

Canadian Library Association / Association canadienne des bibliothèques Position Statement on Library Services to Linguistic and Ethnic Minorities

Approved by Executive Council ~ June 11, 1987

It is recognized that the Canadian National Policy of Multiculturalism within a bilingual framework, not only encourages ethnocultural groups to preserve their own culture and values within the national context, but also recognizes the contribution of these groups to the heritage of Canada.

Canadian libraries at the national, provincial and local levels have endeavoured to respond to the complex demands of a multilingual and multicultural population. The CLA Policy on Multicultural Library Services is intended to support the endeavours of those libraries.

The Canadian Library Association believes that:

1. All citizens of Canada should have equitable access to library materials and services which will meet their needs regardless of their language, cultural background or country of origin.
2. All libraries should reflect the multicultural nature of Canadian society as is appropriate to the collections and services provided for their client groups.
3. All libraries should develop clearly stated policies regarding the scope of their services to their multicultural client group.
4. The provision of multicultural library services is a joint responsibility of all levels of government, and the direct delivery of multicultural library services is a municipal responsibility.
5. It is recognized that Canadian public libraries have a special role to play in the provision of multicultural services to the residents of their communities. They have a unique role to play in not only meeting the needs of a diverse Canadian people, but also in promoting cross-cultural understanding in the interest of a harmonious and integrated society.