenges related to your work, which consists in analyzing these issues.

As my colleague Jean-Pierre mentioned, there was a cycle of analyses with the data from the 2006 census. Currently, we are actively working on analyzing the data from the 2011 census and the national household survey. That data is starting to produce answers.

The socio-economic situation of the minority communities is rather complex to analyze. We are trying to do so as accurately as possible. We notice that the socio-economic situation of the minorities varies a lot from one province to another, even from one region to another in one province.

You mention that a national portrait and the provincial portraits give us certain information. Essentially, the general information that comes out is that the employment situation among francophone minorities is similar. There are some major gaps, but in some regions, the portrait of the socio-economic situation, seen from the perspective of certain indicators such as the unemployment rate and income, is quite different.

In areas where the situation of francophone minorities seems better from a socio-economic standpoint, we see a greater propensity for using English in the labour market.

**Ms. Lise St-Denis:** Do you believe that the data you listed on the language spoken at home really reflects the linguistic reality of francophones who live in minority communities?

**Mr. Jean-François Lepage:** The data from the census are top-quality. We have data on the language spoken the most at home, but also on the other languages spoken regularly. I believe that this allows us to have a more accurate portrait of the situation.

We have seen that in minority situations, the rate of exogamy is growing. Exogamy is where people with different mother tongues become a couple and live together. We know that in that environment, the majority language tends to be adopted as the main language used at home. The data on the language spoken regularly at home allows us to complete the overall portrait to see to what extent French in a minority community continues to be used within a household.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** I would like to expand on that.

After the 2006 census, Statistics Canada conducted the Survey on the Vitality of Official-Language Minorities. We asked a wide range of questions on the linguistic practice outside the home. It became quite clear that the use of French in minority communities is closely linked to the proportion of those minorities within their community.

I will give you an example. For a quarter of a million people, which I mentioned earlier, who live in small minority situations, English is used in the majority of interactions outside the home. That is why those data allow us to complete the portrait that the results of the census gives us.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Bateman, you have the floor.

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

I also want to thank all the witnesses for being here.

Ms. Lalonde, during your presentation, you said that you were in the process of conducting a study on high school students who are considering going to a francophone university and on the obstacles that prevent them from doing so.

What are the results of that study?

• (0935)

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** If I understand correctly, you are talking about the immersion study.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Yes, but in particular the part concerning the young people who are in high school and are considering doing a bachelor's at a francophone university.

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I have some preliminary data because there is actually going to be a meeting tomorrow to complete this study. However, I can give you some information.

We met with high school students who are in immersion programs in three Canadian regions. We also met with immersion students who are currently studying in French at the post-secondary level and some of the students' parents.

One thing is very clear when it comes to these students. They say that, after completing their high school studies in immersion, they do not feel that they have the ability to continue their post-secondary education in French or in immersion. Sometimes, this is a perception on their part that is dispelled when they begin post-secondary studies. In other cases, this perception is justified. After twelve years of immersion, not all of them have the ability to continue their post-secondary education in French.

The other very important point is that, for some parents, post-secondary French programs are not available everywhere. It is easier for some students to pursue post-secondary education in English because they live closer to an English university or college. There are also more programs available.

We have not yet completed this study, but those are a few things that have emerged thus far. If you are interested, I could send you a copy of this study once it has been completed.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** All right. Thank you.

What is the graduation rate for students who attend a university that belongs to your network? Furthermore, how successful are your graduates in the job market afterwards?

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Are you referring to their ability to find a job afterwards?

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Yes.

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I do not have those statistics. However, I can definitely say that most students with post-secondary education who can work in both official languages have many opportunities when it comes to finding employment after graduation.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** The last time you appeared before our committee, you said you did not have statistics on how a francophone student compares to an anglophone student when the time comes to find a job. Do you now have those statistics?

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** We do not have those statistics. It would be very difficult to get them because you would really have to—

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** The last time you were here, you said that you were conducting a study to get that information.

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I was not talking about those statistics. What we started to do was to collect more targeted information about the number of international students who are attending our universities. A study of students who found jobs after graduating should be carried out. Once they have graduated, they enter the job market. Universities and colleges often lose track of students who leave and go to other regions.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** My next question is for Mr. Corbeil.

What variables or indicators must we use to understand the socio-economic situation of official language minority communities?

• (0940)

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** There are many.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** I imagine so, but can you give us the key statistics?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** Yes.

For example, the National Household Survey contains data on the main areas studied. Thus, you can look for information on young people who are old enough to have completed their university studies in order to determine in which areas or industries they are working and the professions they practice based on their characteristics. That is one of the indicators that permits us to follow these students.

The National Graduates Survey provides very important data on interprovincial migration that makes it possible to follow the people surveyed. For example, we know that people who lived in New Brunswick five years ago are in Alberta five years later. We know the sectors they work in and their average and median income. We have information about their unemployment rate, participation rate and highest level of education. For example, we know that people who migrate to Alberta have a high income but that their level of education is not necessarily high.

With respect to people who leave New Brunswick to work in Alberta, we note that there is a smaller percentage with a university degree when compared to people who migrate to other provinces. This phenomenon has been well explained. There is a significant number of jobs in Alberta and salaries are much higher, which tends to attract francophones from other regions.

Those are just a few indicators or types of information available based on our data. There are quite a few. As I just mentioned, the economic situation of official language minorities is a very complex problem that has multiple dimensions. Thus, there many results and statistics to consider.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Williamson, you have the floor.

**Mr. John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would also like to thank all the witnesses for coming here today.

Mr. Corbeil gave a fairly positive economic account of official language communities, in terms of education, jobs, unemployment and so on.

Could you expand on that?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** As my colleague Jean-François Lepage mentioned, the information provided pertains only to the provinces. As they say, "The devil is in the details". Small communities are facing very significant challenges.

In northern New Brunswick, for example, francophones are concentrated in sectors where the industrial structure may be required to change. That poses challenges in terms of education and training. When we examine the major international surveys of

literacy and numeracy, the achievement of New Brunswick francophones is not as good. There are those sorts of challenges.

If we look at the overall situation, you are right: the situation has improved greatly. That is mainly because Alberta and Ontario are attracting educated and trained people. In short, francophones from other provinces who are more educated are necessarily more likely to migrate, particularly those from Ontario and Quebec. That influences the socio-economic structure of the communities to which these people migrate.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Very good.

Nevertheless, although Alberta and Ontario attract francophones, we must be cautious because this is also occurring where I come from, southern New Brunswick, which has a predominantly anglophone population. Even in those regions, there are people who will go out west to find a job. Therefore, this phenomenon is not exclusive to francophone minority communities.

Can you tell us what challenges Canada faces? What can we do in the next 10 or 20 years about this? What are the challenges that we need to identify and address?

• (0945)

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** That is a complex question that we could discuss at length. I am going to make a connection to what my colleague, Jocelyne Lalonde, talked about.

It is clear that, in terms of post-secondary education, there are significant challenges to be addressed in order for francophones to be able to study in their own language. Ms. St-Denis spoke of the issue of anglicization. When youth from more rural areas migrate to a major urban centre to continue their post-secondary education in English, they often tend to remain there and become anglicized. That is a fairly well documented phenomenon.

We mentioned that immigration is an important lever for revitalizing communities. Immigrants in general, and not just French-speaking immigrants, face significant challenges in terms of labour market integration, recognition of foreign qualifications and opportunities for obtaining Canadian work experience.

There are a certain number of challenges. In the end, we have to ask ourselves if we really want to promote the economic development of francophones, whether or not they become anglicized. There is an important problem in that regard.

That is not just the case for official language minorities. It is the case in Quebec and elsewhere. In regions where there are small communities, youth tend to migrate to the major urban centres and do not necessarily return to their regions. There are a number of factors to be considered.

We can provide more information about that, if you wish.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Mr. Lepage, did you want to add something?

**Mr. Jean-François Lepage:** Yes, thank you.

I am presently studying the issue of francophones living outside Quebec. As you mentioned, the models for the migration and immigration of francophones and anglophones are similar. In general, people are moving in the same direction. However, there are minority francophones who live in regions that attract very few migrants or immigrants. We can see that the challenges are not quite the same at the regional level.

In areas where there are many francophone immigrants and migrants—that is, areas where people are moving to—we see that the use of French is the main issue. In other areas where there is a larger francophone population, the challenges observed are more a function of socio-economic conditions than the use of the language. That applies to both anglophones and francophones living in these communities. There is also a regional aspect.

**Mr. John Williamson:** Do I have any time left, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** I am sorry, but your time is up.

Mr. Nicholls, you have the floor.

[English]

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls (Vaudreuil-Soulanges, NDP):** Thank you to the witnesses.

My questions will be primarily for Mr. Lepage and Mr. Corbeil concerning indicators and research gathering.

L'Institut national de santé publique du Québec in May 2012 came out with a report on the well-being of anglophones. In the summary of socio-economic indicators, they said that there was a socio-economic gulf among anglophones who experienced higher poverty levels than francophones in Quebec. They were slightly richer overall in terms of average income, but they experienced greater levels of poverty. The report surmised there was an economic polarization within the group. The median income is lower because of serious poverty in anglophone groups.

Can you explain the story in this data? What's going on with anglophones in Quebec on the ground?

• (0950)

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** It's a very large question, a very good question, that would probably deserve more time than I can devote here.

Basically, we have to keep in mind that in Quebec, the share of the immigrant population within the English-speaking community is fairly important. We're talking about above 35% to 36% of the English-speaking population that comes from immigration. As we know, there are challenges regarding the integration of these immigrants in the labour market. In comparison, the proportion of the French-speaking population that comes from other countries is around 10%, so it's a fairly significant difference. There are challenges for sure.

Also, a fact that is not clear, and very few studies have looked at, is how we can explain the fact that there are way more, in terms of percentages, English-speaking individuals in Quebec who have university degrees but their unemployment rate is higher.

As an example, we know that the English-speaking population represents close to 14% of the Quebec population, but less than 4%

of the workforce within the provincial government. We don't know exactly why this is so, because we have very few studies indicating whether they apply to these positions.

It's just an indication, but for sure, the characteristics of the English-speaking population can explain that, but—

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Would you say that since there is this serious poverty going on, these people are falling through the cracks and are not getting the assistance that they need?

We've heard from other witnesses, service organizations that cater directly to anglophone services, like Youth Employment Services, QCGN, which works with these groups on the ground. They told the committee that they aren't getting the resources they need to serve the needs of the poorest in the province, in terms of anglophones.

I know that you're in statistics, but would you have any recommendations with respect to meeting these challenges, to better integrate immigrant populations that are coming in? If the organizations that serve them were better financed, better taken care of, and better coordinated, wouldn't this go toward meeting the challenge? Would you agree with that?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** I cannot actually state—

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** I know you can't.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** —or propose any answer, but what I can definitely say is that in terms of studies on the English-speaking population in Quebec, there certainly aren't enough studies on this specific topic.

If we had more information and more analyses to really understand these challenges, then I would probably be in a better position to inform those who are more likely to develop programs and policies.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** In other words, finer detail, finer tracking of different factors.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** Yes.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** That would be shared among statistics gathering with StatsCan and also the province, and maybe more coordination among the two bodies.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** It's not only statistics gathering, it's analyzing the existing information.

To give you an example, we have a portrait of the French-speaking population that was released in 2010, but we don't have such a report for the English-speaking immigrant population in Quebec.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Do you have the capacity at StatsCan to undergo such analysis and research?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** We have developed over the years many partnerships with our colleagues in other federal departments. Yes, we've had some discussions in this regard and will certainly continue the discussions.

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Would you make that as a recommendation to this report, that this sort of analysis would be beneficial to the anglophone community in Quebec?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** Actually, the Senate committee has looked at such studies, not on the English-speaking immigrant population, but has stated that this kind of analysis was really useful and really instrumental in understanding the challenges that face the English-speaking population in Quebec.

**The Chair:** We'll go to Mr. Daniel.

**Mr. Joe Daniel (Don Valley East, CPC):** Thank you, witnesses, for being here.

I had the opportunity to visit the aerospace corridor late last year, Bombardier, Pratt & Whitney and Bell Helicopter, etc. One of the things they were concerned about was the fact that their industry is expanding at quite a high rate, something like 30% they expect it to increase this year. One of their biggest concerns was about getting enough engineering staff to maintain this growth level.

I notice from your chart, Madam, that there is a very limited opportunity for engineering courses in terms of the numbers of organizations that are doing these courses in French and going to the higher levels. Do you have any information on how many graduates are coming out of these courses each year? How many of them are likely to end up working in these francophone industries?

• (0955)

[Translation]

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I do not have with me the number of graduates by program. I could provide you with that information later. There are very few programs in French. There are programs in French in Quebec. I could find out the number of graduates by year for programs outside Quebec. However, it would be more difficult to find out where they are working.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Are there any stats that are held on that?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** As you've pointed out, it is quite clear that this industry sector is well concentrated in Quebec. Certainly the minister of education in Quebec has a lot of statistics on that type of information. A lot of this information is available on their website, but for sure we could have access to these data.

We have information in terms of the national household survey data on the specific age groups by specific sectors, where they work and their main field of study. So certainly there is an analysis that could be done to understand in terms of the growth for these specific sectors and in terms of the labour force. Certainly that information could be available.

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Presumably some of that information can be used to actually tailor courses, etc., at some of these organizations to make sure that they are supportive.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Okay, thank you very much on that.

I think in every community, young Canadians, when they are seeking post-secondary education are more likely to leave home so they can actually taste the world in a sense and learn about other things. I don't think it's one community or the other. How many students of this size return to their communities once they've completed their diplomas or degrees?

This question is for Stats Canada.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** I don't have these data, but we could try to find a way because it's very difficult. We have the information about the provinces in which they were born, for instance.

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Right.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** We know where they live right now. We know where they lived one year or five years ago. We would have to do some kind of work to try to understand these kinds of patterns. But we could certainly try to use the actual database to explore this.

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** Madame Lalonde.

[Translation]

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I can give you information from the Consortium national de formation en santé.

We are following college and university health programs in order to determine the number of students who return to their area of origin. At present, approximately 78% of students return to their area of origin after being educated elsewhere.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Daniel:** I would certainly suspect that if there isn't a job in their field of study, the chances of going back to that community are relatively small, but they would go where the jobs would be. Right?

Stats Canada, have you prepared any socio-economic portrait of immigrants living in the official language minority communities? This is kind of a multi-question. Is it different from the socio-economic situation of immigrants that do not live in official language minority communities? Is it possible to gauge the impact of immigration on OLMC economic development?

• (1000)

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** Thank you for your question.

As I mentioned earlier, in 2010 Statistics Canada performed a study in collaboration with Citizenship and Immigration Canada on the French-speaking immigrant population. We have produced an update with the 2011 data, which we are about to deliver to Citizenship and Immigration Canada fairly soon. So yes, we have that kind of information.

We know for instance that the French-speaking immigrant population is very well educated, but despite the fact that this is the case, they have challenges in finding a job and integrating into the labour market. All this information could be available to you after we have delivered it to CIC.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We're now going to Madame Perreault.

[Translation]

**Ms. Manon Perreault (Montcalm, NDP):** Good morning to the three of you.

I have a lot of questions to ask you and I took lots of notes. However, every time I thought of a question, someone else asked it first.

I will ask Ms. Lalonde a question.

According to the Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité and the Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation, or CEDEC, studies on the economic development of OLMCs are few and far between.

Do the universities that belong to your network conduct research on the economic development of official language minority communities?

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I cannot tell you how many studies are being carried out, but some research is being done on the economic development of our francophone communities. There are researchers studying this. It would be good to work with RDÉE Canada and the other organization that you mentioned in future. We could contact our university researchers in order to address our communities' needs with respect to research on economic development.

**Ms. Manon Perreault:** At this time, are there partnerships or awards available for this kind of research?

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** There are a number of awards funded by universities or federal granting agencies such as SSHRC. It is a matter of raising the appropriate issues to meet the needs of francophone communities with respect to economic development.

**Ms. Manon Perreault:** In another vein, with respect to infrastructure and the new building Canada fund, do small institutions have the means to pay their share of the projects that they bring forward?

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** Based on what I have heard since this fund was launched on April 1, 2014, 30% of expenses will be covered by the federal government. The provinces, private sector and institutions will have to cover the remaining 70%. It is definitely a challenge, but the 30% is essential in order to move forward. We hope that the provinces will also contribute so that we can use these funds.

**Ms. Manon Perreault:** Is the 70% more than in past years?

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I really cannot say because it is a new fund.

**Ms. Manon Perreault:** Earlier, we talked about the exodus of young people. It is interesting because I talked about this with some parents from my riding of Montcalm, who told me that if their children wanted to pursue post-secondary education, they often had to leave not just to study, but also to have a rewarding and interesting career that pays a decent salary.

We talked about a lot of things earlier. However, if we really wanted to ensure that our young people return to the regions, what would be the top three incentives?

• (1005)

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** First of all, while students are outside their region, they have to be able to return regularly. There are a number of co-operative programs and internship opportunities. Universities and colleges should ensure that these young people can return to their region for these internships and co-operative programs.

Second, we have to offer them good jobs in their regions. Employers have to be able to attract these young people back to their regions.

Third, many young people decide not to return because they have made friends who live in the Ottawa region. Thus, they continue to live in Ottawa. We have no control over that.

**Ms. Manon Perreault:** Do I have any more time, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** No.

**Ms. Manon Perreault:** That is unfortunate.

**The Chair:** You will have other opportunities to ask questions.

Mr. Gourde, you now have the floor.

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

I will talk about incentives, as did Ms. Perreault.

Of course we want to keep our young people in the regions, but they are likely to move. It goes back to what I was saying a little earlier.

Would the Statistics Canada representatives tell us whether studies show that the regions with minority language communities are at an economic disadvantage or is their situation similar to that of unilingual communities, both anglophone and francophone.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** Are you talking about younger people?

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Whether in terms of the younger people or in general, are these communities at a greater economic disadvantage? Is their situation comparable to that of the rest of Canada? Is it an advantage to have both official languages, as is the case here in Ottawa?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** To give you a very general answer, that depends on the sector of industry.

As you know, economic cycles will influence where we have supply and where we have demand. It is clear that, in certain regions, such as New Brunswick in particular, the socio-economic situation of francophones is not as good as that of their anglophone counterparts.

However, in Ontario, whether in Toronto or Ottawa, there are no real differences between the two communities. It varies from one region to the next. It depends on the main industrial sectors that hire the members of official language minorities. In small communities, this can be an incentive for moving from these regions to larger centres.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Have you conducted studies of the more bilingual communities, such as Ottawa, Sherbrooke or other regions that have universities? How do they benefit from the fact that the community in general speaks both official languages? Can this be an advantage at the international level and also in terms of the creation of businesses that export or import goods and services?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** We have to bear in mind a very important piece of information. Studies have shown that what makes a difference is the ability to use both languages and not just being bilingual.

I will give you an example. Many bilingual people never use this language in public, whether it is at work or on other occasions. However, in Ottawa, for example, it is clearly an advantage because there is significant demand for people who know both official languages. That is perhaps not quite the case in Toronto. We know that, in Toronto, almost 400,000 people can speak both official languages. However, does this translate into a real socio-economic advantage? That does not seem to be the case.

It depends a lot on the environment, the community, the demand and the sectors. If you are in a region where both official languages are used a lot and if there is a considerable need for translators or people who can work in either community at the same time, that will definitely affect the economic situation of these individuals.

●(1010)

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Ms. Lalonde, I know that universities are looking at the opportunities that could result from the signing of our new free trade agreements with Europe and South Korea, and those we will soon be signing with other countries. In your area, do some universities believe that, in terms of economic factors, we have to start taking the time to lay the groundwork and study the possibilities that will emerge? Are you even thinking about preparing the young people who could benefit from these agreements? All of Canada could also benefit.

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** I believe that universities are certainly very aware of these new trade agreements with Europe and China. They are going to let us look at how we can better educate young people so they can adapt to a world where, increasingly, we have to work internationally.

It must be said that an increasing number of universities are offering international baccalaureates that provide young people with broader knowledge of the world. In addition, a number of programs that we offer make it possible for young people to study abroad for 6 to 48 months. This gives youth the opportunity to learn more about other countries and other workplaces. These programs really help give young people an international education and show them what opportunities are open to them at this time.

Having youth who speak English, French and, increasingly, other languages improves our ability to develop a workforce that can meet future needs.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Gourde.

Mr. Nicholls now has the floor.

[English]

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** Mr. Chair, my questions again will be for Mr. Lepage and Mr. Corbeil.

In May 2013, the Conference Board of Canada put out a report, "Mid-Sized Cities Outlook". It stated that 50% of mid-sized cities in Canada hadn't recovered from the recession.

I'd like to focus on New Brunswick in particular, because there are numerous towns in New Brunswick that are showing a lot of challenges. If we look at Miramichi, the report stated that the economic output has declined every year since 2005. Its 2012 real GDP and employment levels were less than half of what they were

eight years ago. Then, if you look at other mid-sized cities, such as Bathurst and Edmundston, and take a look at Fredericton's economy, it declined in 2011 and 2012. Miramichi is the largest city in northern New Brunswick, with about an 8.5% francophone population.

Could you explain some of the challenges that New Brunswick is going through? Is the treatment of official language communities in New Brunswick playing a factor in these statistics that we see with regard to economic performance?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** I cannot talk about the treatment; we don't have information on this topic. However, what is clear is that the socio-demographic and socio-economic profile of francophones in New Brunswick is very different from the ones we see in other parts of the country outside of Quebec.

I mentioned earlier, for instance, that in every international survey on literacy, numeracy, problem-solving skills, there are important challenges that we have observed in New Brunswick. We have to look at what's happening to the youth, actually. What we observed is that those who are less than 24 years of age face specific challenges in terms of developing the appropriate skills and training to face the evolving economy. More and more, we know that in northern New Brunswick the industrial sector and the industrial structure is very different. It's oriented toward processing or the primary sectors, and some of these sectors will probably decrease in the coming years. The challenge is how these young Canadians will adapt to the situation and what kind of training they will need to be able to fully integrate into the economic market.

The profile of the communities in northern New Brunswick must be analyzed in much more detail, but we know there are challenges in terms of training, education, and what kind of jobs and what kind of future these people will have.

●(1015)

**Mr. Jamie Nicholls:** The portrait of what's happening here is that they are transitioning to more innovative sectors of the economy, leaving behind primary and manufacturing sectors and following the general trend of Canada, which should be an innovation-based economy.

What you're saying is that those challenges are being faced because part of the challenge of the whole country is that the government isn't necessarily acting as an innovation-based economy all the time; it's not fostering innovation enough. I mean, if New Brunswick were a country instead of a province, and you looked at the employment level in New Brunswick, it would be lower than all G-7 countries. We know that the rest of Canada, the parts that have made this transition to innovation-based sectors, tends to be doing better.

Just to recap, you are saying that this is an adaptation to more innovation-based sectors of the economy, and that's really what's happening on the ground.

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** There's an adaptation, but there's a challenge regarding this adaptation in terms of, let's say, the major fields in which these young francophones have been studying, where they work, in which sectors. As you know, some of the sectors are more likely to hire young Canadians right after they finish high school, which could be detrimental to their pursuing higher education.

I'm not saying that this adaptation is not going on. Yes, it is, certainly. But there are challenges in how to face this adaptation and how to make sure we provide all the information available to make this transition.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Madame Bateman.

[*Translation*]

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I have a number of questions for Mr. Corbeil.

I remember when you spoke about aboriginal people at the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. I think it was last year.

Do you have comparable data that would allow us to follow the evolution of the socio-economic situation of official language minority communities? If you do, have you done comparative analyses? How has the socio-economic situation of official language minority communities changed over the past 10 years?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** As you know, Statistics Canada's mandate is to carry out analyses and studies in many areas, such as immigration, health, bilingualism and others. Some comparative studies have been done by Statistics Canada for Employment and Social Development Canada's Enabling Fund for Official Language Minority Communities. One of these studies examines the balance between supply and demand in several official language minority communities. We could definitely send you a copy of this study, if necessary.

It is difficult to comment on a short period of 10 years, for example, because the situation fluctuates with the economic cycles. There is a large amount of data on the subject, but it mainly concerns individuals and less so businesses, which are much more difficult to define.

Information is available. As for whether many comparative studies have been done, the answer is no. There are probably not enough resources, in every sense of the word, to carry out all these studies. Yes, we have conducted some studies and we know that our colleagues from other departments have, in particular Employment and Social Development Canada.

• (1020)

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you.

You said that immigration is one aspect that you study. Have you produced a socio-economic portrait of immigrants living in official language minority communities?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** As I said earlier, an update will be given on this topic to Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The 2010 report contain information, dating back to 1991, for every 10 years up to the 2006 census.

We provided an update in order to see how the situation of these immigrants and that of immigrants who do not necessarily speak French has changed.

Other analyses are being carried out. We are following the experiences of immigrants since their arrival in Canada to determine whether their socio-economic situation improves over time. These Statistics Canada studies are under way and will definitely be released by the end of the current year.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Is the economic situation of immigrants who do not come from minority linguistic communities different?

**Mr. Jean-Pierre Corbeil:** As I mentioned earlier, French-speaking immigrants are very educated. They are more educated than immigrants who speak other languages. However, they face significant challenges integrating into the labour market. For example, we note the fact that not having a good command of English is a significant barrier outside Quebec.

The unemployment rate among French-speaking immigrants who do not have a good command of English—which most definitely is a barrier—is higher than that of francophone immigrants who are bilingual or who have some knowledge of English.

This information is available and there is a wealth of data on these characteristics. We are talking about a very educated population, but one that faces significant challenges with respect to the labour market.

**Ms. Joyce Bateman:** Thank you, Mr. Corbeil.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Bateman.

Mr. Godin, you have the floor.

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

Ms. Lalonde, I quite agree with you on the importance of economic immigration.

Can you tell us more about the concrete measures that the government should implement to promote the recruitment and integration of international students?

I would also like to talk about immigration in Canada. Quebec looks after the immigration of francophones. Is the rest of Canada really doing its part to promote francophone immigration? Is Quebec the only one to do so? Are all applications forwarded to Quebec instead of to regions with francophone minorities? I would like to hear your views on this.

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** With respect to the question of international students and immigration, our goal is to have a francophone immigration rate of 4.4% in our communities over the next few years. It is important to reach this percentage of immigrants in order to meet the needs of our communities and to keep the number of francophones within our francophonie the same because there is a significant immigration of anglophones in our communities.



International students are one of the most important groups that will ensure that we have good francophone immigration. These people have been educated here. They have a good knowledge of the environment and they have often worked while studying. An international student is permitted to work 20 hours a week in Canada while studying. That helps them to integrate.

At present, there is a bursary in the francophonie and one of the eligibility criteria is that the person who comes to study in Canada must return to their own country. This criterion should be changed. The majority of students who come to Canada would like to stay here when they finish their studies. This criterion prevents these people from applying for this bursary.

With that in mind, we have to put in place services at our universities and colleges that will ensure the economic integration of our students once they have graduated. We have to work with them to ensure that these young people can remain in our communities afterwards and continue to work. These are two important elements.

• (1025)

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** Earlier, you talked about internships. A lot of young people graduating university say that nobody wants to hire them because they have no experience. People ask them where they come from, and they say that they went to such-and-such a university or college. Then people ask them where they worked, and they say nowhere.

Can you tell us more about that? What kind of programs do you think should be in place to address this problem? Do you have any recommendations about how to give young people a chance to get work experience so they can say they had an employer and worked with someone for six months? Then a future employer can say that person has certain skills and training and that he knows what that person can do. I would like to hear your recommendations because you talked about that during your presentation.

**Ms. Jocelyne Lalonde:** As I said in my presentation, it is becoming increasingly important for colleges and universities to work with communities and businesses. We have to give our students a chance to get experience in their field after or during their training.

Right now, that is working a lot better at the college level. At the university level, it depends on the program. More and more institutions are offering co-op programs that enable students to take classes for a semester and then go work for a business to apply what they learned. There are also more and more initiatives that enable businesses to offer internships.

We really have to work on that relationship between communities, post-secondary institutions and businesses to train skilled workers who are workplace-ready upon graduating.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Godin.

Thank you all for your testimony.

[*English*]

We'll suspend for a couple of minutes to allow our witnesses to depart, but also to allow our clerk to distribute the three motions under consideration.

The meeting is suspended.

• \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

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• (1030)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** We will resume the meeting.

We have a notice of motion from Mr. Godin. There are three notices of motion.

Before discussing the motions and giving the floor to Mr. Gourde, who made a request, I would like to say that I believe the committee has agreed to let the Chair cancel the April 29 meeting. I will cancel that meeting because many committee members will not be able to participate.

Since the committee has agreed to cancel the April 29 meeting, I will do so.

Mr. Gourde, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jacques Gourde:** Mr. Chair, can we go in camera to discuss the motions?

**The Chair:** Are the committee members okay with that?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** No.

**The Chair:** Do you want to request a recorded vote?

**Mr. Yvon Godin:** I would like to request a recorded vote.

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin has asked for a recorded vote. I will turn things over to the clerk.

[*English*]

(Motion agreed to: yeas 5; nays 3)

**The Chair:** I declare the motion carried.

We'll give the technicians a moment to bring this committee in camera.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]





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