

JUSTICE IN OFFICIAL LANGUAGES - NEWSLETTER

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WORDS OF WELCOME

A wind of change is blowing on official languages in Canada. In the space of a few weeks this spring, the government unveiled a new Federal Action Plan with historic investments for the benefit of official language minority communities, and Parliament passed legislation representing the most significant amendments to the *Official Languages Act* since 1988.

The sector of justice in official languages is also blooming and the people who devote themselves to it deserve our full consideration. We hope that this 19th edition of the Newsletter will allow you to discover them and provide a better understanding of the considerations that motivate them. Indeed, this issue begins with an interview with one of these exceptional people, Senator René Cormier, who generously agreed to speak to us, just before he successfully piloted the adoption of the new *Official Languages Act* before the Senate.

You will also find an article on the recipient of the Boreal Prize *Rapprochement* for 2022: the French Common Law Certification Program, which is offered in several law faculties across Canada.

The shortage of professionals in all fields is making headlines and legal translators are no exception. McGill University is helping to meet these needs by training a new generation of legal translators through an innovative university program that you will also learn about in this Newsletter.

This will be followed by an article describing a case recently heard by the Supreme Court of Canada concerning language rights and education in the Northwest Territories.

These days, issues of equity, diversity and inclusion are on everyone's lips. Socio-legal support is one of the tools at our disposal to improve access to justice in both official languages for the most vulnerable people in our communities. These issues are highlighted in the departmental priorities of the Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund, unveiled at the 2023 meeting of the Advisory Committee on Access to Justice in Both Official Languages.

Finally, do not miss the announcements section and the LOL - Let's Play section, which is always appreciated by our readers.

Happy reading!

A GREAT FRIEND OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: AN INTERVIEW WITH SENATOR RENÉ CORMIER

On a chilly morning in mid-May 2023, Jacinthe Bourdages and Karina Yelle, respectively Director and Deputy Director of the Official Languages Directorate, had the great pleasure of meeting the Honourable René Cormier, an independent senator from New Brunswick, at his office on Parliament Hill to talk about official languages. Originally from Caraquet, New Brunswick, Senator Cormier has devoted his life to arts and culture. Since his arrival in the Upper Chamber, he has demonstrated a strong commitment to language rights.

The Senator was very forthcoming during the interview, and we are pleased to share his reflections on official languages and diversity with you. Happy reading!

In your view, what is the current situation with official languages in Canada?

Official languages have never been so front and centre in the public debate as they are at this moment, but at the same time, we are witnessing the decline of the French language all over Canada, which is extremely worrying. More Canadians are speaking French but in terms of demographic balance, there are more English speakers, thereby diminishing the weight of French speakers in this country. This has an impact on the lives of French-speaking Canadians and francophiles. And of course, their ability to live and obtain services in French is affected. The current situation goes to show that we must always be vigilant when it comes to language rights, hence the importance of having strong legislation and a public service that is well aware of these issues. The commitment of sector organizations and individuals from civil society involved in defending language rights is absolutely critical to remaining vigilant.

What impact has the pandemic had on your work on official languages and your vision of them?

The pandemic showed us that respecting official languages is not just a matter of language rights, but also a matter of public safety. During this period, we came to see the fragility of certain mechanisms that ensure compliance with the *Official Languages Act*. I am thinking in particular of signage and labelling related to emergency measures. Personally, I became more aware of the important role that interpreters and translators play in our work as parliamentarians. The pandemic highlighted the fact that we need interpreters to allow us to communicate in both official languages, be it virtually or in person. This was a very demanding period for the interpreters working on Parliament Hill, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them and applaud their fantastic work.

Where did you get your passion for official languages?

I grew up in an environment and in an area where the French language is considered to be an asset – a treasure that allows us to affirm and celebrate our Acadian culture. Where I am from, the link between language and culture has always been plain to see. Culture and education were extremely important to my parents, and I got my love of French from the education I received from my teachers, particularly the nuns. Over the course of my professional journey as an artist and a cultural manager, I became increasingly aware of the richness of the French language and the importance of respecting language rights. Coming from the only officially bilingual province where respecting the *Official Languages Act* was always an issue, I quickly realized that it was necessary to fight for our rights. This fight did, and does, very much spur me to action.

How do you see official languages in relation to diversity?

We must recognize and appreciate that we have a diversity of languages in Canada. In addition to our two official languages, Indigenous languages are part of our linguistic landscape, and we must take that into

consideration as we work to defend and promote language rights. These first languages are essential to reconciliation and to the identity of our country. We must defend and promote them, and there is much work to be done in that regard. In addition, our country reaps the benefits of the growing number of new arrivals, who bring with them a rich linguistic diversity. We must take this into account in the work we do and in how we raise awareness and promote the *Official Languages Act* among Canadians. Official languages must not be perceived as overshadowing other languages, but rather as our two languages that allow us to “live together.” In Canada today, the socioeconomic realities and the diverse cultural and identity realities must be at the heart of our parliamentary business and our policies. It is important not to lose sight of that when it comes to matters involving official languages.

Has your experience with bilingualism and diversity been the same in New Brunswick as in Ottawa? If not, what differences do you see?

Coming from the Acadian Peninsula in northern New Brunswick, where the majority of people are Francophone, and having primarily worked in French before joining the Senate, my first shock when I got to Ottawa was seeing the diverse backgrounds and expertise among my fellow Senators. Despite this diversity, I quickly realized that English was the dominant majority language. This is how things are in Canada and New Brunswick today. Even though bilingualism at the national, provincial and territorial levels can look different from region to region, the fact is that these different realities share similarities. The minority/majority relationship remains an issue, regardless of where you are in the country. Language is a tool of power, so on the political, social and economic fronts, we must constantly shine a light on the fact that French is more than just a form of communication: it is a vehicle of development and societal growth.

What experience or story has had the biggest impact on you during your career in official languages?

In my commitment to official languages, the experience that has impacted me the most is what I am doing right now as chair and member of the Standing Senate Committee on Official Languages. The work we are doing to modernize the *Official Languages Act*, with the aim of recognizing the concept of asymmetry in order to attain substantive equality between our two official languages, constitutes an important step in recognizing the linguistic realities of our country. Awareness of the decline of French in Canada, including in Quebec, is a real wake-up call for Canadians. Although this was already known in some circles in the past, a wider swath of the Canadian population is waking up to this reality today. I think this is the first time that we are affirming this reality while having the buy-in of such a big part of the population.

In your opinion, what is the state of relations between Official Language Minority Communities (OLMC) and the linguistic majority?

The Anglophone linguistic majority in this country has a somewhat ambiguous relationship with OLMCs. While most Canadians seem to appreciate having two official languages in Canada, some need to be reminded from time to time that the French language is not simply a translation of the English language. French is equal to English, and that reality is part of the social contract that we have drawn up as a country. Under the Constitution, the supreme law of our country, these two languages are the official languages of Canada. As we promote all of our linguistic realities in Canada, including Indigenous languages, we must understand that French and English are inclusive languages that are used to express different cultures. I have noticed that some people perceive French outside Quebec as the language of an ethnic group, whereas it is one of our official languages. Substantive equality needs to be understood and applied throughout our state governance, including in our justice system. There is much work to be done for that to become a reality in the day-to-day lives of Canadians and in our democratic institutions.

We already asked you this question during your presentation to Justice on March 27, but for the benefit of our Newsletter readers, could you expand on the issue of language insecurity? What are your suggestions for overcoming this insecurity?

Language insecurity is closely tied to the challenges faced by individuals when speaking their own language in a minority environment or speaking their second language if they're not fluent in it. This is not specific to Francophone minorities living and working in an Anglophone majority; it can also be seen among Anglophones who speak French in a predominantly Francophone environment. That said, I have noticed that this phenomenon is more prevalent among Francophone minorities. As a Francophone in this country, it takes a lot of courage and determination to speak one's own language in certain environments.

So, how can we overcome this language insecurity? Certainly, we have to gain some self-confidence – be instilled with a deep desire to communicate and reach out to others. We also have to truly love the language we are speaking. Language is more than just a form of communication: it is a form of expression that allows us to share our vision of the world. It is important to celebrate it in all its nuances and colours. It is also important to recognize that our relationship with a language is closely tied to the environments in which we live and work. As an Acadian, for example, my relationship to English was strongly influenced by a difficult history between the Acadian people and the Anglophone majority. At first, English for me was the language of the conqueror, the language of those who wanted to assimilate us. Unconsciously, there was a sort of barrier that impacted my desire to learn the language. I had to overcome that perception in order to make the language my own, speak it as well as possible, and appreciate its richness. As Canadians working in the Parliament of Canada, it is our duty to learn to speak the two official languages of our country as best as possible, at all levels of the state apparatus. It is also our responsibility to be open to those who are making an effort to speak the other person's language.

What future do you see for the Francophonie and diversity in Canada?

When I think of the future, I cannot help but think of the current challenges of integrating diversity and the Francophonie into a Canada that is majority Anglophone. In terms of immigration, for example, our strategies to integrate new arrivals into Francophone communities in the country do not seem to be leading to the desired outcomes. We would need a real Francophone immigration policy with enough resources to support the organizations that do the real work of implementing our policies in the communities. Also, it seems to me that in terms of education, there is much work to be done to ensure high-quality French education throughout the country, for both Francophones and francophiles. The federal government must better support the provinces and territories in that respect, and they in turn must do their part for that to become a reality.

Despite some surveys, I sometimes get the impression that the French fact is not fully appreciated by certain Canadians working within the federal government. The future of the French language and of our official languages calls for leadership at the highest levels of the state apparatus, and there is still much work to be done in that regard. If we cannot manage to adequately enforce and support the *Official Languages Act* as part of our federal governance, imagine the impact that has on the population. As parliamentarians and public servants – elected and not elected – we must set an example. This collective responsibility to ensure institutional bilingualism within the state apparatus should not be perceived as a burden, but rather as something we strive to do in our professional and personal lives. We must make it such that speaking the other's language is important to everyone, and for that, we need the right legislative tools. Bill C-13 is very promising on that front.

I would also say that the relationship that Canada maintains with the international Francophonie is a key factor for the future of French in Canada. It is clear that the future of the French language is tied to the

development of French-speaking countries in Africa and to our ability to create Francophone networks all over the world. These elements are critical to ensuring that official languages truly thrive in our country in the future.

Lastly, on a positive note, I sincerely believe that despite the challenges they face, the younger generations best embody the richness of our country's diversity. I hope that we will give them all the tools they need to thrive in our two official languages, with the knowledge that these languages make our country richer, more welcoming and more prosperous.

Note: Since this interview, Bill C-13 to modernize the Official Languages Act was adopted and received royal assent on June 20, 2023. Senator Cormier sponsored this bill in the Senate of Canada.



From left to right: the Director and General Counsel of Justice Canada's Official Languages Directorate (OLAD), Jacinthe Bourdages; Senator René Cormier; Deputy Director and Senior Counsel of OLAD, Karina Desmarais Yelle

BOREAL PRIZE 2022: THE FRENCH COMMON LAW CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IS HONOURED

Each year, the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada (FCFA) awards the Boreal Prize to different entities to recognize their contribution [translation] "to the advancement, development and vitality of francophone and Acadian communities in Canada"¹. In 2022, the FCFA awarded the Boreal Prize *Rapprochement* to the French Common Law Certification Program (the Program) [translation] "for their contribution to building a strong legal community across Canada. The Program allows, in particular, students from law faculties in Western Canada to pursue legal studies in French by completing a third of their Juris Doctor at the University of Ottawa"².

Funded in part by Justice Canada's Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund, the Program allows French-speaking law students the opportunity to complete a significant portion of their legal studies in French. The Program ensures that future jurists have a solid grasp of both official languages in a judicial context.

The Program is offered by the law faculties of the University of Ottawa, the University of Calgary, the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Alberta, the University of British Columbia and Lakehead

¹ [Événements - Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada \(fcfa.ca\)](https://www.fcfa.ca/fr/actualites/evnements)

² [Prix Boréal 2022 : La FCFA honore Mme Jean d'Entremont, le MOFIF et le Programme de certification de common law en français - Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada](https://www.fcfa.ca/fr/actualites/prix-boreal-2022)

University. Law students from western Canada participate in an exchange to Ottawa, where they take part in the Michel Bastarache Moot Court Competition. The students are also paired with bilingual mentors in order to complete a credited internship at an organization that uses French as a workplace language, such as the federal public service.

For more information on the Program, please visit the [University of Ottawa's website](#).

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL-TERRITORIAL WORKING GROUP ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The semi-annual meeting of the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group on Access to Justice in Both Official Languages (FPT Working Group), bringing together the Official Languages Directorate (OLAD) and other federal, provincial and territorial government stakeholders, was held in person in Ottawa on March 6, 2023. This daylong session was the FPT Working Group's first in-person meeting since March 2020.

The role of this working group is to identify issues on access to justice in both official languages and exchange information on best practices and initiatives in place in each jurisdiction.

The day was productive and provided a welcome opportunity to re-establish longstanding working relationships. The next meeting is scheduled for October 17, 2023.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN BOTH OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The annual meeting of the Advisory Committee on Access to Justice in Both Official Languages (Advisory Committee) was held in Ottawa on May 16, 2023. It was the Advisory Committee's first in-person meeting since the pandemic and it was a success.

The Advisory Committee acts as a liaison between the legal representatives of official language minority communities, spokespersons for these communities, and Justice Canada.

Justice Canada took advantage of this one-day meeting to unveil its revised priorities for the Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund (Support Fund). Among these is socio-legal support (see article below). A panel of experts from the community demonstrated, using testimonials and concrete examples, the benefit of this model in improving access to justice for the most vulnerable members of our communities. Another workshop allowed participants to brainstorm ideas for innovative activities and projects that could be funded by the Support Fund under the new Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-2028.³

There were more than 45 participants at the meeting.

³ For information regarding available funding from the Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund, please contact us at JELO.JOL@justice.gc.ca.



Jacinthe Bourdages, Director and General Counsel of OLAD, makes opening remarks at the May 2023 Advisory Committee meeting.

A NEW LEARNING OPPORTUNITY: MCGILL UNIVERSITY'S ONLINE GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN LEGAL TRANSLATION

McGill University's enhanced Online Graduate Diploma in Legal Translation was launched in 2020-2021. Funded in part by Justice Canada's Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund, the Online Graduate Diploma in Legal Translation (the Diploma) is intended to address the increasing shortage of judicial translators.

Expanded from the Graduate Certificate program, the Diploma provides both theoretical and practical training, with an emphasis on the development of five competencies: Thematic and cultural; Communicative and textual; Instrumental; Interpersonal and professional management; and Methodological. Applicants must pass the entrance exam as well as satisfy all other selection criteria.

For more information on the Diploma, please visit [McGill University's website](#).

COMMISSION SCOLAIRE FRANCOPHONE DES T.N.-O v. MINISTER OF EDUCATION OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA



Flag of the Northwest Territories

After years of legal proceedings, the dispute between the Commission scolaire francophone des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (Commission) and the Minister of Education of the Northwest Territories (Minister) finally came before the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC). On February 9, 2023, the country's highest court heard the appeal by the Commission in a case concerning the right to minority-language education and the issue of how the Minister's power should be exercised in order to decide which "non-right holders" children (i.e. children who do not have the constitutional right to attend a linguistic minority school under s. 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*) can be admitted to a French public school.

The case raises important issues for the future of official language minority communities. In this matter, parents living in the Northwest Territories (NWT) wanted their children to be educated in French, despite not qualifying as right holders under s. 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (*Canadian Charter*) nor under a directive established by the government of the NWT. They therefore asked the Minister to use her discretion to allow their children to be enrolled in French-language schools. The Minister denied the request. The Commission and the parents filed applications for judicial review of the Minister's decision with the Supreme Court of the NWT. In two separate judgments, this court set aside the Minister's decision.

These judgments were appealed before the Court of Appeal of the NWT. The Court of Appeal allowed the Minister's appeals and restored her decisions, determining that the trial judge's reasoning on constitutional values had proceeded on the mistaken assumption that the case involved constitutional rights. In the Court of Appeal's view, the families in question did not meet the criteria of s. 23 in that they were non-right holders and therefore had no common law or legislated right or expectation to have their children attend these French-language schools.

The Commission filed an application for leave to appeal before the SCC, which was granted. The SCC also allowed the Commission to present additional evidence regarding the conduct of the hearing before the Court of Appeal, in particular concerning the inability of the three judges of the Court to understand French directly both orally and in writing and concerning the quality of the interpretation during the hearing. According to the Commission, the right to use English or French under subs. 9(1) of the NWT's *Official Languages Act* and subs. 19(1) of the *Canadian Charter* includes the right to be heard by a judge who speaks and understands the official language(s) chosen by the parties without the help of an interpreter. In other words, the Commission is arguing that the SCC should review and reverse a set of four judgments from 1986 and 1988 and conclude that the right to "use" English or French before an NWT court, as guaranteed by subs. 9(1) of the NWT's *Official Languages Act*, includes the right to be heard by judges who understand either or both languages without the help of an interpreter.

The Commission also argued that if the Court concludes that subs. 9(1) does not create such obligations in respect of the courts, subs. 9(1) would be incompatible with subs. 19(1) of the *Canadian Charter* which also guarantees, according to the Commission, the right to use English or French before any court created by Parliament, and guarantees the right to be heard by a judge who understands a party's official language without the help of an interpreter.

Regarding s. 23, the parents' applications for admission (which were denied) were submitted under the Minister's residual discretion, even though they did not qualify under the Directive of the NWT. The appellants contend that the Minister had to consider the threefold purpose of s. 23 (or the values

underlying it or the interests it protects) in her decision-making process. The appellants are not asking the SCC to make the Commission unilaterally responsible for managing admissions to its schools. The SCC previously determined in 2015 (in another dispute involving the Yukon) that in the absence of delegation of this discretion to a school board, the s. 23 discretion to refuse or to accept to admit children whose parents are not right holders belongs to the provincial or territorial government. However, the SCC noted in its 2015 decision that such discretion could not be exercised in a way that “prevents the realization of s. 23’s purpose”. According to the Commission, the discretion to manage admissions to s. 23 schools comes with the duty to exercise it in a manner consistent with: (a) the rights of right holders with children attending a s. 23 school; (b) the rationale for s. 23; and (c) the purpose of language rights, namely “the preservation and development of official language communities in Canada”.

The issues raised by this case are of interest to several official languages stakeholders and several organizations sought to obtain intervenor status before the SCC. Leave to intervene was granted to the Canadian Francophonie Research Chair in Language Rights; the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada; the Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones; the Commission nationale des parents francophones; the Acadian Society of New Brunswick; and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon. Four Attorneys General (Manitoba, Yukon, Quebec and Canada) decided to intervene in the case.

The Attorney General of Canada intervened only on the constitutional question at issue here, namely whether subs. 9(1) of the *Official Languages Act* of the Northwest Territories is inoperative to the extent it is incompatible with subs. 19(1) of the *Canadian Charter*. He addressed, without taking a position, the scope of these provisions with respect to the right to use French or English before the courts, without commenting on questions relating to instruction in the minority language.

The SCC has reserved judgment. There is general agreement that the SCC’s decision could have major repercussions for the future of minority schools and for the administration of justice across the country.

To be continued!

SOCIO-LEGAL SUPPORT FOR BETTER ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The access to justice sector is becoming increasingly interested in socio-legal support. Socio-legal support can be viewed as extra-judicial means (e.g., emotional and cultural support, information, guidance and obtaining forms) of helping litigants navigate the legal system according to their specific needs in order to “support their well-being”.⁴

A wide range of people, including newcomers to Canada, use these services. Since newcomers are typically less familiar with the Canadian justice system and are more vulnerable by virtue of their migration status, they have an urgent need for legal information and advice. Besides, official language minority communities welcome many French-speaking newcomers. Indeed, on January 23, 2022, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada announced that the Francophone immigration targets, first set in 2003, had been met.⁵ This announcement highlights the changing demographics of official

⁴ [Integrating Social Work Within Legal Clinics: An Inter-Professional Perspective to Address Social-Legal Needs | Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice](#)

⁵ [Canada Meets Its Francophone Immigration Target in 2022 - Canada.ca](#)

language minority communities that are home to many Francophone newcomers. While communities and many sectors of activity are trying to adapt to this demographic change, they are also asking themselves, “how can we support these newcomers?” and “by what means?”.

Gaining access to legal information services is not always easy; it depends on the level of social integration achieved and on the system’s ability to provide these services, particularly in a timely and cost-effective manner. Actually, “legal issues are often embedded in a cluster of other problems that can affect many areas of life, including housing, employment, education and health. This makes it very important to address these problems as early as possible.”⁶ Yet, there are many factors that can prevent immigrants from qualifying for legal aid services. When problems cannot be resolved in a traditional way, i.e., through strictly legal means, it is important, “in social terms, to put in place mechanisms” to assist the litigant in other ways.⁷

Previously, Justice Canada has explored “the development of a network of access to justice services linked by referrals to the full range of services implicated in the cluster of inter-related problems experienced by individuals.”⁸ While the access to justice sector has long recognized the benefits of providing “holistic”⁹ support to litigants, some studies indicate that implementing socio-legal support services is a major challenge. Without doubt, “the continued development and implementation of new navigator programs will increase access to justice, assist self-representing litigants at different stages in their justice journey, and provide specialized programs for those most vulnerable,”¹⁰ including immigrants seeking equity.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RETIREMENTS

GUY JOURDAIN – A pillar of the Canadian Francophonie legal community, Guy Jourdain has retired from his role as Director General of the Association des juristes d’expression française du Manitoba (AJEFM). Mr. Jourdain completed his Bachelor’s degree in Civil Law at the University of Montreal and his Bachelor’s degree in Common Law at the University of Manitoba. He is a member of the Bar in both Quebec and Manitoba. Mr. Jourdain has worked in a variety of roles where language and the law intersect, such as lawyer, legal translator, director of the Institut Joseph-Dubuc, translation professor, and coordinator of the AJEFM. He worked from 2001 to 2012 as Director General with the Francophone Affairs Secretariat for the Government of Manitoba. He continued his career in language and law with Manitoba’s Department of Justice as the head of the Legal Translation Service from 2012 to 2015. He then served from 2015 to 2018 as the representative for the Commissioner of Official Languages of Canada for the region of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. In 2019, he returned to the AJEFM to take up the position of Director General, a role he held until 2022. We wish Mr. Jourdain a very happy retirement!

⁶ [Canada's Justice System: Our Understanding of Access to Justice](#)

⁷ [The Legal Problems of Everyday Life – The Nature, Extent and Consequences of Justiciable Problems Experienced by Canadians](#)

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ [Integrating Social Work Within Legal Clinics: An Inter-Professional Perspective to Address Social-Legal Needs | Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice](#)

¹⁰ [Navigator Research in Brief EN.pdf](#)

SABINE DERBIER – Ms. Derbier took a well-deserved retirement in September 2022. Ms. Derbier was the Manager and Ministry Coordinator for French Language Services for the Justice Sector (Attorney General) with the Government of Ontario. She regularly contributed to the meetings of the FPT Working Group, assuming the role of Co-chair from 2020 to 2022. Her enthusiasm for official languages will be missed. Best of luck in your future adventures, Ms. Derbier!

DIANE DAGENAIS - Diane Dagenais, Deputy Director (Immigration law) in Justice Canada's Ontario regional office in Toronto, and Network 41 Coordinator for Ontario, retired in January 2023. Ms. Dagenais joined Justice Canada in 1995. She was a noted contributor to official languages activities in the Department, being a member of Network 41 since 2009. Diane's enthusiasm for and contributions to official languages and to the Department will be dearly missed. Happy retirement, Ms. Dagenais!

NEW ROLES

SACHA BAHARMAND - It is with mixed emotions that we announce the promotion of Sacha Baharmand within Justice Canada, and thereby his departure from OLAD. Mr. Baharmand worked at OLAD from February 2014 to September 2022 as Legal Counsel, Senior Counsel, and Deputy Director. He played key roles in the FPT Working Group, the Advisory Committee, and the Section 41 Coordinators Network. His devotion, professionalism and passion for official languages will be missed, but will continue to inspire us in our work ahead.

KARINA DESMARAIS YELLE - We announce with great enthusiasm the appointment of Karina Desmarais Yelle to the position of Deputy Director and Senior Counsel within OLAD. Ms. Desmarais Yelle worked previously as counsel at OLAD, and returns there after two years at the Court Administration Service and the Federal Court of Canada. Welcome back, Ms. Desmarais Yelle!

LOL – Let's Play

1. How many countries have French as an official language?
A) 29 B) 35 C) 50
2. The 2019 amendments to the *Official Languages (Communications with and Services to the Public) Regulations* could result in how many new bilingual offices? Approximately:
A) 300 B) 500 C) 700

Answers:

1. A) 29. Many countries around the world have French as one of their official languages.
2. C) Approximately 700

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