



At the Intersection of Language Definitions: A Portrait of Linguistic Communities in Québec and Its Territorial Service Networks in 2016

LANGUAGE AS DETERMINANT OF HEALTH AND QUALITY OF SERVICES

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Definitions

Allophones: Persons whose mother tongue or language spoken at home is neither English nor French.

Anglophones: Persons whose mother tongue or language spoken at home is English.

First official language spoken (FOLS): Refers to the first official language (i.e., English or French) spoken by the person. This variable is derived from the knowledge of Canada's official languages, the mother tongue, and the language spoken at home. This variable is specified within the framework of the Official Languages Act. The derivation method is described in the Official Languages (Communication with and Services to the Public) Regulations.¹ This variable is available in the census.

Francophones: Persons whose mother tongue or language spoken at home is French.

Knowledge of official languages (of Canada): Refers to whether a person can conduct a conversation in English only, in French only, in both languages, or in neither language. For a child who has not yet learned to speak, this includes languages that the child is learning to speak at home. This variable is available in the census.

Language spoken most often at home: Refers to the language the person speaks most often at home at the time of data collection. For a person who lives alone, the language spoken most often at home is the language in which he or she feels most comfortable. For a child who has not yet learned to speak, this is the language spoken most often to the child at home. This variable is available in the census. It is comparable to home language, which appears in some administrative documents and some surveys.

Mother tongue: Refers to the first language learned at home during childhood and still understood. If the person no longer understands the first language learned, the mother tongue is the second language learned. This variable is available in the census, in some administrative documents, and in most surveys.

Territorial service network (RTS): Area that generally includes an integrated health and social services centre (CISSS) or an integrated university health and social services centre (CIUSSS) responsible for providing care and services to the population, including public health services.

¹ Official Languages (Communication with and Services to the Public) Regulations, registered December 16, 1991, pursuant to Section 85 of the Official Languages Act, R.S.C., ch. 32 (supp. 4) and Population Estimates by First Official Language Spoken, 1991, catalogue no. 94-320, Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

Highlights

The Integrated Health and Social Services Centres (CISSS) and Integrated University Health and Social Services Centres (CIUSSS) are at the center of the twenty-two territorial service networks (RTS). The RTS are responsible for providing health care and services to their population, which includes minority linguistic communities that may face communicational obstacles.

In this report, the variables "mother tongue", "language spoken at home" and "knowledge of official languages" from the 2016 census, as well as their intersection, were analyzed for the population of Quebec and that of the RTS.

Overall this report confirms the presence of potential linguistic barriers among minority linguistic communities and shows that those communities served by RTS institutions are quite heterogeneous.

Overview

- In 2016, the population of Québec was 78% francophone as defined by mother tongue or 81% as defined by language spoken at home. Anglophones and allophones are language minorities: about 10% of Québec residents speak English at home and 7% speak a language other than English or French.
- While close to 95% of the province's population can conduct a conversation in French, the remaining 5.5% cannot communicate in French, which translates to 454,000 people.

Correspondence between mother tongue and language spoken at home

- For Québec as a whole, there is high concordance between mother tongue and language spoken most often at home among francophones (94%) and allophones (93%).
- But concordance is lower for persons who speak English most often at home. Only 65% of this group reported English as their mother tongue. One-quarter (24%) has a mother tongue that is not one of the official languages, while the remainder are native speakers of French (9%) or are bilingual in English and French (2%).

Language shifts

- There are more people speaking French at home than having French as their mother tongue. That is what we call a language shift. The same pattern is also observed for people speaking English at home. This probably implies that some people whose mother tongue is neither French or English take on French or English as their language spoken at home later in life.

Knowledge of official languages and correspondence with language spoken at home

- A cross-tabulation of language spoken at home with knowledge of official languages reveals that 30% of anglophones (255,000) can only speak English.
- About 13% of allophones in Québec (about 75,000 people) cannot speak English or French.
- Language minorities who cannot speak French primarily live in the RTSs of Montréal, Laval, and Montérégie, but are present in every RTS in the province (see maps in Section 3.2.2).

1 Introduction

1.1 Language, a determinant of health

It is well known that belonging to a minority social group makes it harder for a person to have access to optimal living conditions (Kulla *et al.*, 2010; Bouchard and Desmeules, 2013; Auger, Park, and Harper, 2012; Gagnon-Arpin *et al.*, 2013; Sipilä and Martikainen, 2009; Lussier and Trempe, 2013; Auger *et al.*, 2012; Trempe *et al.*, 2013). Language minorities are likely to face language barriers in their daily lives, especially when trying to find and access health care and services. More and more, it is recommended that a person's language—whether their mother tongue, home language, or first official language spoken—be considered in healthcare program and service planning, including public health programs and services. It is an important determinant of health that has received little attention to date (Kulla *et al.*, 2010; Sipilä and Martikainen, 2009).

Over the past decade a number of researchers have looked at circumstances where majority and minority language groups cohabit in the same geographical area. In Canada in 2016, nearly one million francophones were living as a language minority outside Québec, and about the same number of anglophones were living as a minority within Québec, based on first official language spoken (Corbeil, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2016). Research on language minorities outside Québec describes the health status of francophones as being lower than that of anglophones (Batal *et al.*, 2013; Imbeault *et al.*, 2013).

On the other hand, studies examining the health of linguistic communities in Québec describe trends that are often the opposite of what is observed in other Canadian provinces: in Québec the language minority (anglophones) is healthier (Lussier and Trempe, 2013; Trempe *et al.*, 2013; Auger *et al.*, 2012; Auger, Park, and Harper, 2012).

1.2 Different numbers depending on the variable

There are multiple language variables, and not all are available from every data source. The census is the only data source that offers all the different language variables.

Mother tongue provides a look at the cultural and ethnic identity of the respondent (Edwards, 1985). Since it is the first language learned at home during childhood and still understood at the time of the interview, it is not always used for communication throughout the person's life. But this is the language in which a person in a more critical or sensitive situation (an emergency, physical or emotional pain, cognitive issues, violence) will feel more comfortable communicating (Ouimet *et al.*, 2013).

The **language spoken most often at home** provides information about language practices in the private sphere. A language shift takes place when a person speaks a different language at home than their mother tongue. This reflects their assimilation into the linguistic community they live in (Corbeil *et al.*, 2010).

First official language spoken (FOLS) is a variable derived from knowledge of Canada's two official languages, mother tongue, and language spoken at home. It is often used to define linguistic communities in demographic profiles of different Canadian provinces, health regions, and local health networks in Québec (Pocock and Community Health and Social Services Network, 2018; Corbeil, 2013; Corbeil *et al.*, 2010). It can also be used to classify allophones in one of the official language groups.

With so many ways to define which linguistic community a person belongs to, it is easier to see why the size of a given group varies so much depending on the definition being used. For example, the size of the anglophone community in Québec depends on which variable is chosen (Table 1).

Table 1 **Number and proportion of anglophones by language variable used, Québec, 2016**

	Number (N)	Proportion (%)
FOLS	974,275	11.9
Language spoken at home	846,045	10.4
Mother tongue	636,620	7.8

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census.

These figures suggest that between 637,000 and almost a million anglophone Quebecers may have difficulty communicating in French, the official language of Québec.

Choosing one definition of a linguistic community over another leads to a one-dimensional perspective and can have repercussions on the size of each language group. Anyone seeking to consider linguistic communities in health and social service planning faces a real challenge in light of the variety of language characteristics to be taken into account.

1.3 Objectives

The reorganization of the health network in 2015 led to the creation of new service areas called territorial service networks (RTS). The 22 RTSs are structured around facilities known as Integrated Health and Social Services Centres (CISSS) and Integrated University Health and Social Services Centres (CIUSSS). These centres are responsible for providing health care and services, include public health services, to the population in the territories they cover² (Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux, 2015). That is why it is important to gain a better understanding of the population served in each RTS, including the size of the various language groups. Since the language definitions used in our studies vary by data source, better understanding how they are interrelated will enable us to better contextualize and interpret the findings of our studies.

This report has two objectives: 1) to break down the population of each RTS by its language characteristics, and 2) to show the various ways of defining linguistic communities by cross-tabulating language variables.

To do this, we pay special attention to correspondences between different language characteristics. By cross-tabulating variables, in particular those on language knowledge and use, we can better identify the number of people in a language minority situation who may face more significant communication-related obstacles. Correspondences between language variables also help identify how language shifts are affecting linguistic community numbers. Depending on the context, language shifts can increase or decrease the actual language barrier a person experiences (Statistics Canada, 2013).

² Facilities serving northern and Indigenous populations are not included in the reorganization. As a result there are no RTSs in Nunavik, Terres-Cries-de-la-Baie-James, or Nord-du-Québec.

2 Methodology

2.1 Data source and areas studied

Data is from the 2016 Census and the areas studied are Québec as a whole and the RTSs that are now responsible for providing health care and services and for health and social services planning.

2.2 Definition of linguistic communities

The data in this report describes the total population, including institutional residents.

The geographic divisions used (RTSs) do not include the regions of Nunavik, Nord-du-Québec, and Terres-Cries-de-la-Baie-James, where the majority of the population is Indigenous. However, the Québec total includes the data from those regions. Table A2 in the appendix presents the linguistic portrait of the population not living within an RTS.

The language characteristics selected are mother tongue, language spoken most often at home,³ knowledge of official languages, and first official language spoken (FOLP). Note that the term “official languages” refers to the official languages of Canada, i.e., English and French.

The single-response categories selected for mother tongue and language spoken most often at home are English, French, non-official languages (including Indigenous languages⁴), and both official languages equally (bilingualism). Respondents who self-report in these categories will be called “anglophones,” “francophones,” “allophones,” and “bilingual,” respectively. Multiple responses were combined with single responses according to the following method:

- **Anglophone:** English plus one or more languages other than French
- **Francophone:** French plus one or more languages other than English

- **Allophone:** One or more languages other than English or French
- **Bilingual:** English and French

This is a different method than the one Statistics Canada uses, wherein bilingual respondents are divided equally between francophones and anglophones. The decision to combine single and multiple responses in this report was made based on the purposes of this analysis: to create a linguistic portrait of Quebecers to support regional health and social services decisions. Bilingual residents who speak both English and French face less of a language barrier in daily life or when they need to access health care and services, in contrast to those who primarily speak English or other languages. As a result they should not be considered as members of a potentially vulnerable language minority. The methodology we use to group single and multiple answers prevents us from double counting respondents who speak one of the two official languages.

“Knowledge of official languages” is defined by the census respondent’s ability to conduct a conversation in French only, in English only, in both, or in neither language.

³ Note that the 2016 Census introduces a new language variable, “home language,” which is not to be confused with the variable “language spoken most often at home” used in this report.

⁴ In the 2016 census data available for language spoken most often at home, it is impossible to distinguish between Indigenous languages and non-Indigenous non-official languages.

3 Findings

First, each language characteristic will be presented on its own (Section 3.1), then the linguistic communities as defined by language spoken at home will be cross-tabulated first with mother tongue, then with knowledge of official languages, and finally with first official language spoken (Section 3.2).

The findings generally refer to proportions, and occasionally to numbers of people. Looking at proportions enables us to compare the findings for different language characteristics and RTSs, while looking at numbers gives a sense of population size regardless of whether the proportion stands out from the rest.

3.1 Linguistic portrait of Québec and its territorial service networks in 2016

3.1.1 QUÉBEC AS A WHOLE

Figure 1 shows the breakdown of Québec's population in 2016 by each language variable.

In 2016, 8% of Quebecers reported English as their **mother tongue**, and 78% reported French. One in eight Quebecers (13%) is an allophone, and 1% of the population speaks both English and French as mother tongues.

By comparison, in 2016 **the language spoken most often at home** was English for 10% of Quebecers, French for 81%, another language for 7%, and English and French equally for 2%. These proportions are the same as those reported in 2006 and 2011 (not shown) (Lussier, 2012; Lo *et al.*, 2018).

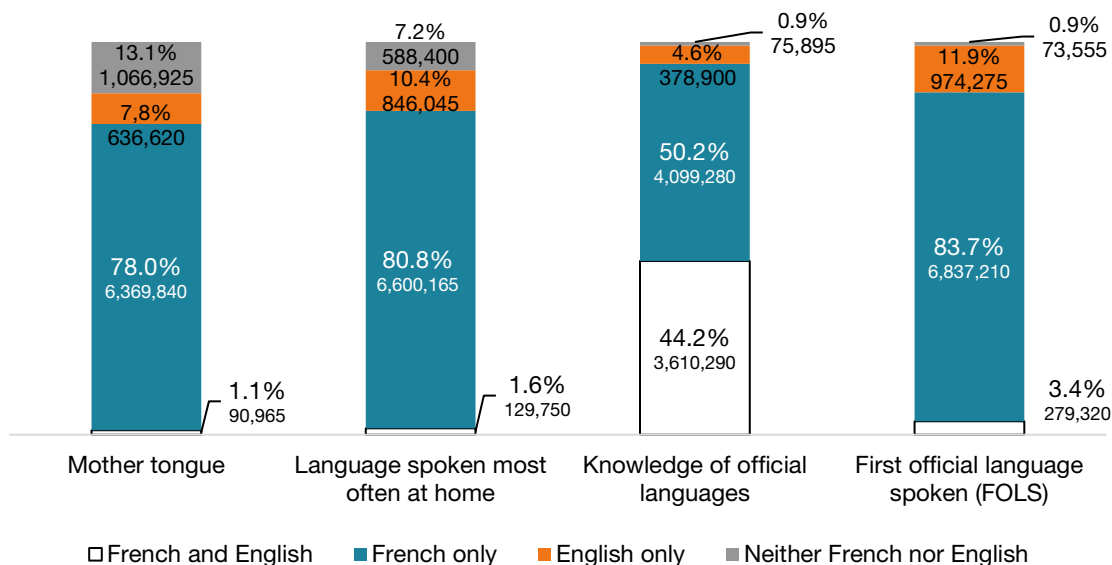
If we compare the two variables, we see that the proportions of people speaking French or English as their mother tongue are lower than those speaking French or English at home. Conversely, the proportion of allophones as defined by language spoken most often at home (7%) is lower than the proportion defined by mother tongue (13%). This is due to shifts away from using a non-official mother tongue to using an official language at home.

The bar representing **knowledge of official languages** in 2016 clearly illustrates the linguistic duality of Quebecers. Across the province, nearly 95% of people can conduct a conversation in French (French only or English and French), while half (49%) can converse in English only or in English and French. Note that despite this high rate of oral bilingualism, about 5% of the population can only speak English, and about 1% cannot conduct a conversation in English or French. This means 454,000 Quebecers cannot speak French.

In 2016, the **first official language spoken (FOLS)** is English for 12% of Quebecers, French for 84%, and both English and French for 4% (Figure 1). About 1% of the population does not speak either official language.

A summary table of the proportions and population numbers associated with each language variable for Québec as a whole is available in the appendix (Table A 1).

Figure 1 Distribution of population by mother tongue, language spoken most often at home, knowledge of official languages, and first official language spoken, Québec, 2016



Note: For the figure legend, refer to Section 2.2 Definition of linguistic communities.
 Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

3.1.2 TERRITORIAL SERVICE NETWORKS

Tables 2, 3, and 4 show, respectively, the proportion of francophones, anglophones, and allophones according to the different language characteristics used to define them.

Table 2: Francophones

According to Table 2, francophones as defined by **mother tongue, language spoken most often at home, or first official language spoken** account for the overwhelming majority of the population of Québec’s RTSs. In all but the five Montréal and one Laval RTSs, francophones make up 75% or more of the population. The Ouest-de-l’Île-de-Montréal and Centre-Ouest-de-l’Île-de-Montréal RTSs on the west side of Montréal Island show a proportion of about 30% francophones, while the other Montréal RTSs (Centre-Sud, Nord, and Est) and the Laval RTS range from 53% to 66%.

We also see that the proportions of francophones as defined by language spoken most often at home are higher than those for mother tongue in every RTS in Québec. This is due to a language shift where French is used at home even when it is not a person’s mother tongue. The RTSs that most reflect such a shift are those on the north and east sides of Montréal Island. In the Est-de-l’Île-de-Montréal RTS, 320,000 people report French as their mother tongue but 367,000 speak French most often at home. For the Nord-de-l’Île-de-Montréal RTS those numbers are 226,000 and 267,000 respectively.

The share of the population that **can only converse in French** ranges from 11% in the Centre-Ouest-de-l’Île-de-Montréal RTS to 82% in the Bas-St-Laurent RTS.

Table 3: Anglophones

Table 3 shows that the share of anglophones varies widely from one RTS to another. If we look at **mother tongue**, half of the RTSs (12 out of 22) are made up of 5% or fewer anglophones. In the Outaouais, Montérégie-Ouest, and Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal RTSs, anglophones account for about 15% of the population. The highest proportions are observed in the Centre-Ouest de l'Île-de-Montréal and Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal RTSs, with 29% and 35% respectively.

We see a similar pattern across RTSs for anglophones as defined by **language spoken most often at home**. There is a language shift toward English in about half the RTSs. In the Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal RTS in particular, while 125,000 people report English as their mother tongue, 170,000 speak it most often at home. For the Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal RTS those numbers are 101,000 and 143,000 respectively.

The proportion of the population that can only conduct a conversation in English is higher in RTSs near Montréal than in those further away, for a total of nearly 380,000 people in all of Québec. However, the proportions of persons who can **only conduct a conversation in English** are lower than those reporting English as mother tongue and language spoken at home, which suggests that many anglophones can speak both official languages.

Table 4: Allophones

Table 4 presents the proportion of allophones by RTS, in other words persons whose mother tongue or primary language spoken at home is neither English nor French. It also shows the proportion of persons who cannot conduct a conversation in either official language and for whom the first official language spoken is neither English nor French.

This data on allophones by RTS in Table 4 excludes Indigenous language communities in Nunavik, Terres-Cries-Baie-James, and Nord-du-Québec, which are outside the RTSs. However, these communities are included in the total for Québec as a whole at the bottom of the table. A brief linguistic analysis of communities living outside of the RTSs is available in Table A2 of the appendix.

If we look at **mother tongue**, the proportions of allophones are low in RTSs farther away from the Montréal area (less than 5%). In contrast, the proportions vary from 21% to 40% in the five Montréal and one Laval RTSs. The proportion of the population that speaks a mother tongue other than English or French ranges from 6% to 15% in the three Montérégie and one Outaouais RTSs. In the Côte-Nord RTS, the proportion is 10%, probably due to the high proportion of Indigenous populations living there (Government of Canada, 2019).

For each of the 22 RTSs, the proportion of allophones based on mother tongue is almost always twice the proportion of allophones based on **language spoken at home**. Proportionately, this suggests a large language shift among allophones away from their original mother tongue toward the language they adopt at home.

As for the proportion of persons **unable to conduct a conversation in either official language**, the trends are similar to those for mother tongue, i.e., a stronger concentration closer to Montréal. While the proportions do not exceed 3%, this nonetheless represents more than 75,000 people who are likely to face significant language barriers in Québec.

Table 2 Number and proportion of francophones according to each language variable, Québec, 2016

RTS	Total population	Proportion of total RTS population (%) who report French as...			
		Mother tongue	Language spoken most often at home	Only official language known ^a	First official language spoken
		% N	% N	% N	% N
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	197,385	98.7 194,860	99.2 195,895	81.7 161,220	99.3 195,995
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	276,365	98.4 271,990	99.1 273,825	81.1 224,015	99.2 274,140
031 - Capitale-Nationale	729,995	94.1 686,920	96.3 703,210	61.8 451,115	97.3 710,085
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	508,510	96.3 489,845	97.5 496,000	74.5 379,015	98.4 500,495
051 - Estrie-CHUS	472,615	88.6 418,640	90.0 425,390	56.3 266,120	91.1 430,555
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	357,500	31.9 114,150	32.2 115,260	12.6 45,050	38.2 136,465
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Mtl	345,270	28.9 99,740	30.9 106,610	10.5 36,415	37.0 127,700
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	299,570	61.3 183,680	64.4 193,020	22.6 67,770	68.8 206,050
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	426,765	53.0 226,270	62.6 267,345	34.7 148,205	71.3 304,105
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	512,940	62.4 319,985	71.6 367,170	45.4 232,815	79.9 409,655
071 - Outaouais	382,605	75.6 289,095	76.1 291,175	30.1 115,105	79.6 304,550
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	146,720	94.5 138,670	95.9 140,710	70.2 102,975	96.1 141,045
091 - Côte-Nord	92,515	85.1 78,705	86.7 80,190	75.4 69,785	93.4 86,370
111 - Gaspésie	77,835	88.4 68,780	89.2 69,395	69.0 53,690	89.1 69,355
112 - Îles	12,475	94.3 11,765	94.5 11,795	73.9 9,215	94.7 11,810
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	420,085	98.0 411,635	98.8 414,955	74.3 312,140	98.9 415,420
131 - Laval	422,990	59.1 250,140	66.2 280,100	34.9 147,675	72.0 304,755
141 - Lanaudière	494,795	92.7 458,780	95.3 471,665	63.7 315,030	96.5 477,460
151 - Laurentides	589,400	90.0 530,310	91.8 540,895	52.1 307,005	92.7 546,115
161 - Montérégie-Centre	399,045	77.0 307,415	80.1 319,475	44.0 175,640	82.9 330,825
162 - Montérégie-Est	518,975	91.1 472,955	93.8 486,725	56.5 292,990	95.2 493,995
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	435,435	76.0 330,735	76.8 334,620	40.3 175,295	79.2 344,800
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	8,164,365	78.0 6,369,840	80.8 6,600,165	50.2 4,099,280	83.7 6,837,210

^a Knowledge of official languages: Data for persons who know only French (excluding those who know English and French).
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Table 3 Proportion and number of anglophones according to each language variable in Québec RTSs, 2016

RTS	Total population	Proportion of total RTS population (%) who report English as...			
		Mother tongue	Language spoken most often at home	Only official language known ^a	First official language spoken
		% N	% N	% N	% N
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	197,385	0.6 1,110	0.3 665	0.1 150	0.6 1,115
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	276,365	0.6 1,745	0.4 1,180	0.1 320	0.7 1,810
031 - Capitale-Nationale	729,995	1.5 10,755	1.1 8,360	0.3 1,920	1.7 12,105
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	508,510	1.0 5,020	0.6 3,250	0.1 660	1.0 5,290
051 - Estrie-CHUS	472,615	7.0 33,300	7.1 33,500	2.4 11,570	7.7 36,315
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	357,500	35.0 124,995	47.6 170,170	19.6 69,910	50.9 181,790
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Mtl	345,270	29.2 100,790	41.4 142,985	24.3 83,860	49.3 170,230
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	299,570	15.6 46,665	21.1 63,235	9.5 28,385	23.5 70,470
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	426,765	7.5 31,875	12.6 53,815	6.8 28,890	16.1 68,780
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	512,940	5.1 26,215	10.0 51,270	2.7 13,905	11.5 58,840
071 - Outaouais	382,605	14.4 55,015	17.4 66,715	8.7 33,185	17.4 66,435
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	146,720	3.1 4,590	2.9 4,270	1.3 1,905	3.5 5,070
091 - Côte-Nord	92,515	4.6 4,250	4.5 4,130	3.4 3,120	5.2 4,840
111 - Gaspésie	77,835	9.8 7,665	9.6 7,495	5.6 4,350	10.6 8,220
112 - Îles	12,475	5.1 635	4.9 615	3.5 435	5.1 640
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	420,085	0.8 3,450	0.5 2,125	0.1 355	0.9 3,580
131 - Laval	422,990	8.0 33,840	14.7 62,250	5.1 21,380	17.3 72,985
141 - Lanaudière	494,795	1.9 9,345	1.9 9,225	0.4 1,930	2.4 11,935
151 - Laurentides	589,400	4.7 27,600	5.2 30,520	1.5 8,925	5.9 34,870
161 - Montérégie-Centre	399,045	7.5 29,925	9.5 37,875	4.1 16,280	11.3 45,040
162 - Montérégie-Est	518,975	2.3 12,090	2.5 12,960	0.7 3,600	3.1 15,910
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	435,435	14.6 63,515	17.4 75,620	5.6 24,450	17.7 77,240
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	8,164,365	7.8 636,620	10.4 846,045	4.6 378,900	11.9 974,275

^a Knowledge of official languages: Data for persons who know only English (excluding those who know English and French).
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Table 4 Proportion and number of persons reporting neither English nor French according to each language variable, Québec RTSs, 2016

RTS	Total population	Proportion (%) of total RTS population reporting neither English nor French for...			
		Mother tongue	Language spoken most often at home	Knowledge of official languages	First official language spoken
		% N	% N	% N	% N
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	197,385	0.5 920	0.2 325	0.0 45	0.0 40
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	276,365	0.7 1,945	0.3 720	0.0 100	0.0 80
031 - Capitale-Nationale	729,995	3.9 28,490	2.0 14,245	0.3 1,950	0.3 1,865
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	508,510	2.3 11,575	1.4 7,265	0.2 1,085	0.2 1,045
051 - Estrie-CHUS	472,615	3.5 16,370	1.9 8,895	0.3 1,550	0.3 1,480
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	357,500	30.5 109,005	16.4 58,710	1.8 6,580	1.8 6,355
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Mtl	345,270	39.7 137,075	24.1 83,325	2.8 9,755	2.7 9,460
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	299,570	21.2 63,600	11.7 34,930	1.7 5,145	1.7 5,015
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	426,765	37.9 161,790	21.7 92,610	3.1 13,120	3.0 12,760
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	512,940	31.3 160,385	16.0 82,265	2.2 11,240	2.1 10,905
071 - Outaouais	382,605	8.2 31,540	4.2 15,975	0.5 1,845	0.5 1,765
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	146,720	1.7 2,560	0.5 805	0.1 85	0.1 80
091 - Côte-Nord	92,515	9.9 9,115	8.4 7,805	0.5 440	0.5 425
111 - Gaspésie	77,835	1.0 795	0.4 315	0.0 15	0.0 10
112 - Îles	12,475	0.3 35	0.1 10	N/A	N/A
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	420,085	0.9 3,660	0.4 1,615	0.1 280	0.1 250
131 - Laval	422,990	31.1 131,675	15.8 66,980	2.0 8,520	2.0 8,310
141 - Lanaudière	494,795	4.7 23,420	2.0 9,800	0.2 1,140	0.2 1,080
151 - Laurentides	589,400	4.3 25,575	1.8 10,900	0.3 1,650	0.3 1,585
161 - Montérégie-Centre	399,045	14.1 56,140	8.5 33,985	1.3 5,085	1.2 4,940
162 - Montérégie-Est	518,975	5.8 29,865	2.8 14,495	0.3 1,600	0.3 1,535
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	435,435	7.8 33,915	3.8 16,510	0.4 1,680	0.4 1,600
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	8,164,365	13.1 1,066,925	7.2 588,400	0.9 75,895	0.9 73,555

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

3.2 Correspondence between language spoken most often at home and other language characteristics for Québec as a whole and the territorial service networks in 2016

The objective in this section is to describe the level of correspondence between the language spoken most often at home and the other language variables (mother tongue, knowledge of official languages, first official language spoken) for Québec as a whole and the RTSs.

The choice to use language spoken at home as opposed to mother tongue as the basis for the analysis was made because this variable is more widely available in databases used for health studies, and because it better reflects a person's current situation. In Section 3.2, linguistic communities (anglophones, francophones, and allophones) are therefore designated based on language spoken at home.

3.2.1 CROSS-TABULATION OF LANGUAGE SPOKEN MOST OFTEN AT HOME AND MOTHER TONGUE

Québec as a whole

Table 5 shows that in Québec in 2016, there was virtually perfect concordance between language spoken at home and mother tongue for francophones (94%) and for allophones (93%).

But a significant variation emerges in the linguistic portrait of anglophones when comparing data for

language spoken at home and mother tongue. Concordance between the two was only 65%, in other words about two-thirds of those who speak English at home also reported English as their mother tongue.

Some 9% of those who prefer to speak English at home reported French as their mother tongue. That means there are 75,000 anglophones across Québec who, in reality, do not actually face language barriers.

Lastly, nearly one-quarter of Quebecers (24%) who prefer to speak English at home reported a mother tongue other than English or French. People in this category may be immigrants who speak another language, descendants of immigrants who have adopted English as the language they use at home, or people with an Indigenous mother tongue. Across Québec this translates to 200,000 allophones who have made the shift from their mother tongue to English as the language spoken most often at home. These individuals may be more at risk when they need to communicate in the public sphere.

These variations within the anglophone community result in variations in individuals' ability to express their needs, including health-related needs, or use the available resources and services.

Of final note, persons who speak English and French equally at home come from a variety of mother tongue backgrounds: 14% English, 36% French, 24% both languages, and 25% another language (Table 5).

Table 5 Distribution of language spoken most often at home by mother tongue for Québec as a whole, 2016

Language spoken most often at home	Total population	Distribution (%) of mother tongue in total population			
		English	French	Other	English and French
English	846,045 (100%)	64.8 547,835	8.8 74,565	24.0 202,735	2.5 20,905
French	6,600,165 (100%)	0.9 58,220	94.3 6,223,765	4.3 284,765	0.5 33,410
Other	588,400 (100%)	2.0 11,860	4.1 24,350	93.2 548,365	0.7 3,835
English and French	129,750 (100%)	14.4 18,715	36.3 47,160	23.9 31,060	25.3 32,820
Total	8,164,365 (100%)	7.8 636,620	78.0 6,369,840	13.1 1,066,925	1.1 90,965

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Territorial service networks

In order to study the variations in the linguistic portrait of anglophones on a more granular level, the data for **language spoken most often at home (English)** was cross-tabulated with the data for mother tongue for each RTS (Table 6). We see varying degrees of concordance between these two language characteristics from one RTS to another. The correspondence between English spoken at home and English as mother tongue ranges from 41% to 92% depending on the RTS.

The proportion of anglophones (as defined by language spoken at home) who report French as their mother tongue ranges from about 6% to 29% depending on the RTS. The highest proportions can be seen in the RTSs with few anglophones (Bas-Saint-Laurent, Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean, Capitale-Nationale, Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec, and Chaudière-Appalaches). People whose mother tongue is French but who have adopted English at home may encounter less of a language barrier in the public sphere since their mother tongue matches the dominant language.

In contrast, nine RTSs show significant proportions (20% to 50%) of persons using English at home for whom neither official language is their mother tongue. This situation is especially common in and around Montréal. These populations are more vulnerable to communication challenges.

Cross-tabulations of language spoken at home and mother tongue for francophones and allophones by RTS are available in the appendix (Tables A3 and A4).

Table 6 Distribution of mother tongue among persons who speak English most often at home in Québec RTSs, 2016

RTS	Persons who speak English most often at home	Distribution (%) of mother tongue			
		English	French	Other	English and French
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	665	60.2 400	28.6 190	8.3 55	3.8 25
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	1,180	64.4 760	23.3 275	8.1 95	4.2 50
031 - Capitale-Nationale	8,360	63.6 5,320	21.0 1,755	11.1 930	4.4 365
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	3,250	63.8 2,075	23.2 755	9.1 295	3.8 125
051 - Estrie-CHUS	33,500	81.7 27,380	10.9 3,645	5.0 1,665	2.4 810
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	170,170	69.9 118,865	6.5 11,095	21.4 36,445	2.2 3,765
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	142,985	65.6 93,780	5.9 8,390	26.6 38,075	1.9 2,740
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	63,235	66.1 41,800	9.2 5,840	21.9 13,870	2.7 1,720
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	53,815	49.2 26,460	7.4 3,995	41.0 22,040	2.4 1,315
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	51,270	40.9 20,955	6.8 3,470	49.9 25,580	2.5 1,265
071 - Outaouais	66,715	73.2 48,850	14.6 9,730	9.6 6,430	2.6 1,705
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	4,270	72.6 3,100	15.9 680	8.8 375	2.7 115
091 - Côte-Nord	4,130	87.4 3,610	8.2 340	2.9 120	1.6 65
111 - Gaspésie	7,495	87.9 6,585	6.3 475	4.4 330	1.5 115
112 - Îles	615	92.7 570	6.5 40	0.0 0	0.8 5
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	2,125	58.8 1,250	27.8 590	8.5 180	5.4 115
131 - Laval	62,250	45.5 28,340	6.7 4,150	45.3 28,230	2.5 1,530
141 - Lanaudière	9,225	57.7 5,325	15.4 1,420	23.3 2,150	3.6 335
151 - Laurentides	30,520	68.0 20,755	13.7 4,185	15.2 4,650	3.1 935
161 - Montérégie-Centre	37,875	65.7 24,865	10.2 3,845	21.0 7,935	3.2 1,230
162 - Montérégie-Est	12,960	59.6 7,725	17.0 2,205	19.7 2,550	3.7 485
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	75,620	75.9 57,395	9.5 7,210	11.8 8,925	2.8 2,085
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	846,045	64.8 547,835	8.8 74,565	24.0 202,735	2.5 20,905

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

3.2.2 CROSS-TABULATION OF LANGUAGE SPOKEN MOST OFTEN AT HOME AND KNOWLEDGE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

In Québec, a language minority’s inability to converse in French is an indication of potential language barriers. The analysis in this section includes two maps illustrating the proportion of allophones and anglophones (as defined by language spoken most often at home) who cannot converse in French in each RTS.

Québec as a whole

Table 7 shows that in Québec in 2016, four in ten francophones (as defined by language spoken most often at home) knew both official languages. This proportion is identical among allophones (40%). Among anglophones, 70% can conduct a conversation in French.

However, nearly 380,000 Quebecers, or three anglophones in ten and two allophones in 10, can only conduct a conversation in English (see Table 7).

Furthermore, there are 75,000 allophones who cannot converse in either English or French. This is the most vulnerable linguistic community because its members do not know either of Canada’s official languages.

All in all that makes 454,000 people who cannot converse in French in Québec.

Table 7 Knowledge of official languages by language spoken most often at home for Québec as a whole, 2016

Language spoken most often at home	Total population	Distribution (%) of knowledge of official languages for total population			
		English only	French only	Neither English nor French	English and French
English	846,045 (100%)	30.2 255,670	0.0 205	0.0 0	69.8 590,165
French	6,600,165 (100%)	0.0 475	59.6 3,936,980	0.0 0	40.3 2,662,710
Neither English nor French	588,400 (100%)	20.6 121,020	26.8 157,685	12.9 75,895	39.7 233,805
English and French	129,750 (100%)	1.3 1,735	3.4 4,405	0.0 0	95.3 123,610
Total	8,164,365 (100%)	4.6 378,900	50.2 4,099,280	0.9 75,895	44.2 3,610,290

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Territorial service networks

Table 8 shows the distribution of francophones (defined by language spoken most often at home) by knowledge of official languages for each RTS. We see a larger proportion (50% or more) of francophones who are orally bilingual in the Montréal, Outaouais, and Laval RTSs.

Table 9 shows that there are anglophones who can only conduct a conversation in English in every RTS in the province. [Map 1](#) illustrates the RTSs where anglophones are most likely to face language barriers. Proportions range from 13% (Chaudière-Appalaches) to 70% (Îles), but the highest numbers are found in and around Montréal (table 9).

A contrasting picture emerges when we look at allophones’ knowledge of the official languages. More than 50% of allophones know either French or both English and French in every RTS except Gaspésie (Table 10). The proportions of allophones who cannot conduct a conversation in French in each RTS are also illustrated with a map. These proportions vary from 12% (Côte-Nord) to 60% (Gaspésie) (see [Map 2](#)), and as with the anglophones, RTSs with the highest numbers of allophones who do not know French are clustered in the Greater Montréal region.

The group most vulnerable to communication difficulties (those who cannot conduct a conversation in English or French) represents at least 15% of the allophone population in the Estrie-CHUS, Chaudière-Appalaches, Bas-Saint-Laurent, Laurentides, Mauricie-et-du-Centre-du-Québec, Montérégie-Centre, and Centre-Sud-de-l’Île-de-Montréal RTSs (Table 10).

Table 8 Knowledge of official languages among persons who speak French most often at home in Québec RTSs in 2016

RTS	Persons who speak French most often at home	Distribution (%) by knowledge of official languages		
		English only	French only	English and French
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	195,895	0.0 5	82.2 161,020	17.8 34,870
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	273,825	0.0 5	81.6 223,550	18.4 50,275
031 - Capitale-Nationale	703,210	0.0 15	63.1 443,835	36.9 259,360
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	496,000	0.0 5	75.4 373,915	24.6 122,085
051 - Estrie-CHUS	425,390	0.0 10	61.6 262,110	38.4 163,270
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	115,260	0.0 40	32.2 37,130	67.8 78,095
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	106,610	0.0 40	24.9 26,520	75.1 80,050
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	193,020	0.0 20	31.9 61,590	68.1 131,405
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	267,345	0.0 105	44.5 119,070	55.4 148,175
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	367,170	0.0 90	53.5 196,580	46.4 170,495
071 - Outaouais	291,175	0.0 10	38.1 111,025	61.9 180,140
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	140,710	0.0 0	72.9 102,620	27.1 38,085
091 - Côte-Nord	80,190	0.0 0	79.4 63,705	20.6 16,485
111 - Gaspésie	69,395	0.0 0	77.3 53,615	22.7 15,780
112 - Îles	11,795	0.0 0	78.1 9,210	21.9 2,585
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	414,955	0.0 0	75.0 311,205	25.0 103,745
131 - Laval	280,100	0.0 55	46.4 129,935	53.6 150,110
141 - Lanaudière	471,665	0.0 10	65.6 309,405	34.4 162,250
151 - Laurentides	540,895	0.0 15	56.2 303,755	43.8 237,120
161 - Montérégie-Centre	319,475	0.0 20	52.6 168,125	47.4 151,325
162 - Montérégie-Est	486,725	0.0 20	59.0 286,945	41.0 199,760
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	334,620	0.0 5	51.3 171,520	48.7 163,090
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	6,600,165	0.0 475	59.6 3,936,980	40.3 2,662,710

Note: Since the proportion of persons unable to conduct a conversation in English or French only applies to allophones, this data point was not included in the table to avoid showing proportions of zero.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Table 9 Knowledge of official languages among persons who speak English most often at home in Québec RTSs in 2016

RTS	Persons who speak English most often at home	Distribution (%) by knowledge of official languages		
		English only	French only	English and French
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	665	17.3 115	0.0 0	83.5 555
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	1,180	24.2 285	0.0 0	76.3 900
031 - Capitale-Nationale	8,360	16.8 1,405	0.1 5	83.2 6,955
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	3,250	15.5 505	0.0 0	84.3 2,740
051 - Estrie-CHUS	33,500	32.2 10,790	0.0 0	67.8 22,710
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	170,170	30.9 52,590	0.0 30	69.1 117,550
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	142,985	37.3 53,280	0.0 20	62.7 89,685
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	63,235	31.1 19,640	0.0 5	68.9 43,590
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	53,815	26.9 14,450	0.1 45	73.1 39,320
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	51,270	14.6 7,475	0.1 35	85.3 43,755
071 - Outaouais	66,715	44.6 29,780	0.0 5	55.4 36,930
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	4,270	42.3 1,805	0.0 0	57.6 2,460
091 - Côte-Nord	4,130	63.1 2,605	0.0 0	36.9 1,525
111 - Gaspésie	7,495	55.6 4,165	0.0 0	44.4 3,330
112 - Îles	615	69.9 430	0.0 0	29.3 180
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	2,125	13.2 280	0.2 5	86.8 1,845
131 - Laval	62,250	18.3 11,390	0.0 25	81.7 50,835
141 - Lanaudière	9,225	16.9 1,560	0.1 10	83.0 7,660
151 - Laurentides	30,520	22.4 6,850	0.0 5	77.5 23,665
161 - Montérégie-Centre	37,875	26.2 9,935	0.0 10	73.7 27,930
162 - Montérégie-Est	12,960	18.6 2,405	0.0 5	81.4 10,545
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	75,620	28.5 21,515	0.0 5	71.5 54,100
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	846,045	30.2 255,670	0.0 205	69.8 590,165

Note: Since the proportion of persons unable to conduct a conversation in English or French only applies to allophones, this data point was not included in the table to avoid showing proportions of zero.

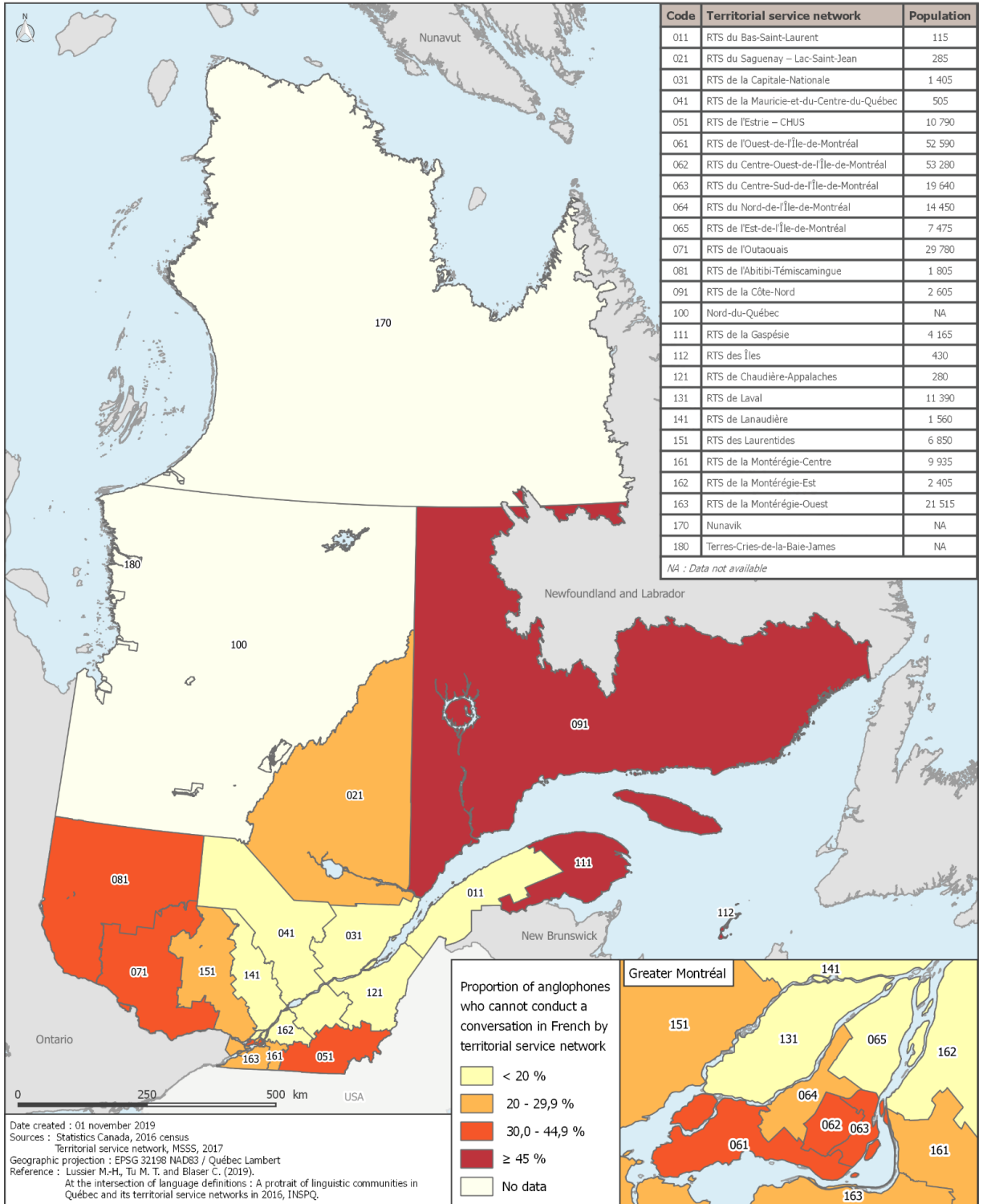
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Map 1

Anglophones (defined by language spoken at home) who are unable to conduct a conversation in French by RTS, 2016



Language barriers : Anglophones who cannot conduct a conversation in French by territorial service network in 2016



Map 2

Allophones (defined by language spoken at home) who are unable to conduct a conversation in French by RTS, 2016



Language barriers : Allophones who cannot conduct a conversation in French by territorial service network in 2016

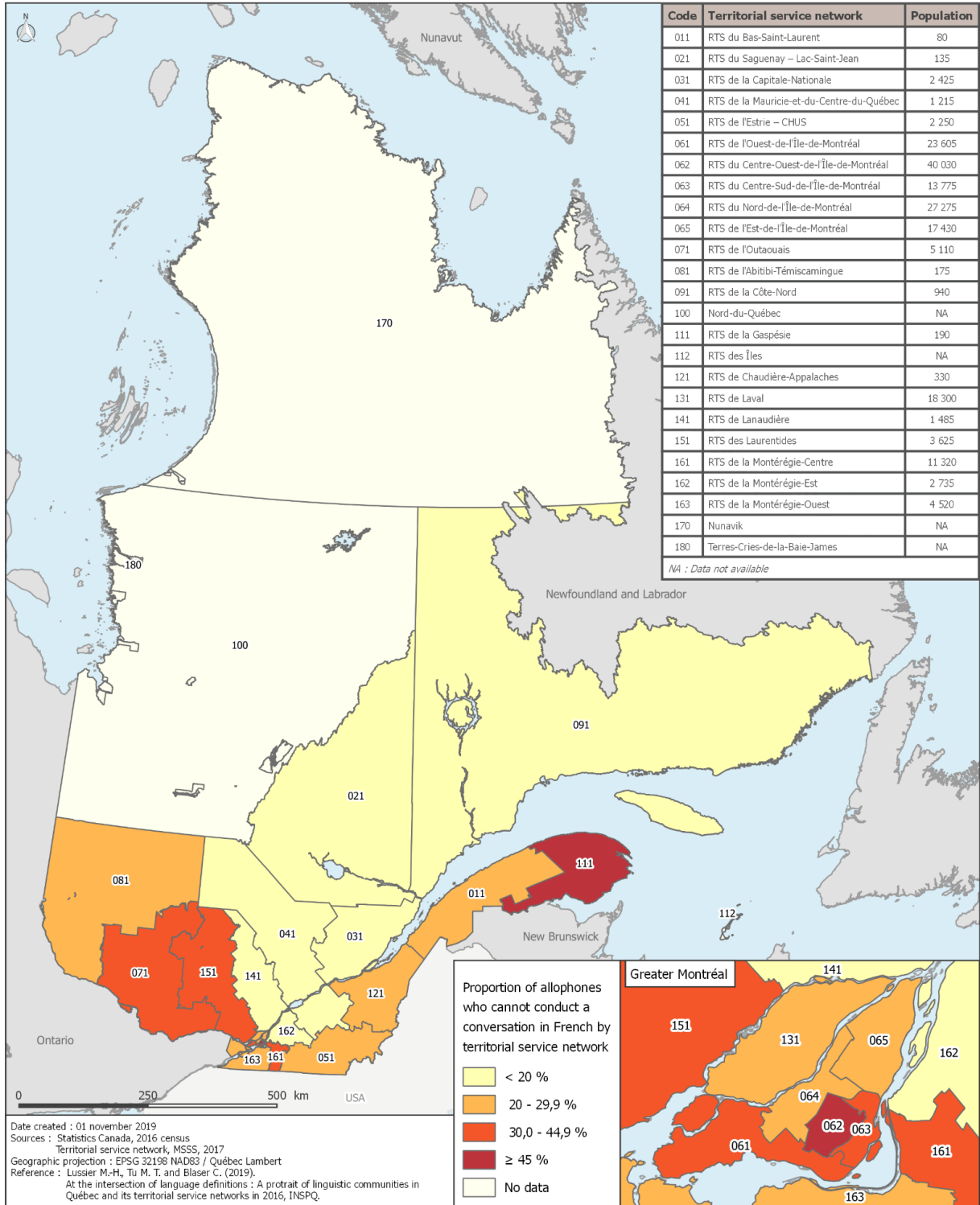


Table 10 Knowledge of official languages among persons who speak neither English nor French at home in Québec RTSs in 2016

RTS	Persons whose language spoken most often at home is neither English nor French	Distribution (%) by knowledge of official languages				
		English only	French only	Neither English nor French	English and French	Not French ^a
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	325	9.2 30	41.5 135	15.4 50	35.4 115	24.6 80
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	720	4.9 35	51.4 370	13.9 100	30.6 220	18.8 135
031 - Capitale-Nationale	14,245	3.3 470	49.2 7,015	13.7 1,955	33.7 4,805	17.0 2,425
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	7,265	1.9 135	67.4 4,900	14.9 1,080	15.9 1,155	16.7 1,215
051 - Estrie-CHUS	8,895	7.9 700	42.7 3,800	17.4 1,550	32.0 2,845	25.3 2,250
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	58,710	29.0 17,025	13.1 7,705	11.2 6,580	46.7 27,400	40.2 23,605
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Mtl	83,325	36.3 30,280	11.6 9,690	11.7 9,750	40.3 33,605	48.0 40,030
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	34,930	24.7 8,630	17.2 6,020	14.7 5,145	43.3 15,135	39.4 13,775
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	92,610	15.3 14,155	31.0 28,700	14.2 13,120	39.6 36,635	29.5 27,275
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	82,265	7.5 6,190	43.3 35,615	13.7 11,240	35.5 29,225	21.2 17,340
071 - Outaouais	15,975	20.4 3,265	24.2 3,865	11.5 1,845	43.8 6,995	32.0 5,110
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	805	11.2 90	38.5 310	10.6 85	39.8 320	21.7 175
091 - Côte-Nord	7,805	6.5 505	77.5 6,050	5.6 435	10.4 815	12.0 940
111 - Gaspésie	315	55.6 175	12.7 40	4.8 15	28.6 90	60.3 190
112 - Îles	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	1,615	3.1 50	48.6 785	17.3 280	30.7 495	20.4 330
131 - Laval	66,980	14.6 9,780	25.8 17,250	12.7 8,520	46.9 31,430	27.3 18,300
141 - Lanaudière	9,800	3.5 340	54.7 5,365	11.7 1,145	30.2 2,955	15.2 1,485
151 - Laurentides	10,900	18.1 1,975	27.4 2,990	15.1 1,650	39.3 4,285	33.3 3,625
161 - Montérégie-Centre	33,985	18.4 6,240	21.5 7,305	14.9 5,080	45.2 15,355	33.3 11,320
162 - Montérégie-Est	14,495	7.8 1,135	39.9 5,790	11.0 1,600	41.2 5,970	18.9 2,735
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	16,510	17.2 2,840	21.6 3,560	10.2 1,680	51.0 8,425	27.4 4,520
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	588,400	20.6 121,020	26.8 157,685	12.9 75,895	39.7 233,805	31.5 176,955 ^b

^a Data used for the map. Allophones who do not know French (English only + neither English nor French).

^b The total for this column ("Not French") is the sum of the RTSs, which is not equal to the total for Québec as a whole.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

N/A: Not available for methodological reasons.

3.2.3 CROSS-TABULATION OF LANGUAGE SPOKEN MOST OFTEN AT HOME AND FIRST OFFICIAL LANGUAGE SPOKEN

Québec as a whole

Table 11 shows that more than nine in ten persons who use English at home also reported English as their first official language spoken (FOLS), while the rest (9%) reported French as their FOLS. Nearly 100% of those who use French at home also reported French as their FOLS. For bilingual individuals and those who speak neither English nor French at home, the most frequent FOLS reported is “Both English and French,” followed by French, then English.

Table 11 First official language spoken by language spoken most often at home for Québec as a whole, 2016

Language spoken most often at home	Total population	Distribution (%) of first official language spoken			
		English	French	Neither English nor French	English and French
English	846,045 (100%)	91.4 773,300	8.6 72,745	0.0 0	0.0 0
French	6,600,165 (100%)	0.8 54,360	99.2 6,545,805	0.0 0	0.0 0
Neither English nor French	588,400 (100%)	21.6 126,970	29.0 170,370	12.5 73,560	37.0 217,500
English and French	129,750 (100%)	15.1 19,635	37.2 48,295	0.0 0	47.6 61,820
Total	8,164,365 (100%)	11.9 974,275	83.7 6,837,210	0.9 73,555	3.4 279,320

Note: The proportion of persons whose first official language spoken is either “Both English and French” or “Neither English nor French” only applies to allophones and bilingual individuals (according to Statistics Canada’s official determination; see references in the Definitions section). This data was not included in the table on anglophones to avoid showing proportions of zero.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Territorial service networks

Table 12 shows the distribution of first official language spoken among those who speak English most often at home. In the Bas-Saint-Laurent, Chaudière-Appalaches, Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec, Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean, and Capitale-Nationale RTSS, about one-quarter of those who primarily use English at home report French as their first official language spoken.

The distribution is balanced across the FOLS categories for allophones in most RTSS (see Table A5 in the appendix). The FOLS distribution table for francophones is also available in the appendix (Table A6).

Table 12 First official language spoken among persons who speak English most often at home in Québec RTSs in 2016

RTS	Persons who speak English most often at home	Distribution (%) by first official language spoken	
		English	French
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	665	72.2 480	28.6 190
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	1,180	78.4 925	21.6 255
031 - Capitale-Nationale	8,360	79.5 6,650	20.5 1,715
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	3,250	77.4 2,515	22.6 735
051 - Estrie-CHUS	33,500	89.4 29,955	10.6 3,550
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	170,170	93.7 159,370	6.3 10,800
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	142,985	94.3 134,890	5.7 8,095
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	63,235	90.9 57,505	9.1 5,730
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	53,815	92.7 49,910	7.3 3,905
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	51,270	93.4 47,865	6.6 3,405
071 - Outaouais	66,715	85.8 57,250	14.2 9,460
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	4,270	84.5 3,610	15.5 660
091 - Côte-Nord	4,130	92.1 3,805	8.0 330
111 - Gaspésie	7,495	94.1 7,055	5.9 440
112 - Îles	615	93.5 575	6.5 40
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	2,125	73.2 1,555	26.6 565
131 - Laval	62,250	93.4 58,165	6.6 4,080
141 - Lanaudière	9,225	84.8 7,825	15.2 1,400
151 - Laurentides	30,520	86.5 26,410	13.5 4,110
161 - Montérégie-Centre	37,875	90.0 34,095	10.0 3,775
162 - Montérégie-Est	12,960	83.3 10,790	16.7 2,165
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	75,620	90.7 68,550	9.3 7,070
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	846,045	91.4 773,300	8.6 72,745

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

4 Discussion and conclusion

One of the objectives of this report was to describe the language landscape in Québec and its territorial service networks in relation to different language variables. Unsurprisingly, analysis of the 2016 census data shows that the majority of Quebecers are francophones, as defined by mother tongue or language spoken at home, and that anglophones and allophones are language minorities in the province. Nearly 95% of Quebecers say they can conduct a conversation in French, while about half can do so in English.

While the data indicates that seven in ten anglophones know French, they may nevertheless confront language barriers in their daily lives, in particular when seeking health care or services. A person's mother tongue is the best option for communicating about health problems and treatment options, especially when the patient is in pain or elderly (Quimet *et al.*, 2013).

The situation can be more problematic for the 6% of people living in Québec who cannot speak French. These 454,000 people are found in all of the province's territorial service networks, not only in the Greater Montréal area. The challenges are even greater for a subgroup of 75,000 who are especially vulnerable: 13% of allophones or nearly 1% of the total population of Québec is unable to speak either English or French. The majority of this subgroup lives in and around Montréal.

Another aim of the report was to tease out the complexity of language practices and definitions, and how interrelated they are. Language definitions enable us to define the linguistic communities we use as a basis for calculating health indicators and determinants. Depending on which definition is used, the populations that make up each linguistic group are not identical. As we have shown, these populations may face language obstacles that can have an impact on their health. A better understanding of the complex reality behind each language definition is important to interpreting any disparities in health we find between language groups. This is especially true since language definitions vary from one database to another and there is not always a choice.

What emerges most prominently from our cross-analysis of the various possible language definitions is a heterogeneity in the anglophone community as defined by language spoken most often at home. Across Québec, 9% of persons who speak primarily English at home are French mother tongue speakers. In some territorial service networks that proportion exceeds 20%. There are effectively no language barriers for these anglophones in Québec. In contrast, people who speak English at home but whose mother tongue is neither English nor French (24% of all anglophones in Québec and up to 50% in certain RTSS) may be quite vulnerable at a communicational level.

In addition to providing an updated portrait of the linguistic profile of Québec's population, this report shows that the minority linguistic communities served by territorial service network facilities are quite heterogeneous. The cross-tabulation of language variables provides a more in-depth perspective on our linguistic communities. It reveals that certain populations are less vulnerable, or conversely more vulnerable, than they may first appear when examined through a one-dimensional language definition lens. As a result, vigilance is required when analyzing population pools based on a single language variable.

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Appendix: Additional tables

Table A 1 Distribution of population by mother tongue, language spoken most often at home, knowledge of official languages, and first official language spoken, Québec, 2016

	Mother tongue	Language spoken most often at home	Knowledge of official languages ^a	First official language spoken
English	7.8 636,620	10.4 846,045	4.6 378,900	11.9 974,275
French	78.0 6,369,840	80.8 6,600,165	50.2 4,099,280	83.7 6,837,210
Other	13.1 1,066,925	7.2 588,400	0.9 75,895	3.4 73,555
English and French	1.1 90,965	1.6 129,750	44.2 3,610,290	0.9 279,320
Total	8,164,365	8,164,365	8 164 365	8,164,365

^a For knowledge of official languages, “English” refers to persons who know only English; “French” to persons who know only French; “Other” to persons who know neither English nor French; and “English and French” to persons who can conduct a conversation in both languages.

Table A 2 Distribution of population in regions with no RTS (Nunavik, Terres-Cries-de-la-Baie-James, and Nord-du-Québec) by mother tongue, language spoken most often at home, knowledge of official languages, and first official language spoken, Québec, 2016

	Mother tongue	Language spoken most often at home	Knowledge of official languages ^a	First official language spoken
English	5.0 2,230	8.6 3,815	43.6 19,415	46.6 20,765
French	33.1 14,775	33.1 14,740	24.7 10,995	34.7 15,465
Other	61.6 27,475	58.1 25,915	6.7 2,985	6.7 2,965
English and French	0.2 95	0.2 90	25.0 11,150	12.0 5,365
Total	44,575	44,575	44,575	44,575

^a For knowledge of official languages, “English” refers to persons who know only English; “French” to persons who know only French; “Other” to persons who know neither English nor French; and “English and French” to persons who can conduct a conversation in both languages.

Table A 2 shows the breakdown of the population of regions with no RTS (Nunavik, Terres-Cries-de-la-Baie-James, and Nord-du-Québec) in 2016 by language variable. The data for mother tongue and language spoken at home paints two very similar pictures.

About 60% of residents of these regions speak neither English nor French as their mother tongue or language spoken most often at home. One-third (33%) of residents report French as their language, while only 5% to 9% of them report English as their mother tongue or language spoken at home, respectively. A slight language shift is observed, with the proportion of allophones as defined by mother tongue dropping a bit and giving way to English as the language spoken at home.

As for knowledge of Canada’s official languages, in 2016 44% of residents of these regions reported knowing only English, and one-quarter only French. One in four residents can conduct a conversation in both official languages, in contrast to about 7% of the population who can converse in neither English nor French.

The first official language spoken in regions outside the RTSs in 2016 was English for 47% of the population, French for 35%, and both languages for 12%.

Table A 3 Distribution of mother tongue among persons who speak French most often at home in each RTS in Québec, 2016

RTS	Persons who speak French most often at home	Distribution (%) of mother tongue			
		English	French	Other	English and French
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	195,895	0.3 645	99.2 194,340	0.3 555	0.2 355
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	273,825	0.3 905	99.0 271,200	0.4 1,215	0.2 500
031 - Capitale-Nationale	703,210	0.7 4,700	97.0 682,335	2.0 13,815	0.3 2,370
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	496,000	0.5 2,615	98.3 487,785	0.9 4,235	0.3 1,370
051 - Estrie-CHUS	425,390	1.1 4,790	96.9 412,395	1.4 6,065	0.5 2,140
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	115,260	1.8 2,080	84.9 97,890	12.1 13,895	1.2 1,395
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	106,610	1.7 1,815	80.3 85,600	16.9 17,970	1.1 1,225
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	193,020	1.4 2,785	89.9 173,515	7.8 15,120	0.8 1,605
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	267,345	0.9 2,440	79.9 213,720	18.4 49,135	0.8 2,055
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	367,170	0.8 3,035	83.8 307,700	14.8 54,250	0.6 2,185
071 - Outaouais	291,175	1.6 4,710	94.3 274,455	3.2 9,395	0.9 2,615
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	140,710	0.9 1,275	97.6 137,390	1.1 1,490	0.4 555
091 - Côte-Nord	80,190	0.6 495	97.2 77,910	1.9 1,510	0.3 275
111 - Gaspésie	69,395	1.3 870	98.0 68,020	0.3 210	0.4 300
112 - Îles	11,795	0.5 55	99.2 11,695	0.2 25	0.1 15
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	414,955	0.5 2,005	98.8 410,095	0.5 1,975	0.2 880
131 - Laval	280,100	1.0 2,820	85.3 238,845	13.0 36,335	0.8 2,105
141 - Lanaudière	471,665	0.7 3,395	96.4 454,820	2.4 11,520	0.4 1,930
151 - Laurentides	540,895	1.0 5,525	96.6 522,550	1.8 9,935	0.5 2,880
161 - Montérégie-Centre	319,475	1.1 3,375	93.8 299,600	4.5 14,455	0.6 2,045
162 - Montérégie-Est	486,725	0.7 3,550	96.1 467,825	2.7 13,125	0.5 2,220
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	334,620	1.3 4,195	95.6 319,755	2.5 8,310	0.7 2,365
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	6,600,165	0.9 58,220	94.3 6,223,765	4.3 284,765	0.5 33,410

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Table A 4 Distribution of mother tongue among persons who speak a language other than English or French most often at home in Québec RTSs, 2016

RTS	Persons whose language spoken most often at home is neither English nor French	Distribution (%) of mother tongue			
		English	French	Other	English and French
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	325	3.1 10	9.2 30	87.7 285	-
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	720	0.7 5	16.0 115	82.6 595	-
031 - Capitale-Nationale	14,245	0.7 105	5.7 810	93.2 13,280	0.3 45
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	7,265	0.6 45	4.1 300	95.1 6,910	0.1 10
051 - Estrie-CHUS	8,895	1.0 85	5.6 500	93.3 8,295	0.2 20
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	58,710	2.9 1,720	2.7 1,565	93.4 54,860	0.9 555
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	83,325	4.0 3,325	2.6 2,135	92.7 77,280	0.7 585
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	34,930	2.6 920	3.4 1,185	93.3 32,600	0.6 225
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	92,610	1.7 1,550	4.9 4,495	92.8 85,970	0.6 595
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	82,265	1.1 905	5.7 4,655	92.7 76,285	0.5 425
071 - Outaouais	15,975	1.8 285	5.6 895	91.9 14,675	0.8 120
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	805	2.5 20	15.5 125	80.7 650	1.2 10
091 - Côte-Nord	7,805	0.8 60	3.5 275	95.6 7,460	0.1 5
111 - Gaspésie	315	12.7 40	6.3 20	81.0 255	-
112 - Îles	10	-	-	100.0 10	-
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	1,615	0.3 5	10.8 175	88.5 1,430	0.6 10
131 - Laval	66,980	1.6 1,075	4.4 2,965	93.0 62,300	1.0 640
141 - Lanaudière	9,800	0.6 55	7.0 690	92.1 9,030	0.3 25
151 - Laurentides	10,900	1.6 175	4.9 530	92.9 10,125	0.7 75
161 - Montérégie-Centre	33,985	1.7 585	3.8 1,295	93.6 31,815	0.9 290
162 - Montérégie-Est	14,495	1.2 175	5.8 835	92.5 13,410	0.5 75
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	16,510	2.0 330	3.6 595	93.6 15,450	0.8 135
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	588,400	2.0 11,860	4.1 24,350	93.2 548,365	0.7 3,835

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Table A 5 First official language spoken among persons who speak neither English nor French most often at home in Québec RTSs in 2016

RTS	Persons whose language spoken most often at home is neither English nor French	Distribution (%) by first official language spoken			
		English	French	Neither English nor French	English and French
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	325	10.8 35	46.2 150	12.3 40	32.3 105
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	720	4.9 35	57.6 415	11.1 80	25.7 185
031 - Capitale-Nationale	14,245	3.8 540	51.7 7,365	13.1 1,865	31.4 4,475
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	7,265	2.1 155	69.2 5,025	14.4 1,045	14.3 1,040
051 - Estrie-CHUS	8,895	8.5 755	45.3 4,030	16.6 1,480	29.6 2,630
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	58,710	30.6 17,975	14.9 8,755	10.8 6,350	43.7 25,630
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	83,325	37.9 31,615	13.2 11,025	11.4 9,460	37.5 31,230
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	34,930	26.0 9,095	19.4 6,780	14.4 5,015	40.2 14,035
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	92,610	16.2 14,995	33.4 30,975	13.8 12,760	36.6 33,880
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	82,265	8.2 6,750	45.6 37,510	13.3 10,905	32.9 27,100
071 - Outaouais	15,975	21.2 3,390	27.7 4,430	11.0 1,765	39.9 6,380
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	805	12.4 100	44.1 355	9.9 80	32.9 265
091 - Côte-Nord	7,805	6.7 520	78.1 6,095	5.4 420	9.8 765
111 - Gaspésie	315	60.3 190	14.3 45	3.2 10	23.8 75
112 - Îles	10	-	50.0 5	50.0 5	50.0 5
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	1,615	3.4 55	54.5 880	15.2 245	26.9 435
131 - Laval	66,980	15.5 10,400	28.2 18,920	12.4 8,310	43.8 29,350
141 - Lanaudière	9,800	3.9 380	57.8 5,660	11.0 1,080	27.3 2,680
151 - Laurentides	10,900	18.8 2,045	30.0 3,270	14.5 1,585	36.7 4,000
161 - Montérégie-Centre	33,985	19.4 6,600	23.7 8,060	14.5 4,940	42.3 14,385
162 - Montérégie-Est	14,495	8.6 1,240	42.5 6,160	10.6 1,530	38.4 5,565
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	16,510	18.4 3,040	23.7 3,915	9.7 1,600	48.2 7,955
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	588,400	21.6 126,970	29.0 170,370	12.5 73,560	37.0 217,500

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

Table A 6 First official language spoken among persons who speak French most often at home in Québec RTSs in 2016

RTS	Persons who speak French most often at home	Distribution (%) by first official language spoken	
		English	French
011 - Bas-Saint-Laurent	195,895	0.3 545	99.7 195,350
021 - Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	273,825	0.3 765	99.7 273,060
031 - Capitale-Nationale	703,210	0.6 4,280	99.4 698,935
041 - Mauricie-et-Centre-du-Québec	496,000	0.5 2,320	99.5 493,685
051 - Estrie-CHUS	425,390	1.1 4,540	98.9 420,850
061 - Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	115,260	1.7 2,000	98.3 113,255
062 - Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	106,610	1.6 1,715	98.4 104,900
063 - Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	193,020	1.4 2,660	98.6 190,355
064 - Nord-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	267,345	0.9 2,330	99.1 265,015
065 - Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal	367,170	0.8 2,815	99.2 364,355
071 - Outaouais	291,175	1.6 4,565	98.4 286,610
081 - Abitibi-Témiscamingue	140,710	0.8 1,160	99.2 139,545
091 - Côte-Nord	80,190	0.5 430	99.5 79,755
111 - Gaspésie	69,395	1.2 805	98.8 68,595
112 - Îles	11,795	0.4 50	99.6 11,745
121 - Chaudière-Appalaches	414,955	0.4 1,765	99.6 413,190
131 - Laval	280,100	1.0 2,700	99.0 277,405
141 - Lanaudière	471,665	0.7 3,150	99.3 468,515
151 - Laurentides	540,895	1.0 5,225	99.0 535,670
161 - Montérégie-Centre	319,475	1.0 3,200	99.0 316,270
162 - Montérégie-Est	486,725	0.7 3,205	99.3 483,520
163 - Montérégie-Ouest	334,620	1.2 4,015	98.8 330,605
Québec as a whole Including regions outside the RTSs	6,600,165	0.8 54,360	99.2 6,545,805

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census. Table 1, CO-1788 special order.

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