



2022-2025 Strategy to Support Economic Immigration in Manitoba's Bilingual Municipalities

“Cities play a leading role on the global migration scene. The most dynamic cities welcome immigrants with hopes, dreams and aspirations and, by helping them to flourish, create prosperity for their entire population.”

– Cities of Migration

**Creating winning conditions to
receive and include immigrants.**

Leveraging our bilingual advantage.

**Uniting forces to collectively succeed
in *living* together.**

This first Strategy to Support Economic Immigration in Manitoba's Bilingual Municipalities was produced by the Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (AMBM).

As a priority, the Strategy aims to build the capacity of its member municipalities to attract French-speaking or bilingual immigrants to their territory, and to create conditions that are conducive to their reception, settlement and inclusiveness. It also wishes to confirm the role and consolidate the presence of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities within the continuum of Francophone immigration to the province, in complementarity and solidarity with the key players who make up this continuum.

The development of this Strategy was made possible through the financial support of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

The AMBM wishes to acknowledge the work of the consulting team at Consultation Alegria Consulting Inc. for coordinating the development of this Strategy.

We are also grateful to the elected officials and Chief Administrative Officers of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities, as well as the many experts and contributors who invested their time and expertise to participate in the many consultations and interviews conducted in preparation for this Strategy.

Finally, we sincerely thank the knowledgeable and experienced staff at IRCC who provided us with constant support and insight during our work.

This Strategy is not an end in itself. Rather, it marks the beginning of an important societal project aimed at making immigration in our municipalities a success together.

THE VISION

Newcomers choose Manitoba's bilingual municipalities because of their quality of reception, their bilingual assets, their opportunities for economic development and the quality of life they offer.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE STRATEGY

1. Address immigration with a language-inclusive approach that values bilingualism, consistent with the commitment of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities to official languages, while applying a strong Francophone and regional lens.
2. Focus on immigration that corresponds to the local and regional economic fabric (talent sought, entrepreneurship) and actively participates in the economic revival of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities, to the benefit of all parties involved.
3. Clarify the role that Manitoba's bilingual municipalities intend to play in creating the conditions for the reception, settlement and inclusiveness¹ of immigrants.
4. Build the immigration capacity of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities in a manner that respects their issues, needs and objectives.
5. Join forces with the other two orders of government to actively contribute to the definition and attainment of targets, as well as participate in the development of strategies, both for immigration in general and for Francophone immigration.
6. Maximize the leverage effects of the role of the Economic Development Council for Manitoba Municipalities (CDEM)² in Francophone economic immigration and employability.

¹ While integration is the socio-economic means that society gives to the individual to enter its circle, inclusiveness is the expansion of this same space in order to guarantee a place for everyone. We are advocating for a larger circle (our communities) so that everyone can fit in. This effort begins with the host society, while encouraging individual participation.

² As an affiliate of the AMBM, the CDEM is the economic development engine for Manitoba's bilingual municipalities and coordinates the Invitation to Manitoba sub-stream of the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program in partnership with the Province.

The Three Pillars



Connecting talent attraction with the local and regional economic fabric.



Creating the conditions for the reception, settlement and inclusiveness of immigrants.



Actively participating in the success of Manitoba's Francophone immigration continuum and the common immigration system (Manitoba-Canada).

The Eight Objectives

1. Raise awareness of, and engage employers in, attracting international talent to support their growth.

2. Connect employers with immigration candidates effectively.

3. Help develop initiatives to educate and engage municipal governments and rural communities on the benefits of immigration, diversity and inclusiveness.

4. Develop the capacity of rural bilingual municipalities to plan for, attract, receive, include and retain immigrants.

5. Federate the establishment of regional mechanisms to develop partnerships and anchor sustainable solutions to meet the reception, settlement and inclusiveness needs of immigrants.

6. Increase the autonomy of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities in selecting immigration that is relevant to the local labour market and economic fabric.

7. Contribute to the improvement of government policies and programs related to immigration and Francophone immigration.

8. Build collaborative municipal leadership in immigration at the provincial level.

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Benefits of Francophone Immigration for Manitoba's Bilingual Municipalities

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Association of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (AMBM) is the voice of bilingual municipal leadership in the province of Manitoba. As a political and strategic organization, it relies on the added value of French in the strength of bilingualism to foster the development, vitality and sustainability of its members and their communities. To date, the AMBM has 15 municipalities that have adopted a policy to offer municipal services in French. The AMBM also owns two subsidiaries with complementary aims that are an integral part of the AMBM Group: the Economic Development Council for Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (CDEM) and Eco-West Canada (EWC). CDEM provides bilingual communities in Manitoba with a range of consulting services in community economic development, tourism, Francophone economic immigration and employability, while EWC provides Canadian municipalities with consulting services in energy transition and efficiency. Together, the AMBM, CDEM and EWC form the AMBM Group.

While the commitment of the AMBM's 15-member municipal governments to the vitality and development of their Francophone minority communities is at the heart of their priorities, the fact remains that these communities are predominantly made up of Anglophone and Allophone populations. Research and consultations over the past few years have led to the conclusion that the AMBM and its members will take a language-inclusive approach to immigration that will value Canadian bilingualism, consistent with their commitment to official languages.





The 2022-2025 Strategy to Support Economic Immigration in Manitoba's Bilingual Municipalities complements the AMBM's Municipal Economic Recovery Strategy³. In the coming years, economic immigration will be part of a compelling economic recovery in our communities, so attracting new talent and entrepreneurial immigrants must be directly linked to local and regional economic realities and needs.

This Strategy was made possible through the financial support of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and is part of the *Building Knowledge and Capacity on Immigration in Manitoba's Bilingual Municipalities* project. The goal of this three-year project is to increase the competitiveness of bilingual municipalities in attracting skilled labour and entrepreneurs, as well as to build the capacity of municipalities to receive, provide services and refer newcomers to relevant community stakeholders.

1.2 WINNIPEG: MANITOBA'S IMMIGRATION ENGINE

As a member of the AMBM, the City of Winnipeg is one of the most important immigration hubs in the country. "Between 2011 and 2016, Winnipeg added 39,000 immigrant workers to the workforce. Only Regina attracted proportionately more workers among the 60 largest urban centres in Canada. Winnipeg has always relied in immigration as an important driver of population growth; however, the number settling in the region has increased substantially in recent years (Figure 2). This has led to a boost in annual population growth from an average of 0.8% per year between 2006 and 2011 to 1.7% per year since."⁴

"Thirty-five percent of all Francophone immigrants living in Winnipeg in 2016 had moved to Canada in the 5-year period between 2011 and 2016, which is the highest Francophone immigration rate among urban centres in Canada (outside Quebec)."⁵

Winnipeg has a long history of attracting, receiving, settling and including immigrants in general and Francophone immigrants in particular. It also has capacity, resources and an understanding of best practices. Despite this, Manitoba's capital continues to face a demographic challenge related to its aging population. This is a challenge shared by most AMBM members.

At the same time, the other 14 bilingual municipalities in Manitoba are in the early stages of immigration. To date, municipal councils have never had the financial and human resources to prioritize and activate this issue. The majority of these rural municipalities recognize the importance of immigration to ensure their vitality and development, but need support, resources and relevant tools to measure their current situation (reception, settlement, inclusiveness) and to establish their own targets and strategies, in collaboration with their population and employers.

³ Source: <https://ambm.ca/en/recovery/>.

⁴ Source: Economic Profile Series: Winnipeg, Manitoba, Spring 2019.

⁵ Ibid.

1.3 TOWARDS A SURGE IN IMMIGRATION TO MANITOBA AND CANADA

According to the 2021 census data released by Statistics Canada, Manitoba's population is 1,342,000, a 5% increase since 2016.

Between 2010 and 2019, the number of immigrants (permanent residents) who settled annually in the province of Manitoba grew by almost 20%, for a total of 155,030 people. In terms of French-speaking and bilingual (French and English) immigration, the number of new permanent residents choosing to settle in the province of Manitoba jumped by 60% between 2016 and 2019. In 2019, these 820 individuals represented 4.3% of all permanent residents who arrived in Manitoba during the year.

Although the onset of the pandemic has slowed population growth, Canada's population growth rate remains the highest in the G7.⁶

In this time of economic recovery and skyrocketing inflation, it is clear that immigration is a major source of population growth in the years ahead, to ensure that our country has the workers it needs to address critical labour shortages and sustain a strong economy into the future. In this context, the federal government aims to welcome immigrants at a rate of 1% of the Canadian population, representing approximately 1.3 million newcomers between 2022 and 2024⁷. Almost 60% of this immigration will be economic. In Manitoba, approximately 45,000 economic immigrants are expected to arrive during the same period.

In terms of Francophone immigration, the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba's targets for Francophone immigration are 4.4% and 7.0% respectively. The federal target may change in the coming year as the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne (FCFA) du Canada* is calling for a 20% target by 2036. According to data provided by the FCFA, the demographic weight of Francophone communities has dropped to 3.8% across Canada and if nothing is done, it will drop to 3.1% by 2036.



⁶ According to Statistics Canada's 2021 Census, the Canadian population now stands at just under 37 million in 2021, 1.8 million (+5.2%) more than in 2016.
⁷ Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2022/02/new-immigration-plan-to-fill-labour-market-shortages-and-grow-canadas-economy.html>.

1.4 ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF INCREASED IMMIGRATION

Immigration is the primary means of ensuring population growth in Canada and Manitoba in the face of an aging population and declining birth rates. Between 2018 and 2019, 80% of Canada's population growth was due to immigration. It could become the only source of population growth in the country in the coming years. In terms of socio-demographics, immigrants provide a response to the exodus of young people and the challenges of an aging population.

For Manitoba's bilingual municipalities, this strategy will focus on immigration that corresponds to the local and regional economic fabric (talent sought, entrepreneurship) that will be able to actively participate in the economic recovery of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities, to the benefit of all parties involved.

The work of the *Building Knowledge and Capacity in Manitoba's Bilingual Municipalities on Immigration* project since April 2020 has identified a number of arguments for increased immigration to Manitoba's bilingual municipalities. Here is the summary:

UNDENIABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The current labour shortage is having a negative impact on the productivity and development of Canadian and Manitoba businesses. According to a survey conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (2021), more than half of SMEs (55%) in Canada and (48%) in Manitoba report being affected by this labour shortage.

In this context of shortage, immigration can play a crucial role in helping Canada acquire the necessary labour force to continue to develop its economy. Just over a quarter (26%) of workers in Canada have an immigrant background (2018). In several sectors of activity, this proportion is even higher, particularly in the health sector. To wit, in 2016 in Canada (Statistics Canada), immigrants accounted for:

- 23% of registered nurses;
- 35% of nursing aides, orderlies and other related positions;
- 36% of physicians;
- 37% of pharmacists;
- 39% of dentists.

Immigration helps to mitigate the impact of an aging active population (labour force)⁸ and ensures that there is a sufficient pool of available workers to support local industries as tens of thousands of Manitobans retire over the next few years.

It increases the competitive position of our employers through access to new markets and the recruitment of a new workforce, or simply through access to new talent.

⁸ This argument does not apply to the Seine River region which has one of the youngest populations in Canada. This region includes the rural municipalities of Taché and La Broquerie, as well as the Town of Sainte-Anne.

Immigrants fuel innovation by bringing new knowledge and skills, by approaching problems from new angles. They have a higher average graduation rate than the Canadian-born population.

They also create increased demand for local products and services:⁹

- Housing costs, electricity and property taxes;
- Transportation costs and vehicle maintenance;
- Food (local grocery stores and restaurants);
- Yearly tax revenues collected by municipal, provincial and federal governments.

The population growth generated by immigration translates into increased public and private investment to meet the needs of newcomers. In fact, the arrival of newcomers makes it possible to:

- Maintain municipal and social infrastructure and services;
- Keep tax rates at an acceptable level;
- Maintain or increase the standard of living in our communities.

These newcomers may also be immigrant entrepreneurs who are able to invest financially in existing businesses or in the establishment of new entrepreneurial projects. One third (33%) of business owners with salaried employees in Canada are immigrants (2022). Approximately 600,000 immigrants to Canada are self-employed (Statistics Canada, 2016) including 12,800 in Manitoba.

It is important to note that the presence of international students ensures the maintenance and development of academic and post-secondary training programs, as well as the vitality and viability of educational institutions.

Finally, evidence shows that immigrants are active contributors to their host communities on many levels. In particular, they contribute to the opening of mindsets to the world and to a diversification of cultural offerings. The research also tells us that Francophone immigrant youth, like local youth, make a direct link between citizenship, belonging to a community and “active participation in that community.”¹⁰ Once they become citizens, immigrants have a higher rate of voter turnout than the Canadian-born.¹¹

⁹ According to the Economic Profile Series: Winnipeg, Manitoba, Spring 2019, every 1,000 new immigrant families with an average household income directly generate \$84 million worth of new household expenditures, much of this spending in the local community.

¹⁰ BENIMMAS, Aïcha and Sylvia Kasparian, Le concept de citoyenneté chez des immigrants et des membres de la société d'accueil en milieu minoritaire francophone : une analyse lexicale, 2014 (*The concept of citizenship among immigrants and members of the host society in a Francophone minority setting: a lexical analysis*, available in French only).

¹¹ Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2020 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration.

The Importance of Francophone Immigration in Our Communities

Demographic losses can have a long-term impact on the sustainability of communities, both in socio-economic terms, and in terms of language rights.

In his report on Francophone immigration outside Quebec published in November 2021, the Commissioner of Official Languages indicated that in “Canada outside Quebec, the Francophone minority population, defined according both to mother tongue and to first official language spoken, was 4.4% of the population in 2001 and 3.8% of the population in 2016.¹²” He also stated that in order “to meet the 4.4% target between 2008 and 2020, Canada would have needed to admit over 75,000 additional French-speaking permanent residents outside Quebec.”

When it tabled its plan to modernize the *Official Languages Act* (March 1, 2022)¹³, the federal government announced that it was aiming for substantive equality between Canada’s two official languages, in particular by putting in place mechanisms for the promotion and protection of French at the national level that will have a direct impact on the sustainability of Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs). On the Francophone immigration side, the bill includes objectives, targets and indicators to address the declining demographic weight of Francophone minorities. Consequently, on April 4, 2022, the FCFA asked the Government of Canada to adopt a progressive target for Francophone immigration starting with a proportion of 12% in 2024.¹⁴

There is a consensus that Francophone immigration is a strategic contribution to the survival of the French language and a key factor in the development and vitality of Francophone minority communities, in addition to enhancing citizen participation in both official languages.

For employers in Manitoba’s bilingual municipalities, French-speaking immigrants are part of the solution to the talent shortage, especially when they are proficient in both of Canada’s official languages. With their ability to speak more than one language, these individuals are expected to play key roles with their employers. Also, thanks to their connection with their country of origin, they can contribute to creating new market opportunities, especially in the context where French is one of the most spoken languages in the world.

“There is a consensus that Francophone immigration is a strategic contribution to the survival of the French language.”

¹² Commissioner of Official Languages: Francophone immigration target outside Quebec has yet to be reached as 2023 deadline approaches, November 2021.

¹³ House of Commons of Canada, Bill C-13, first reading March 1, 2022.

¹⁴ FCFA du Canada, La FCFA demande une nouvelle cible progressive en immigration francophone : 12 % pour 2024, 20 % pour 2036 (FCFA Calls for a New Progressive Target for Francophone Immigration: 12% for 2024, 20% for 2036, available in French only) April 4, 2022.

In terms of entrepreneurship, a study conducted by Sociopol (2020)¹⁵ for the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada looked at the experiences of Francophone immigrants living outside Quebec who were business owners (one of the research sites was in Winnipeg, Manitoba). The Sociopol study (2020) shows that immigrant entrepreneurship contributes to the economy of Francophone communities, but also, more generally, to their vitality.

The arrival of newcomers to our bilingual communities also contributes to the normalization of life in French in Manitoba's bilingual municipalities and paves the way for maintaining and developing municipal and government services in both official languages and local infrastructure dedicated to Francophones (e.g., schools in the *Division scolaire franco-manitobaine*).

Francophone community spaces provide an environment where it is possible to speak, socialize, access services and work in French. They have a positive impact on the vitality of the Francophone community. Francophone immigrant families play an important role in the energy and liveliness of Francophone community spaces.

To this end, immigrants are participating in the transformation of Francophone community spaces, which are becoming more pluralized as a result of growing diversity.

These impacts include:

- Increase in the number of businesses offering service in French.
- New French or bilingual job opportunities.
- Expansion of the French-speaking business community, promoting networking and exchanges.
- Strengthening the attachment and commitment of immigrants to the community.
- A more supportive environment for an inclusive community atmosphere.

Their commitment (volunteers, participants, employees) has a significant impact on the Francophone community as a whole:

- Strengthening community structures through increased attendance.
- Sharing new ideas and perspectives.
- Diversifying community organizations.
- Creating an environment which is more supportive of an inclusive community.

According to Huot et al. (2021), who studied Winnipeg and Vancouver, this participation fosters, for the immigrant:

- A sense of belonging to a community.
- The creation of new social networks.
- An increase of social capital.
- Better socio-economic integration.

Ultimately, the arrival of French-speaking newcomers enriches our communities with multiple contributions.

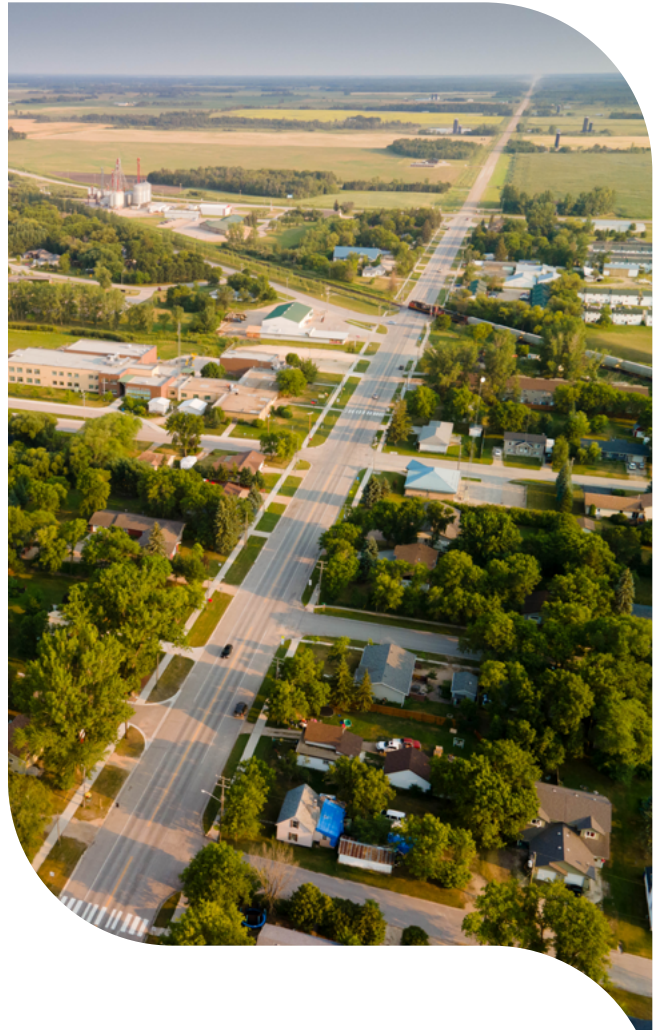
¹⁵ Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Francophone Immigrant Business Owners in Minority Communities: Challenges and Incentives, March 2020.

1.5 TRIPARTITE PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE IMMIGRATION PLANNING AND SUCCESS

In Canada, immigration is a shared responsibility between the federal and provincial or territorial governments. They also rely on the collaboration of communities and local governments to successfully achieve their respective mandates and goals.

While the prospective immigrant chooses his or her country and province of destination, it is the municipality that will become their host community, where they will settle and live with their family thereafter.

As the democratic institutions closest to the citizens, Manitoba's bilingual municipalities wish to work together with the other two orders of government to actively contribute to the definition and attainment of targets, as well as to participate in the development of strategies, both for general immigration and for Francophone immigration.

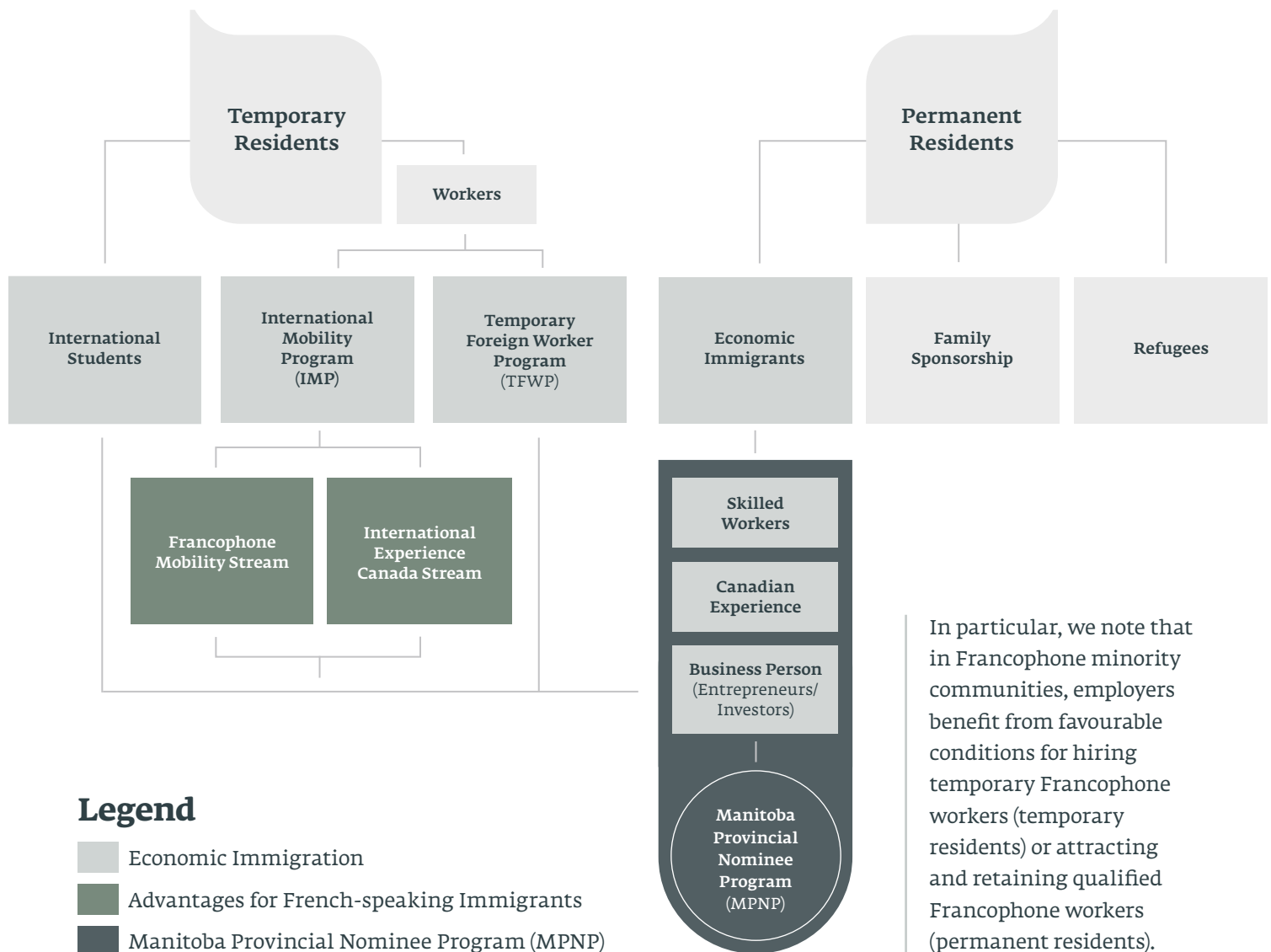


1.6 THE DIFFERENT ROUTES TO IMMIGRATION IN MANITOBA

This section illustrates the different avenues available to potential candidates to immigrate to the province of Manitoba.

1.6.1 TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT IMMIGRATION TO CANADA

The following diagram illustrates the different categories of temporary and permanent immigration to Canada, including Manitoba.



In either case, recruiting French-speaking workers from Francophone minority communities results in favourable treatment. Typically, the issuance of a temporary work permit in Canada requires employers to commission a favourable Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA).¹⁶

By hiring a French-speaking workforce, these same employers may be exempted from having to submit a pre-employment LMIA. The requirement to obtain an LMIA will be determined by the nature of the immigration program to which employers will be subject for hiring the temporary foreign worker, either the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) or the International Mobility Program (IMP).

Under the TFWP, employers are required to obtain an LMIA, whereas under the IMP, employers can hire a temporary worker without first obtaining an LMIA.

Francophone Mobility Stream

Since 2016, under the Francophone Mobility Stream of the International Mobility Program (IMP), employers have been granted an exemption from the LMIA for the recruitment of qualified Francophone and bilingual candidates¹⁷ who possess language skills (French) at Level 7, whose workplace will be in Manitoba¹⁸ and who will be working in either a temporary management job¹⁹ or a professional²⁰, technical or skilled job²¹.

International Experience Canada (IEC) Stream

Canada also has bilateral agreements with 36 countries and territories (including France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland) allowing candidates between the ages of 18 and 35 to gain personal and professional experience in Canada, within three categories: 1) the Working Holiday Open Work Permit (WHP), 2) the Young Professionals Work Permit (linked to an employer) and 3) the Student Co-op Work Permit only (linked to an employer). Since the IEC is part of the International Mobility Program, the work permit application is exempt from the LMIA.

It is important to note that the categories of permits, the age requirements and the length of validity of each permit may vary from country to country. The following table contains information on four of the countries in the international Francophonie.

COUNTRY	WORKING HOLIDAY WORK PERMIT	YOUNG PROFESSIONALS	INTERNATIONAL CO-OP INTERNSHIP	AGE LIMIT
France	Up to 24 months	Up to 24 months	Up to 24 months	18-35 years old
Belgium	Up to 12 months	N/A	N/A	18-30 years old
Luxembourg	Up to 12 months	Up to 12 months	Up to 12 months	18-30 years old
Switzerland	N/A	Up to 18 months	Up to 12 months	18-35 years old

¹⁶ Obtaining a favourable LMIA from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) can be time-consuming, costly and tedious.

¹⁷ The term “bilingual” refers here to Canada’s two official languages, English and French.

¹⁸ Manitoba or a province or territory other than Quebec.

¹⁹ National Occupational Classification (NOC) Skill Type o.

²⁰ NOC Skill Level A.

²¹ NOC Skill Level B.

1.6.2 ECONOMIC IMMIGRATION

A person considering economic immigration to Manitoba (becoming a permanent resident) has three main avenues of access, with several streams:

Federal Government:

- Workers' Program (Express Entry System)
- Business Immigration Program

Provincial Government:

- Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP)

The figure below provides a summary of these pathways to economic immigration in Manitoba.



Details of the Express Entry Skilled Workers' Program²²

Express Entry is an online federal immigration application system that manages immigration applications submitted by skilled workers. An eligible applicant must create and submit a profile in the Express Entry pool. Each applicant is ranked in the Express Entry pool using a ranking system (point system).

Express Entry is one of the strategies that support immigration to Francophone minority communities. Since 2020, the federal government has significantly increased the number of points awarded to immigrants with strong French language skills²³.

Through the Express Entry system, a valid job offer from a Canadian employer will provide additional points to the immigration applicant and increase their chances of being invited to submit an application for permanent residence²⁴. Thus, the candidate will arrive in Canada with a permanent resident status instead of a simple work permit.

Express Entry and the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program

A candidate who has a profile in the Express Entry system may also apply for an exploratory visit under the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program under the Francophone Strategic Stream. In the Express Entry system, a nomination by the Province of Manitoba awards an additional 600 points to the applicant and greatly increases their chances of being invited to apply for permanent residence in the short term. Manitoba promotes the nomination of Francophone immigrants in its Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program.



²² Source: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/works.html>.

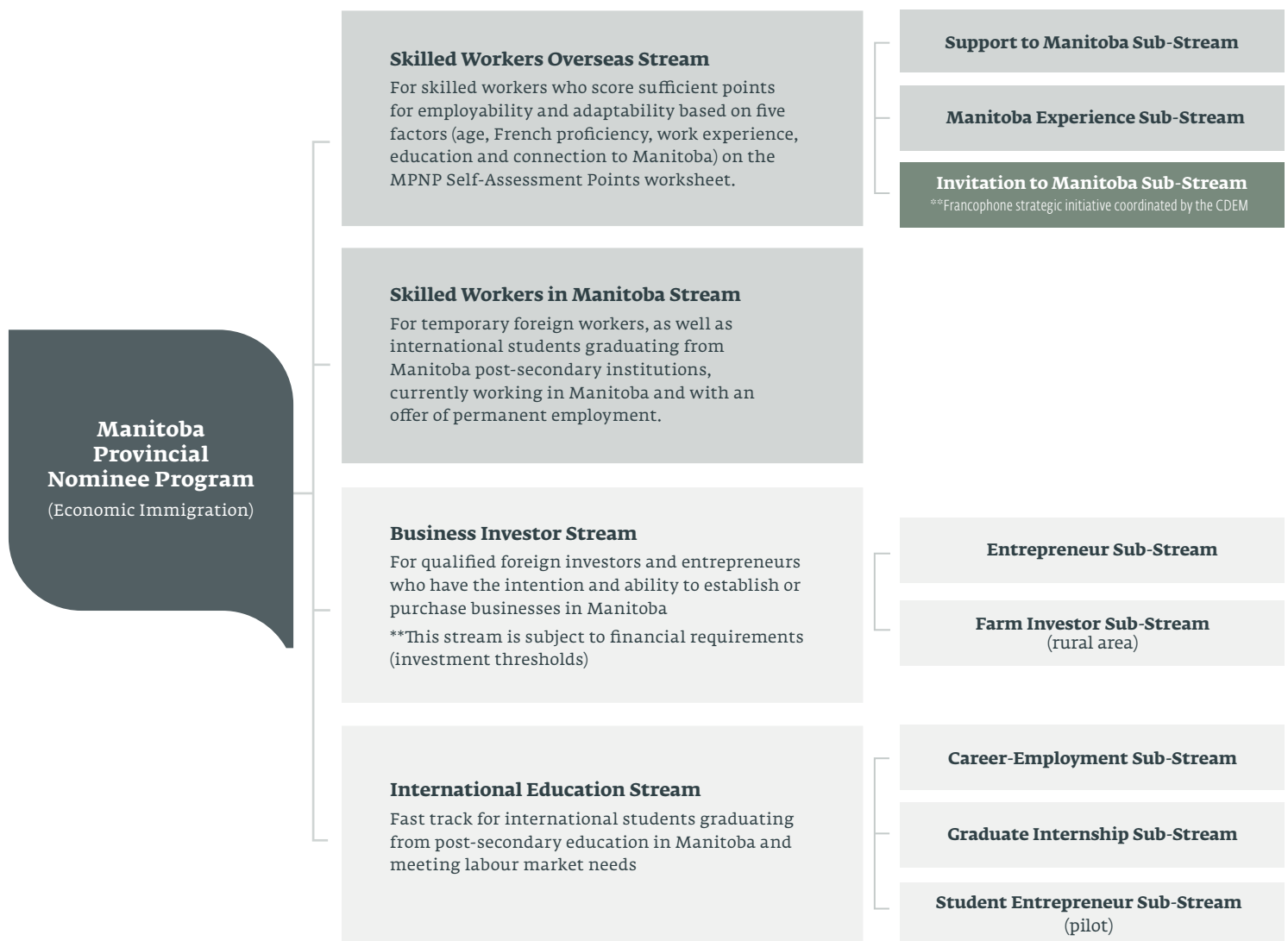
²³ Applicants can earn up to 50 additional points in the Comprehensive Ranking System, even when French is not their first language.

²⁴ This advantage applies to all candidates in the Express Entry pool, regardless of language.

1.6.3 MANITOBA PROVINCIAL NOMINEE PROGRAM

The Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) selects candidates who meet the economic needs of the province. Selection criteria are based on age, education, work experience, linguistic level, initial capital and a connection to the province of Manitoba (close friend, close family, work experience in Manitoba, job offer or studies in Manitoba).

The figure below shows the mechanics of the MPNP.



Within the Skilled Workers Overseas Stream, for Francophone applicants who have no connection to Manitoba, the Province has created a strategic Francophone sub-stream better known as *Invitation to Manitoba*.

This initiative selects qualified individuals from abroad who have the education, work experience, language skills and settlement funds required to work and settle in Manitoba and contribute to the province's economic development. An exploratory visit allows them to make the connection with Manitoba.

As part of a formal partnership established under the MPNP, the CDEM²⁵ coordinates this sub-stream. Here is the procedure for foreign skilled workers wishing to apply to the CDEM under Invitation to Manitoba:

- The applicant submits a request for an exploratory visit (to the MPNP).
- The province regularly selects candidates (once or twice a month: more than 50 candidates) and forwards the information to the CDEM.
- The CDEM evaluates the applications selected by the province and supports the applicant in preparing and conducting the exploratory visit (EV).
- The EV allows the candidate to establish a link with Manitoba and thus meet one of the essential requirements of the MPNP.
- Following the EV, the applicant receives a designation from Manitoba to apply for permanent residence under the MPNP.

International Education Stream

After completing their post-secondary studies in Manitoba, an international student becomes eligible to apply for a post-graduation work permit to accept employment in Manitoba. After working for a period of six months for a Manitoba employer and having a longer-term job offer from the same employer, the student can apply for an MPNP appointment from the Manitoba government. With this appointment, the student is able to apply for permanent residence.

Important: If the student has a job offer in an in-demand occupation in Manitoba and has a minimum linguistic competency score of CLB²⁶²⁷, the requirement to work for a period of six (6) months is not necessary and the student may apply earlier.

For more information on the MPNP:

[Skilled Workers in Manitoba](#)

[Skilled Workers Overseas](#)
(including Invitation to Manitoba)

²⁵ <https://www.cdem.com/en/employabilite-et-immigration-en/immigrate-to-manitoba/>

²⁶ Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB).

²⁷ This minimum score applies to all categories: reading, writing, speaking and listening.



1.7 BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY IMMIGRANTS

In an environment where many immigrants prefer to settle in larger urban centres, whether for the presence of services or a cultural community or for economic reasons, it is more difficult for rural communities to attract and retain newcomers. In these regions, newcomers must also be able to find employment. In a rural context, there must be an economic attraction, employment, and business opportunities.

For most immigrants, accessing and integrating into the labour market is a major challenge, whether they are Francophone or Anglophone. For French-speaking immigrants who settle in a province or territory other than Quebec, the importance of English is an additional challenge when it is the predominant language in the labour market. It is recommended that newcomers have access to language training in both official languages in order to integrate well.

Employers play an important role in recruiting workers and integrating newcomers into the labour market. They still need to be made aware of the benefits of hiring immigrant talent and have easy access to platforms to connect with immigrants, showcase their organizations and talk about job opportunities.

Many recent immigrants also struggle to have their foreign credentials or experience recognized, forcing them into lower-paying jobs outside their field of study or expertise. They are sometimes unable to get work and find themselves unemployed.

In small communities and rural areas, newcomers may be overlooked because they stand out in a number of ways, such as their accent, different names, personal presentation and physical appearance, and written presentation (e.g., resumes and letters that do not meet Canadian standards).

Ultimately, the research, consultations and training-consultation sessions held over the past two years have identified the key challenges for immigrants to successful immigration to rural bilingual municipalities in Manitoba:



1. **Finding a suitable job**

- Recognition of qualifications and experience
- Lack of Canadian experience in the labour market
- Facilitated connection with local employers

2. **Find suitable and affordable housing**

3. **Access to regional and inter-regional transit services**

4. **Access to reliable Internet and cell phone services**

5. **Getting used to the climate**

6. **Getting support in the host community**

7. **For French-speaking immigrants:**

- Learning English
- Obtaining services in French

8. **Challenges for Francophone immigrants who want to start a business:**

- Access to networking opportunities
- Access to financing
- Support for starting a business

1.8 ROLE OF MANITOBA'S BILINGUAL MUNICIPALITIES IN THE CONTINUUM OF FRANCOPHONE AND BILINGUAL IMMIGRATION

Successful Francophone and bilingual immigration involves many levels of responsibility and engages a wide range of stakeholders from the public, civil society and private sectors. “It is a relatively complex ecosystem where each stakeholder has a role to play and in which they make a useful and complementary contribution.”²⁸

In this ecosystem and on the entire continuum of Francophone immigration to Manitoba, where several organizations have been involved for many years, municipalities must and wish to bring added value.

As the democratic institutions closest to the citizens, the role of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities is to create winning conditions to eliminate obstacles and leverage the community's vital forces in order to achieve Francophone and bilingual immigration within their territory and in Manitoba as a whole.

Municipalities are at the forefront of the reception and integration of Francophone and bilingual newcomers. They must play a role in a number of ways, including:

- Ensuring the concerted action and mobilization of the community with regard to Francophone and bilingual immigration.
- Attracting and retaining immigrants.
- Ensuring the integration and social cohesion of newcomers.
- Welcoming newcomers and introducing them to the local culture.
- Providing newcomers with access to essential municipal infrastructure and services (e.g., related to transportation and housing).
- Working closely with law enforcement authorities to ensure the safety and protection of both newcomers and the host community. To this end, municipalities could benefit from culturally adapting their services and practises to better meet the needs of immigrants (e.g., bylaws, municipal policies, administrative rules and procedures, service delivery, employees' approach to customer service, governance and the role of elected officials).
- Establishing a safe cultural environment where the multiple contributions of Francophone and bilingual immigration are valued and where community-based intercultural dialogue is promoted and supported. An environment where racism and discrimination are not tolerated, and where underlying systemic injustices and inequities are addressed while celebrating diversity.

²⁸ Source: https://www.immigrationfrancophone.ca/images/Guide_des_municipalites_en_immigration_francophone.pdf (available in French only).

2022-2025 Strategy to Support Economic Immigration to Manitoba's Bilingual Municipalities

The 2022-2025 Strategy to Support Economic Immigration in Manitoba's Bilingual Municipalities draws on the research, consultations, analysis and training-consultation sessions conducted as part of the project since 2020, including:

- Applied research on the insertion of bilingual municipalities within the Francophone immigration continuum in Manitoba.
- Municipalities' capacity to attract, receive, integrate and retain immigrants/Francophone immigrants.
- Inventory of best practices in immigration.
- Intervention and support plan for elected officials and administrative staff of AMBM member municipalities.
- Five economic immigration training-consultation sessions held with elected officials and Chief Administrative Officers of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities.

As the democratic institutions closest to the people, Manitoba's bilingual municipalities have a key role to play in supporting the achievement of immigration targets in both official languages. To this end, they intend to welcome a growing number of economic immigrants, promote greater regionalization of immigration to the province, actively contribute to reaching and exceeding Francophone immigration targets, and create favourable conditions for successful immigration. All of this is done by creating strong partnerships with the many stakeholders in the Francophone and Anglophone immigration ecosystem, in addition to the other two orders of government.

DIRECTION 1

Align talent attraction efforts with labour market demand and economic outlook

Many industries are facing challenges in recruiting talent. We need a better picture of what jobs are available now and in the medium term. We need to better understand workforce needs for the next three to five years. We also need to identify the most promising opportunities to attract immigrant investors in targeted industries and to support the next generation of entrepreneurs. We need to partner with the Province of Manitoba to promote the regionalization of Francophone and bilingual immigration.

OBJECTIVE 1

Raise awareness and engage employers in attracting international talent to support their growth.

OBJECTIVE 2

Connect employers with immigration candidates effectively.

DIRECTION 2

Create conditions favourable to the reception, settlement and inclusion of immigrants

Many residents and stakeholders (elected officials and staff) in bilingual municipalities still want to better understand the importance of attracting and welcoming increasing numbers of immigrants to our communities, particularly in rural areas. We need to focus on providing information (facts and figures) and awareness initiatives that will reach people and appeal to their hearts and minds. Manitobans and Franco-Manitobans are welcoming, supportive, caring and generous people, but they need to have all the information and understand the issues to sort out the myths from the reality. Our research has also shown that before attracting new immigrants to rural bilingual communities, it will be crucial to ensure the presence of the infrastructure necessary for their settlement and inclusion (housing, connectivity, mobility). To do this, we will multiply the partnerships that can bring about change and advocate for the establishment of relevant regional mechanisms.

OBJECTIVE 3

Help develop initiatives to educate and engage municipal governments and rural communities on the benefits of immigration, diversity and inclusiveness.

OBJECTIVE 4

Develop the capacity of rural bilingual municipalities to plan for, attract, receive, include and retain immigrants.

OBJECTIVE 5

Foster the establishment of regional mechanisms to develop partnerships and anchor sustainable solutions to meet the reception, settlement and inclusion needs of immigrants.

DIRECTION 3

Actively participate in the success of the common immigration system (Manitoba-Canada)

Immigrants choose their country and province of destination and then settle with their families in our municipalities, which become their host community, where various infrastructures and services facilitate their settlement and development. Municipalities are the democratic institutions closest to the citizens. Manitoba's bilingual municipalities wish to join forces with the other two orders of government to actively contribute to the definition and achievement of targets, as well as to participate in the development of strategies, both in terms of immigration in general and Francophone immigration to Manitoba. Our members also aim to strengthen a tripartite partnership with the Province and the CDEM in order to support the growth of immigration in their territory through effective collaborative mechanisms that are connected to the needs of the local and regional labour market.

OBJECTIVE 6

Increase the autonomy of Manitoba's bilingual municipalities in selecting immigration that is relevant to the local labour market and economic fabric.

OBJECTIVE 7

Contribute to the improvement of government policies and programs related to immigration and Francophone immigration.

OBJECTIVE 8

Build collaborative municipal leadership in immigration at the provincial level.



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