



# VISION 2025

PLAN stratégique communautaire  
de **l'Ontario français**

*A Strategic Plan for Ontario's  
Francophone Community*

**BUILDING OUR FUTURE  
TOGETHER**

**L'ASSEMBLÉE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>FOREWORD</b>  | <b>04</b> |
| <b>A - AN OVERVIEW OF ONTARIO'S FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY</b>  | <b>05</b> |
| <b>B - STATE OF THE COMMUNITY</b>                          | <b>06</b> |
| <b>C - VISION 2025</b>                                     | <b>09</b> |
| <b>D - FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS</b>                          | <b>10</b> |
| <b>PILLAR 1 - GROWTH AND VITALITY</b>                      | <b>12</b> |
| Part 1 - Economic Development and Employability            | <b>13</b> |
| Part 2 - Accessibility and Use of French Language Services | <b>14</b> |
| <b>PILLAR 2 - ATTRACTION AND RETENTION</b>                 | <b>15</b> |
| Part 1 - Immigration/Newcomers                             | <b>16</b> |
| Part 2 - Children and Youth                                | <b>17</b> |
| <b>PILLAR 3 - PARTICIPATION AND CELEBRATION</b>            | <b>18</b> |
| Part 1 - Commitment and Participation                      | <b>19</b> |
| Part 2 - Awakening and Constructing Identity               | <b>20</b> |
| <b>PILLAR 4 - COOPERATION AND ORGANISATION</b>             | <b>21</b> |
| Part 1 - Cooperation and Collaboration                     | <b>22</b> |
| Part 2 - Capacity Development                              | <b>23</b> |
| <b>E - OVERVIEW</b>  | <b>25</b> |

# FOREWORD

Establishing a common strategy for the entire Franco-Ontarian community while determining the orientations and directions that will guide its actions until 2025 is the task bestowed upon l'Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario.

Alongside its community partners, l'Assemblée launched an ambitious process titled **VISION 2025 - Building Our Future Together**. Its first initiative is the creation of a ten-year strategic plan.

This plan belongs to Ontario's community. It is the result of an unprecedented consultation process. Over 150 representatives of various organisations met across the province; six submissions received, a dozen interviews with political, institutional, cultural and community leaders were held; and, most importantly, over 2,500 participants answered an online survey.

Thanks to this plan, the community's active forces will, for the first time, combine their efforts and work towards a common goal: the community's vitality.

*During the Grand Rassemblement of 2015 in Toronto, the plan was met with such enthusiasm that it quickly became more than just another document. It is a map meant to guide the community's actions.*

*Expectations are high indeed. The individuals, organisations, government partners and businesses that form the community must join forces.*

*It is a collective responsibility to breathe life into this plan. For the community's vitality, we must make it a reality. Together.*

# A

Approximately 1 400 000 people speak French in Ontario.

Over 611,500 members of the community are francophone (4.8% of Ontario's population).



The median age is 44 (compared to 40 for the province as a whole) and close to **one in three Franco-Ontarians is over 55.**



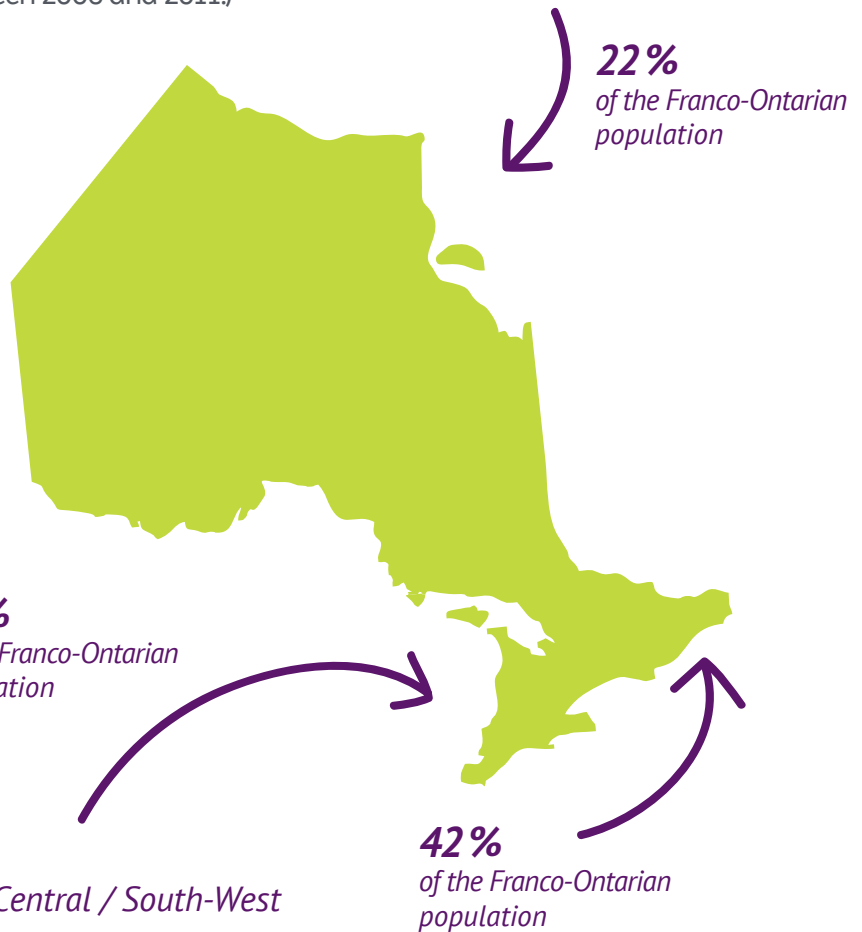
40% of the French-speaking community was born outside Ontario and 14% outside Canada.

## AN OVERVIEW OF ONTARIO'S FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY

### A CONTRASTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC REALITY:

#### *The North*

is currently facing a significant demographic decline. (3% decline in the North-East and 7% decline in the North-West between 2006 and 2011.)



#### *The Central / South-West*

French-speaking community is very much a minority (1 out of 50), but has recently seen considerable growth (approximately 10% between 2006 and 2011).

#### *The East*

holds the largest number of French-speaking individuals and has recently seen extensive growth (6,5% growth between 2006 and 2011).

# B

## STATE OF THE COMMUNITY

*A strong consensus materialized during the development of the community strategic plan: **the community's capacity to live fully and proudly in French has, thus been maintained throughout the last five years, if not improved.***

### WHY THIS CLAIM?

Many factors support this claim: a stronger **sense of identity**; improved **access to elementary and secondary education** in certain regions; the **independence of Ontario's French Language Services Commissioner**; progress in terms of **French Health Services**; **engagement of the francophone community** as partners of the health care system; **a more inclusive definition** of Franco-Ontarian by the Ontario government; **amendments to the French Language Services Act** requiring third party service providers to provide services in French; adding obligations to third-party government subcontractors in terms of French services; **better interactions with the anglophone community**; the success of initiatives and celebrations highlighting **400 years of francophone presence** in the province as well as **the renewal of the structures of l'Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario** leading to better collaboration between regional community organisations.

### HOWEVER...

Despite the aforementioned gains, the francophone community has its share of challenges: **a decrease of the demographic weight of the francophone community**; a francophone immigration which, alone, is insufficient to offset this demographic weight decrease; the fact that various provincial regions face diametrically **opposed demographic challenges** such as growth versus exodus; an **aging Franco-Ontarian population**; the ever-growing presence of **exogamous** families and the reality that fewer and **fewer francophones speak their native tongue at home.**

*All of these gains  
and challenges are important.*

## IN SUMMARY

*Even though the majority of those consulted agreed that the community is going through an overall positive phase, consensus was also reached on:*

1. The fact that certain gains are still fragile and must be consolidated;
2. There are multiple issues that require special attention.

## AMONGS THE MAIN ISSUES, WE CAN MENTION:

- Reinforce the importance and added **value of French/English bilingualism** for the whole province.
- Find solutions to **not only retain but involve young francophones in their community** (whether it be for their studies or later in life in the workplace).
- Better **integration of the immigrant population** so they may easily find *opportunities across Ontario* (not only in large urban centres in the Eastern and Central regions).
- Increase the **availability of French language services throughout** the province.
- Face the consequences caused by the **decrease of quality and usage of both spoken and written French.**
- Counter **linguistic insecurity.**
- Consider the **aging** population phenomenon in terms of services offered, implications for the elderly and the continued involvement of community members.

- Ensure a **leadership renewal** in the community.
- Showcase our **successes** and **inspire pride** in belonging to Ontario's francophone community.
- Address **transformations of public and media space** and the advent of **new technologies**.
- Approach challenges affecting the future of the community with a **comprehensive and multi-sectorial perspective** by making coherent links between various aspects of issues.
- Focus the community's actions around **common goal's**.
- Support greater **accountability** from government institutions and publicly funded organisations.
- Maintain the **sustainability of existing institutions, capacity and know-how**.
- Ensure **adequate funding** of organisations contributing to our *community's well-being*.
- Ensure that the community plays a **leadership role in the Canadian and International Francophonie**, because of its status as the largest francophone community outside Québec.





## VISION 2025

*Keeping in mind this diagnostic, the Franco-Ontarian community has adopted the following vision:*

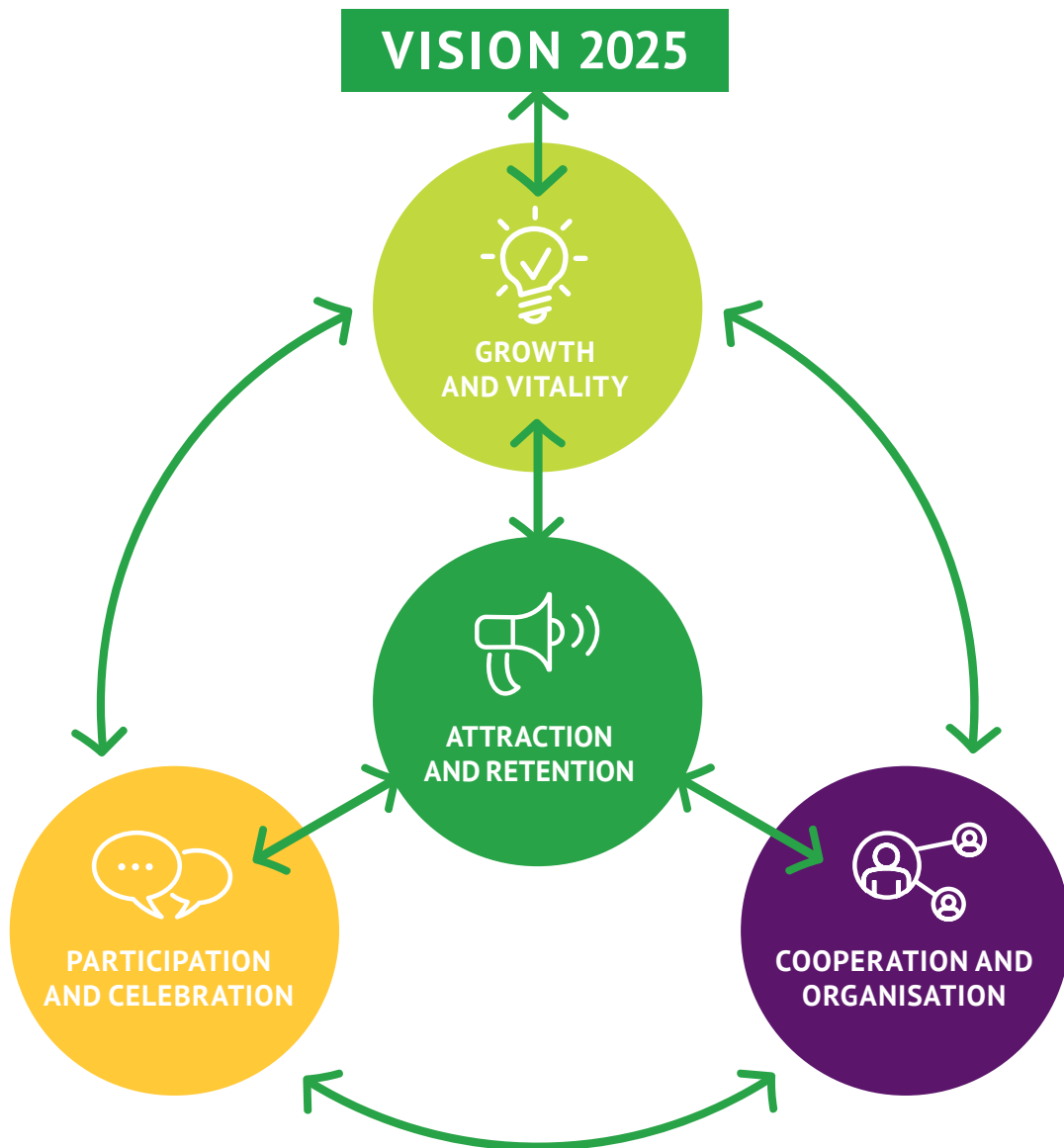
*“Creative, united and committed to its well-being, Ontario’s francophone community enjoys sustained growth, is proud of its language and its culture and thrives on its rich diversity all across the province.*

*Welcoming and open, the community contributes to Ontario’s vitality, in a bilingual province and grows in an environment where living and socializing in French has become an accepted norm.*

*As a recognized leader, the community is active in the Canadian and international francophonie.”*

# D FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS

The 2016-2025 Community Strategic Plan is based on the principles outlined in the five axes of the 2011-2016 plan. The strategy required to achieve VISION 2025 revolves around a limited number of axes rather than sector-based compartmentalization (health, education, arts and culture, economy, etc.) To better serve this plan, our five axes were transformed into four pillars.



# 1

## GROWTH AND VITALITY

The growth and vitality of a community, especially one in a minority situation, can be measured by demographic growth, quality of life, social and economic opportunities, access to services (health, education, justice, governmental, cultural, entertainment, etc.), quality of infrastructure or the capacity of its members to influence its destiny.

# 2

## ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

An essential condition for prosperous growth and vitality is the capacity to attract or retain an increasing number of citizens by providing all that is needed to live well and thrive in the community.

# 3

## PARTICIPATION AND CELEBRATION

The degree to which citizens are proud of their identity, identify with their community, socialize, participate and contribute to the cultural vitality, as well as the community's well-being and longevity are also essential factors.

# 4

## COOPERATION AND ORGANISATION

Another determining factor relates to the nature and quality of the mechanisms required by the community to organize and co-ordinate its action so that its interests are taken into account in major decisions.

These four pillars are highly complementary. The general idea is to be able to provide the means for Ontario francophones to settle, integrate and succeed their lives so as to proudly live their culture, actively engage in their community and contribute to its development and its sustainability.

# PILLAR 1

## GROWTH AND VITALITY

Provide members of Ontario's francophone community with an environment that promotes well-being, personal growth and quality of life in French.



# PILLAR 1 - PART 1

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY

### \* WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS:

- To increase the **employability** of community members across Ontario:
  - Creation and availability of jobs (including better ways of communicating opportunities to certain areas).
  - Training.
  - Entrepreneurial assistance - mentoring.
- To promote an **entrepreneurial community**, (i.e. an integrated approach to economic development which supports private and collective entrepreneurship, establishes long-term partnerships, facilitates access to markets and to sources of funding, facilitates francophone succession when transferring businesses, focuses on sustainable development).
- To encourage francophone involvement in **private sector decision making** (i.e. boards of directors, chambers of commerce, etc.).
- To foster **innovation**.
- To pay special attention to francophones **in disability, vulnerability or disadvantaged situations** (whether physical, mental, social, economic, age-related or in a minority situation) and ensure proper socio-economic **inclusion**.
- To promote **gender parity**.
- To promote **francophone expertise** as well as excellence of products and services.
- To demonstrate the **economic contribution** of the francophone community to the whole of the province (e.g.: value added of the francophone contribution to the economic development of Ontario; impacts at the commercial level, in tourism, in technological development and in exports; etc.).

\* Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.

# PILLAR 1 - PART 2

## ACCESSIBILITY AND USE OF FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES

### \*WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS:

- To increase **francophone spaces** across the province.
- To increase **access to public, parapublic and institutional services**:
  - Strengthen active offer (Government services, health, justice, education).
  - Increase the number of francophone infrastructures (schools, health centres, etc.).
  - Increase the number of bilingual positions in government and the number of civil servants providing French language services across the province.
- To increase **services offered in the private sector** (businesses, professional services, etc.):
  - Engage entrepreneurs and service providers in offering services in French.
  - Educate the community on the impact of "consuming in French" every day.
- To increase **access to French culture** (multiply cultural venues across the province, diversify cultural offerings, increase the number of artistic and cultural events, engage media, etc.) and facilitate **artistic and cultural creation**.
- To increase **access to entertainment, sports and recreational activities offered in French**.
- To consider and meet **the needs of minority and special groups** (e.g.: seniors, immigrants, youth, etc.).
- To analyse needs based on **relevant data**, while reinforcing francophone identification mechanisms (e.g. school taxes, health cards, etc.).
- To **align capacity** to provide services (e.g.: training qualified workers) according to **needs and demand**.
- To strengthen the ability and the resolve of the members of the community to practice **"active demand"**.
- To provide access to **tools and programs** (e.g. job and employer repertoires, internship programs, mentoring programs for entrepreneurs, etc.).

\* Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.



# PILLAR 2

## ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

Recruit, attract and retain dynamic forces across the province to provide the means to live in French in an environment that meets their needs.

*In addition to the actions listed under the Growth and Vitality Pillar (economic development, employability and added French services), additional actions will be required.*

## PILLAR 2 - PART 1

### IMMIGRATION/NEWCOMERS

#### \* WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS:

- To increase the **number** - and **the ratio** - of French-speaking immigrants in Ontario (from other countries) as well as newcomers coming from other Canadian provinces.
- To **improve capacity** and welcome centre infrastructure.
- To facilitate economic and cultural **integration** of newcomers (including, for example, the recognition of diplomas, certificates and acquired skills).
- To develop **differentiated regional strategies**, such as:
  - Central: Focus on solidarity and harmonization.
  - North: Focus on attracting new citizens - employability and lifestyle.

*\* Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.*



## PILLAR 2 - PART 2

### CHILDREN AND YOUTH

#### \* WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS:

- To increase **access to education**, at any stage of the education continuum, in all communities:
  - Improve the quality of the French and offer students a linguistic and cultural experience to counter linguistic insecurity and serve as an incentive for growth and economic development.
  - Increase the quality and availability of daycare and early childhood services.
  - Increase the amount of elementary and secondary schools as well as the variety of offered programs (where demand exists).
  - Improve access and availability of postsecondary programs.
  - Reinforce bridging programs between college and university studies.
  - Create a French language university in Ontario.
  - Retain students within the French language school system.
- Reduce financial barriers to education (e.g. bursaries, grants and added mobility).
- Promote the principle of parity (at the end of their schooling, Ontario students, regardless of their mother tongue, are fully bilingual and open to the realities of others).
- To provide more **economic opportunities** to counter the exodus to urban centres.
- To provide more activities appropriate to the needs of younger consumers, reflecting the notion of «by and for youth» particularly for **extracurricular and leisure activities**.
- To reinforce the **participation** and the community **engagement** of our youth.
- In addition to physical spaces, develop and offer **virtual francophone spaces** (e.g. digital platform, social media, etc.) allowing youth to express themselves in French, and fully assume their francophone identity.

*\*Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.*

# PILLAR 3

## PARTICIPATION AND CELEBRATION

Confirm and strengthen the sense of belonging and pride, as well as the active participation of Ontario francophones in the life of our community.



# PILLAR 3 - PART 1

## COMMITMENT AND PARTICIPATION

### \* WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS:

- To improve **communication** with members of the community (other than those already identified francophones); better inform them of their rights, promote 'active demand', the availability of services, the existence of opportunities in the region and the contribution of community organizations representing them.
- To expand the **volunteer base** (in terms of management, spokespersons and service providers in fields such as philanthropy).
- To **renew leadership** (e.g.: empowering young people and giving them opportunities where they engage in large numbers and assume leadership both at the political and at the community level; without forgetting to appeal to young adults/young professionals and in mobilizing recent retirees to convince them to engage in community action).
- To **celebrate peer successes**.
- To foster **a culture of inclusion** to facilitate the participation of all groups beyond identity differences.

*\*Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.*

# PILLAR 3 - PART 2

## AWAKENING AND CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY

### \* WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS:

- To promote and encourage the transmission of **the French language and of the Franco-Ontarian diversified culture** to future generations (i.e: by the commitment of schools and teachers to the quality of French as well as the teaching of history and the discovery of the francophone cultural richness, by engaging seniors and by collaboration with cultural milieus in arts and heritage).
- To put in place measures to counter **linguistic insecurity**, at all levels, in particular for francophone professionals.
- To **use arts and culture as means to close gaps** between various groups within the community in order to bridge the distance between francophiles, anglophones and allophones.
- To develop platforms to further **disseminate and promote** our Franco-Ontarian artists and increase opportunities to identify with inspiring models (in arts, sports, business, politics, etc.).

- To take advantage of the increasing number of **immersion programs** to increase the customer base for French programs and activities; to seek support for the importance of French culture in Ontario.
- To heighten awareness and explain the difference **between bilingualism and linguistic duality** as a means to counter assimilation.
- To promote the **symbolism** of the contributions of the francophone community of Ontario (ex: events celebrating Franco-Ontarian day, monuments, cultural and heritage events).
- To increase **multisector projects** for joint action by community groups.
- To develop and promote **appropriate branding** for the francophone community.
- To remain open to various aspects, realities and lessons learned about **the Canadian and international “Francophonie”**.

*\*Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.*



# PILLAR 4

## COOPERATION AND ORGANISATION

Encourage a greater alignment of community efforts and strengthen its capacity to interact with government, private sector and non-profit sector representatives.

# PILLAR 4 - PART 1 COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION

## \* WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS:

### *Within the community*

- To build on existing initiatives in order to improve **collaboration between community partners** and institutions (e.g. universities, school boards, hospitals, etc.) to promote efficiency.
- To encourage **networking and the sharing of knowledge and expertise.**
- To consolidate **governance** structures within the community.

### *Between Communities*

- To build bridges and foster **exchange between groups** (notably anglophones, francophiles, Quebecers, First Nations and newcomers) in order to promote solidarity.
- To actively engage in dialogue with the anglophone majority and encourage greater **recognition of contributions of francophones in the public opinion.**
- To strengthen **collaboration between Ontario's francophonie, Canada's francophone and the International francophonie.**

*\*Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.*

## PILLAR 4 - PART 2

### CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

#### \* WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS:

- To ensure the **sustainability** of organizations and institutions working in community development (e.g.: funding, skills development, governance structures, infrastructure and living spaces, etc.)
- To plan and support **continuity** and **succession** within community agencies.
- To increase the **presence of community workers in the field** - particularly in rural and remote communities to foster local vitality.
- To represent francophone interests in **governmental and para-governmental decision making**.
- To develop the skills of our community **champions to:**
  - Represent our community's interests to government officials ;
  - Establish a constructive dialogue with the private sector and other interest groups ;
  - Foster engagement and participation within the community.
- To consolidate **dialogue between different levels of government to promote greater collaboration** for francophone affairs.

*\*Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.*

- To strengthen the **capacity to collaborate proactively** with governments (municipal, provincial, federal) and develop a structured approach for the identification of issues /appropriate requests (e.g.: language and constitutional rights, establishment of accountability frameworks between governments and the community, achieving bilingual status for Ottawa and the province).
- To strengthen **interactions and partnerships with the private sector.**
- To train community leaders in new **communication technologies** (e.g. create a virtual francophone environment) in order to mobilise, share, inform and promote dialogue.
- **To support Franco-Ontarian media** and help them adapt to new communications technologies

- To review **application procedures for funding:**

- Share experience and knowledge of funding applications.
- Obtain on-going funding to allow community organizations to fulfill their missions.
- Receive funding to promote communication between community members.

*\*Local circumstances and the evolution of the context facing the community could lead to the identification of other needs during the ten year time frame covered by the plan.*



# 5 - OVERVIEW

**VISION 2025** : Creative, united and committed to its well-being, Ontario's francophone community enjoys sustained growth, is proud of its language and its culture and thrives on its rich diversity all across the province. Welcoming and open, the community contributes to Ontario's vitality, in a bilingual province and grows in an environment where living and socializing in French has become an accepted norm. As a recognized leader, the community is active in the Canadian and international francophonie.

| PILLARS  | OBJECTIVES   | PRIORITIES AND AREAS OF ACTION   |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b></p> <p>Growth and Vitality</p>           | <p>Provide members of Ontario's francophone community an environment that promotes well-being, personal growth and quality of life in their language.</p>                | <p>Economic Development and Employability</p> <p>Accessibility and use of French language services</p> |
| <p><b>2</b></p> <p>Attraction and Retention</p>      | <p>Recruit, attract and retain dynamic forces across the province to provide the means to live in French in an environment that meets their needs.</p>                   | <p>Immigration/Newcomers</p> <p>Children and Youth</p>   |
| <p><b>3</b></p> <p>Participation and Celebration</p> | <p>Confirm and strengthen the sense of belonging and pride, as well as the active participation of Ontario francophones in the life of our community.</p>                | <p>Commitment and Participation</p> <p>Construction of Identity</p>                                    |
| <p><b>4</b></p> <p>Cooperation and Organisation</p>  | <p>Encourage a greater alignment of community efforts and strengthen its capacity to interact with government, private sector and non-profit sector representatives.</p> | <p>Cooperation and Organisation</p> <p>Capacity Development</p>  |



# VISION 2025

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