

Francophone communities outside Quebec issue ultimatum in Ottawa (Translated using Google Translate)

Description

The Federation of Francophone and Acadian Communities (FCFA) in Canada is demanding concrete action from the federal government to improve the lot of Francophone minority communities and gives it until March 31 to do so.

“It’s been more than 27 months since this government came to power. Since then, we have had a lot of rhetoric about official languages,” said FCFA President Jean Johnson at a news conference in Ottawa. He was accompanied by the Federation of French-Speaking Jurists Associations and the Ontario Francophonie Assembly.

It’s all fluff, it’s in love, it’s affectionate, but nothing comes out of it.

The fed up communities

The Federation and its 18 member organizations are calling for an action plan to make Francophones a priority. They are asking that this plan be administered and managed by the Privy Council Office, the central agency of the public service.

In particular, organizations are asking that this plan be accompanied by an additional \$ 575 million investment for community organizations in the regions. According to Mr. Johnson, this amount represents a catch-up of 12 years of lack of investment in Francophones outside Quebec.

Our communities are really thirsty, we choke, we are losing our organizations.

A federal action plan as of April 1

Simon Ross, the press secretary with the Office of the Minister of Canadian Heritage, says he understands the concerns of the FCFA.

“When they say that it’s been ten years since a disinvestment in French across the country, totally agree with them, saying, the Conservative government has done absolutely nothing,” says Simon Ross.

The Conservative action plan ends on March 31, according to Simon Ross, and he says the Liberal government will be ready to take over. “I want to reassure Francophone minority communities, the government will maintain its commitment on the issue,” he said.

We need to do more for Francophone communities across the country.

He recalls that the appointment of Franco-Manitoban Raymond Théberge as Commissioner-designate for Official Languages was a first step in the right direction.

The action plan will be implemented on April 1, according to the government, but for now, there is no

announcement date that has been announced.

Simon Ross is nevertheless sure that this will satisfy francophone communities in a minority environment. “We are convinced that it will respond to the concerns of communities,” he says.

Discouraging rumors

This is not the organization’s first call for additional funding from the federal government, but the FCFA’s efforts have so far remained unanswered. The president of the FCFA said he had tried to meet with the federal Finance Minister, Bill Morneau, and to initiate a dialogue with the Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, but that they have not responded to these requests.

Rumors suggest that Ottawa will not offer the additional funding requested, Johnson said. “If the rumor is true, [it] will be an insult and an insult to our community and it will turn into grumbling,” he said.

Johnson, however, remained vague about the consequences of the ultimatum, alluding to possible electoral repercussions. “In two months, when we will be one and a half years away from the next election, we will know what conclusions the Trudeau government will draw from this chapter,” he said.

The organizations will lead a day of action, on March 1, on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, to meet as many MPs and senators as possible, and raise awareness of the needs of francophones in minority communities.

<http://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1080897/francophonie-minoritaire-fca-langues-officielles-argent>

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