

Employment Profile of English Speakers in Montréal

Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT)



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The views expressed herein are those of the Provincial Employment Roundtable. They do not purport to reflect the views of the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise.

**Secrétariat aux relations
avec les Québécois
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Québec 

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This profile aims to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the employment issues faced by Montréal's English-speaking communities by surveying the most comprehensive information on the demographic and labour force conditions of English speakers in the region. The profile compiles the available data on English speakers' employment status with respect to their position as linguistic minorities in majority French-speaking communities. For this reason, most of the information presented in this profile is organized by the two linguistic categories of English speakers and French speakers.

In addition to examining the demographics and labour force of the English-speaking population, this profile also surveys Montréal's economic structure, as well as the work activity, income, and educational attainment of workers with the goal of providing a more holistic picture of employment and employability.

Key findings:

- Montréal has a population of 1,895,000 individuals; 622,160 are English speakers.
- In every urban region in Québec, English speakers make up a larger share of the labour force than they do the total population. English speakers constitute 34.1% of Montréal's labour force, and 32.8% of the region's population.
- English speakers aged 25-44 make up the largest share of both the total English-speaking population and the labour force.
- Among both English and French speakers, there are more men in the labour force than women. However, men experience a higher unemployment rate than women, which suggests that while there are fewer women in the labour force, they are employed at a higher rate than men.
- English speakers in Montréal have an unemployment rate of 9.1%. This is higher than the unemployment rate of French speakers in the region (8.8%).
- Youth aged 15-24 experience the highest unemployment rates in the region, irrespective of linguistic identity. English-speaking youth experience a higher unemployment rate (16.6%) than French-speaking youth (15.9%).
- English speakers in Montréal earn a lower median after-tax income than French speakers (\$26,378 compared to \$28,385) despite higher engagement in full-time work and working a higher average number of weeks per year.

METHODOLOGY & DEFINITIONS

Methodology

This profile relies primarily on data from two sources: the 2016 Census of Canada and the Institut de la statistique du Québec.¹

The profile uses 25% sample data from the 2016 Census. The 25% sample data is drawn from the approximately 25% of Canadian private households who received a long form questionnaire.

The data in this profile is organized by administrative region and regional county municipality/municipalité régionale comté (RCM/MRC). Administrative regions and regional county municipalities serve to organize the allocation and delivery of government services in Québec.

Language

English speakers and French speakers in this profile are classified according to Statistics Canada's definition of First Official Language Spoken (FOLS).² Individuals who speak both English and French as their first official language are evenly divided among English and French speakers. FOLS designation is a derived concept, taking into account a person's knowledge of Canada's two official languages, their mother tongue, and their home language (i.e. the language they speak most often at home).

Sex

Sex in this profile refers to sex assigned at birth, as indicated in the 2016 Census. Sex is typically assigned based on a person's reproductive system and other physical characteristics. The 2016 Census data exclusively utilizes the concept of sex, and particularly the categories of male and female. Data regarding the distinct concept of gender was collected for the first time in the 2021 Census, and will be made available in those datasets.

Labour Force Activity

Labour force refers to all individuals aged 15 and over who were either employed or unemployed during the week of May 1st to May 7th, in 2016. The labour force excludes individuals who are institutional residents, those who are unable to work, and those who are unwilling to work. For example, retirees, stay-at-home parents, students, and discouraged workers

who have stopped job-searching are not typically counted as part of the labour force. Generally, Statistics Canada does not consider those engaged in unpaid services such as community and volunteer services, or unpaid domestic services, to be part of the labour force.

Employed/Unemployed Person

An employed person is an individual who, during the week of May 1st to May 7th, 2016, did paid work in the context of an employer-employee relationship, or who was self-employed. The term also refers to individuals who did unpaid family work, which is defined as work directly contributing to the operation of a farm, business, or professional practice owned by a relative in the same household (this does not include unpaid domestic services like childcare and household maintenance). The definition also includes individuals who had employment but were temporarily absent from work during the reference period due to events such as illness, disability, vacation, or labour dispute.

An unemployed person is an individual who did not have paid work during the week of May 1st to 7th, 2016, but had either been actively looking for paid work in the last four weeks, had been temporarily laid-off, or had definite plans to start a new job within four weeks.

Unemployment Rate

This refers to unemployment expressed as a percentage of the labour force in the week of May 1 to 7, 2016. The unemployment rate for a particular demographic (i.e. age, sex) is the number of unemployed in that group, expressed as a percentage of the labour force for that group.

Work Activity

Work activity refers to whether or not a person 15 years or over worked in 2015. For those who worked, this refers to the number of weeks they worked for pay or in self-employment during the reference year, even if they only worked for a couple hours. It provides a wider portrait of an individual's engagement in work over the period of a year.

After-tax Income

After-tax income refers to the total income of a person less income taxes. Income taxes refers to the sum of federal

1. Census data is the primary and most comprehensive source of linguistic-based information on Québec's English-speaking labour force. The fact that this data is only available every 5 years is a considerable limitation for those who rely on linguistic-based data to make important decisions. There is a need for more frequent data collection and publication on the socio-economic status of linguistic minorities by Statistics Canada, the Institut de la statistique du Québec and relevant research networks.

2. Statistics Canada. "First official language spoken of person," (2021, November 02). Government of Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3Var.pl?Function=DEC&id=34004>

METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

income taxes, provincial and territorial income taxes, less abatement where applicable.

Educational Attainment

Refers to the highest level of education that a person has successfully completed.

Industry

Industry refers to the specific economic activity engaged in by a given group. An activity, in turn, is the combination of labour, capital, and goods in order to produce new goods and/or services. The industry data are produced according to the North American Industry Classification System 2012.

Population



POPULATION

Total Population

English-speaking Population



Montréal

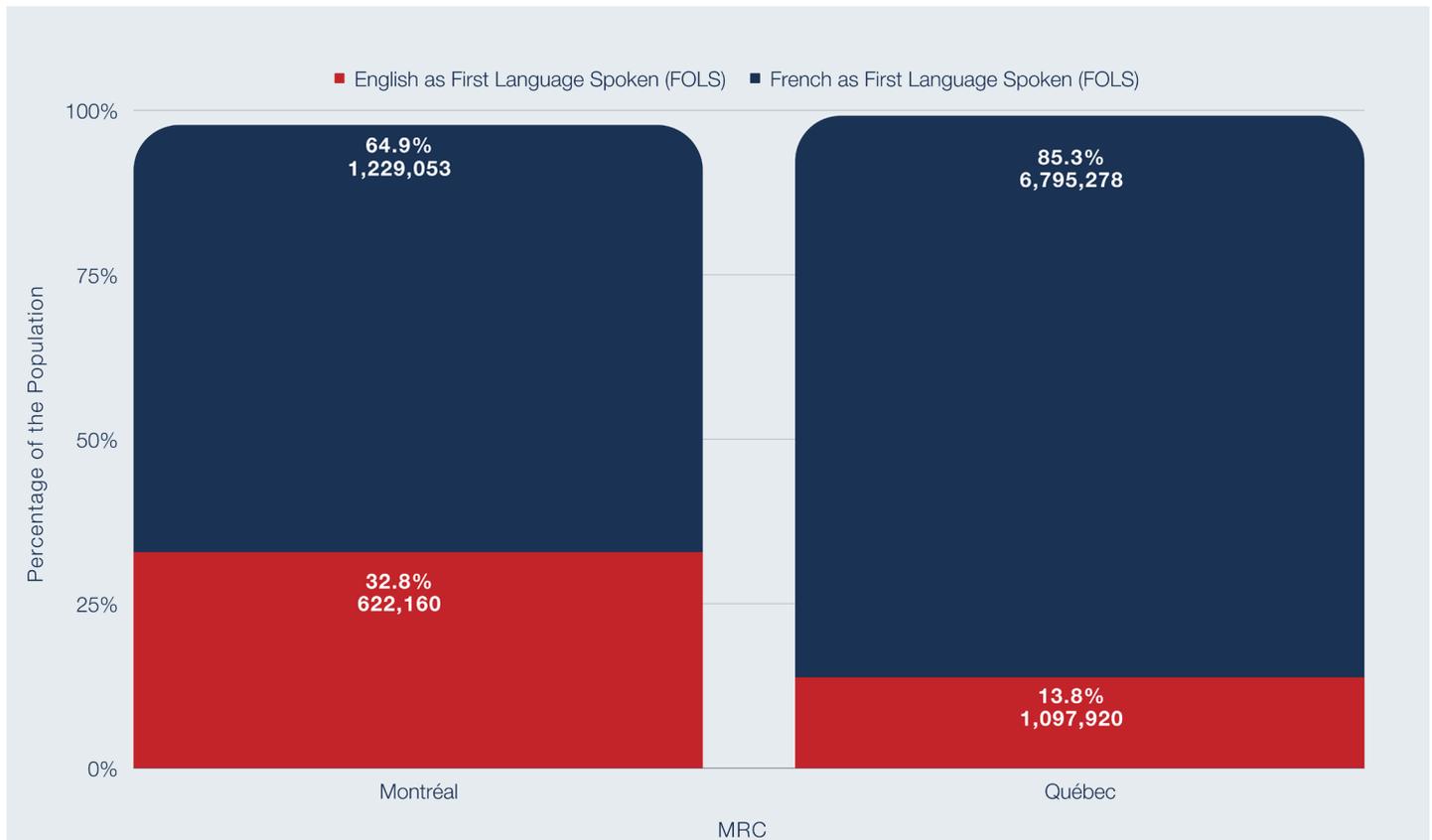
Montréal is Québec's largest region by population, with a total population of 1,895,000 individuals.

Approximately 622,160 individuals - or 32.8% of Montréal's total population - are English speakers.

More than half of all English speakers in Québec (56.7%) live in Montréal.

Montréal has the second-highest percentage of English speakers within any region of Québec, after Nord-du-Québec.

Graph 1: Total Population of Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

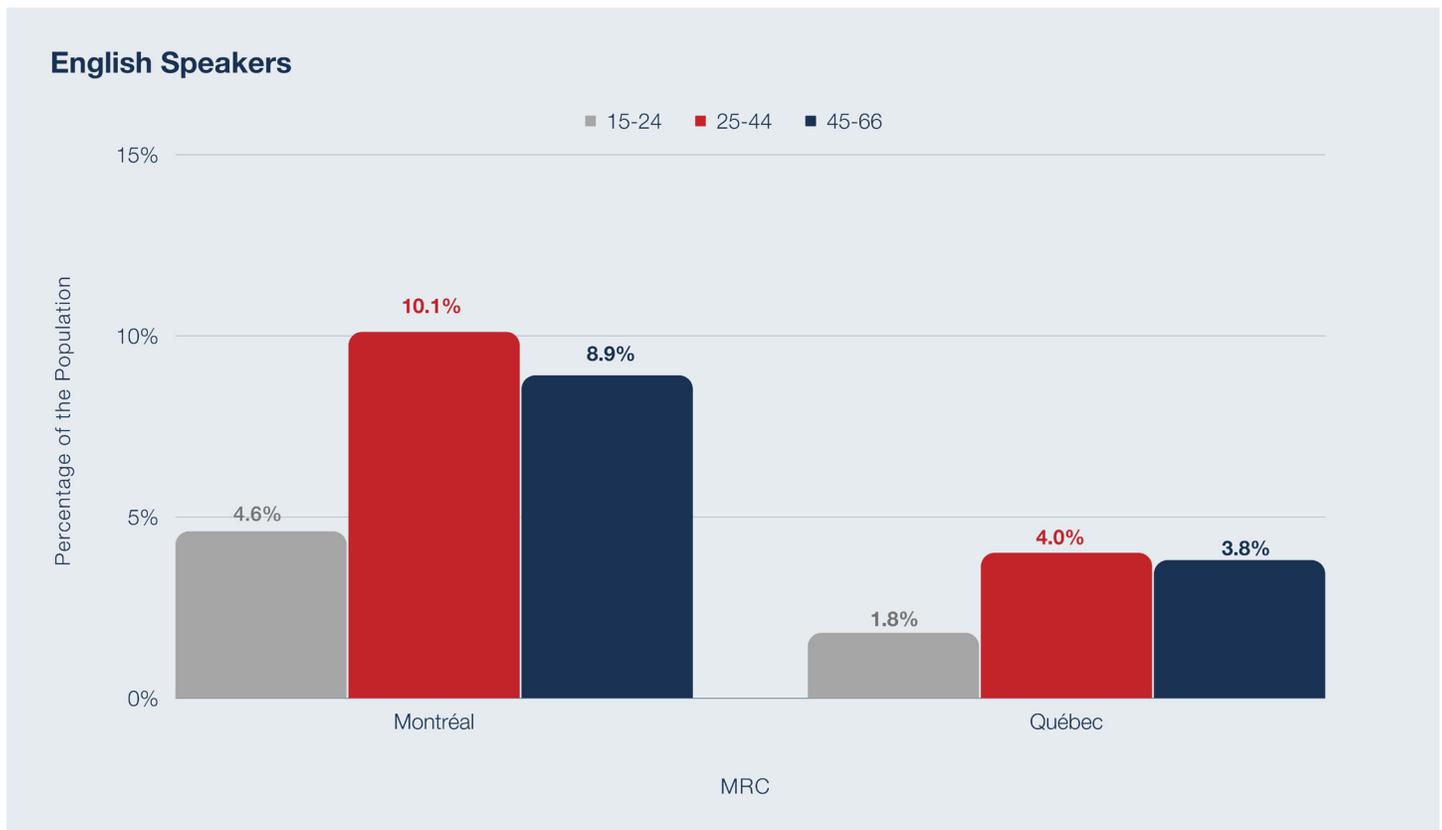
POPULATION

Age Structure of Population

Across every age group, there is approximately double the number of French speakers as English speakers.

Montréal is the only region where French-speaking individuals aged 45-64 are not the largest age-linguistic group in the total population. French-speaking 25-44 year olds represent the single largest age-linguistic group in the region, representing 20.3% of the total population.

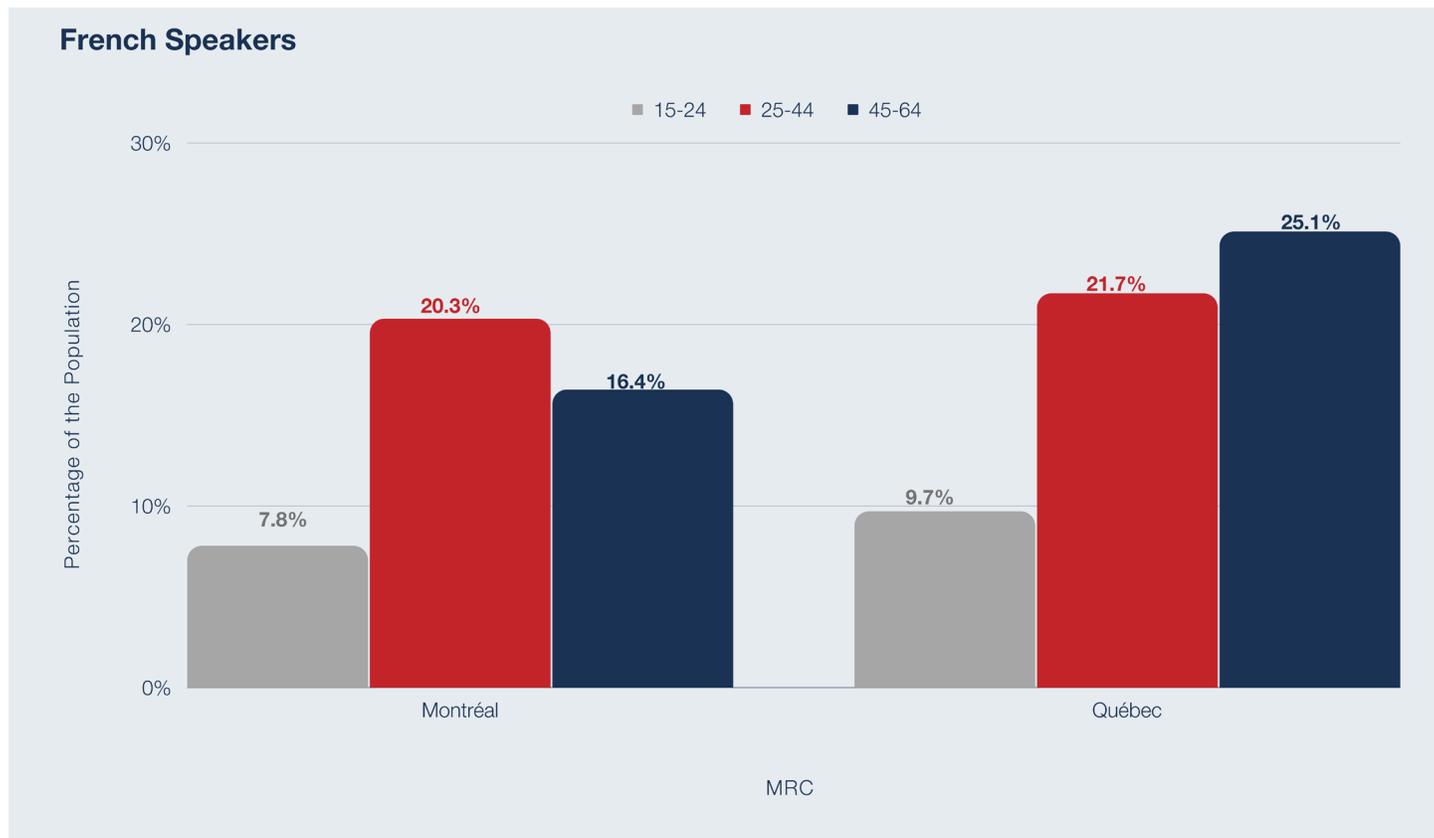
Graph 2a: Age Structure of Montréal's Population



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

POPULATION

Graph 2b: Age Structure of Montréal's Population



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

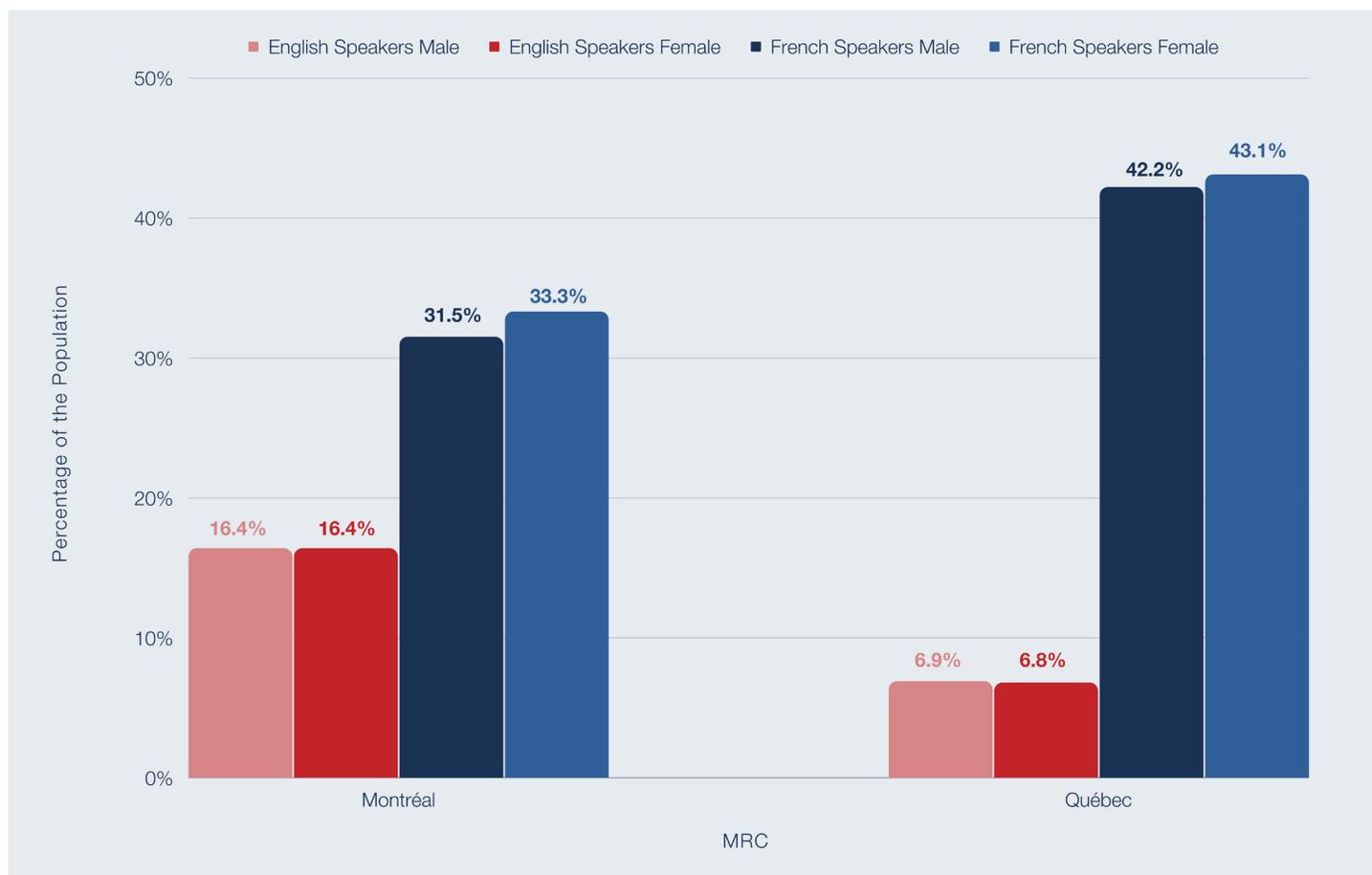
POPULATION

Sex Structure of Population

French-speaking women are the largest sex-linguistic group in both Montréal (33.3%) and Québec (43.1%), while French-speaking men represent a slightly smaller sex-linguistic group (31.5% in Montréal and 42.2% of Québec).

English-speaking men and women in Montréal each represent 16.4% of the total population.

Graph 3: Sex Structure of Montréal's Population



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

Economic Structure



ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

Montréal is designated as an urban region in Québec's Economic Development Index.³ As of 2018, Montréal has a score of 107.3, an increase of 3 points from its 2013 score of 104.3. With this new score, Montréal surpassed Capitale-Nationale to become the region with the highest score, indicating strong economic performance and growth.⁴

Employment in Montréal is largely centered on the service sector, which is consistent with its high degree of urbanization. Prominent industries include financial and real estate services, professional, technical and scientific services, information and cultural industries, health care, education, and tourism. Notably, there are ten industrial clusters that Montréal has developed in the past 15 years, which include aerospace, film and television, fashion, information technology, and electric and intelligent transportation.⁵

From 2013-2017, sales of manufactured goods produced in the region increased by an average of 1.1% per year, compared to a provincial yearly growth rate of 3%. Following this period (2017-2021), private investment in Montréal increased by an annual average of 4.9%, compared to a provincial private investment growth of 1.7% annually. Over one third of private investment in Québec is in the Montréal region.⁶ Major upcoming projects include the construction of the Réseau express métropolitain (REM), an extension of the existing transportation network valued at \$6.3 billion. Additionally, the City of Montréal and the province of Québec will inject approximately \$9 billion for infrastructure projects including road maintenance, replacement of water structure, and updating of water infrastructure. Commercial projects include the Royalmount commercial development (located in the Town of Mount Royal) and the renovation of the Centre Eaton in downtown Montréal.

3. This index analyzes the economic reality of the region according to four components: demographics, labour market, income, and education. A score of more than 100 indicates that a region is above average, while the increase of a score over time indicates better performance in comparison with other regions.

4. Frédéric Hamelin. "Portrait économique des régions du Québec," (2020). Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation. Retrieved from: https://www.economie.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/contenu/documents_soutien/regions/portraits_regionaux/20200322-PERQ-2020.pdf, page 18.

5. François Dupuis, Mathieu D'Anjou, and Chantal Routhier. "Études régionales: Région administrative de Montréal," (2019). Desjardins. Retrieved from: desjardins.com/ressources/pdf/19Montréal-f.pdf?resVer=1572545618000, page 4.

6. Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation du Québec. "Région Montréal: Secteur des entreprises," (2020) Retrieved from: <https://www.economie.gouv.qc.ca/pages-regionales/Montréal/portrait-regional/secteur-des-entreprises/>

Industries



INDUSTRIES

Top Industries for Total Population

Services



86.9%

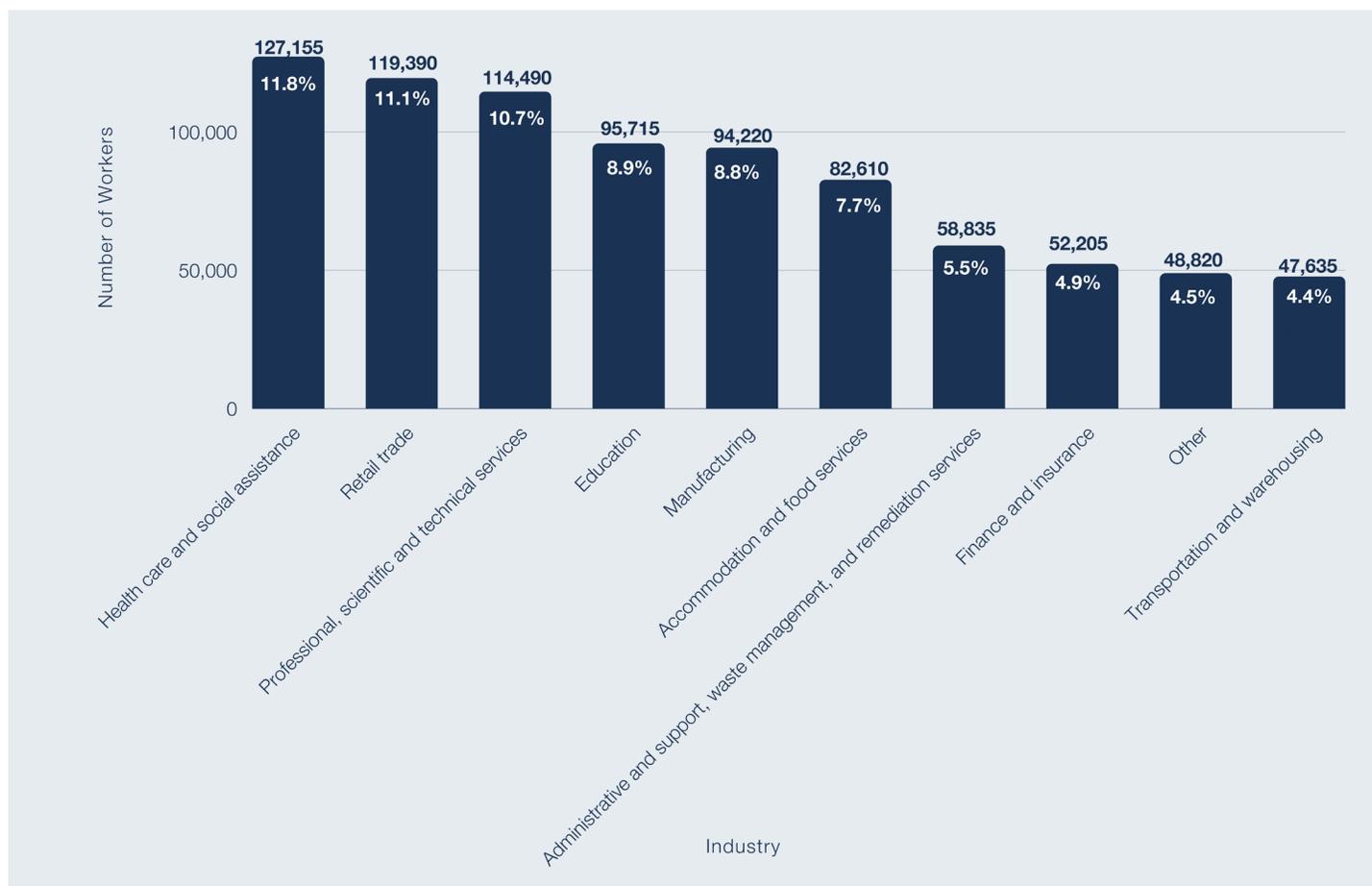
The service sector accounts for 86.9% of jobs in the Montréal region, compared to 79.9% within the province.⁷

Primary industries and the manufacturing industry account for a lower percentage of jobs within Montréal than they do at the provincial level.

Due to Montréal's large population, however, it has the second-highest number of manufacturing jobs within the province (100,300).

The services sector encompasses a vast array of occupations and industries ranging from health care to retail and education. Industries categorized as "other" include repair services and religious organizations.

Graph 4: Top 10 Industries in Montréal for Total Population



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

7. Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation du Québec. "Région Montréal: Structure économique," (2021). Retrieved from: <https://www.economie.gouv.qc.ca/pages-regionales/Montréal/portrait-regional/structure-economique/>

INDUSTRIES

Top Industries for English Speakers

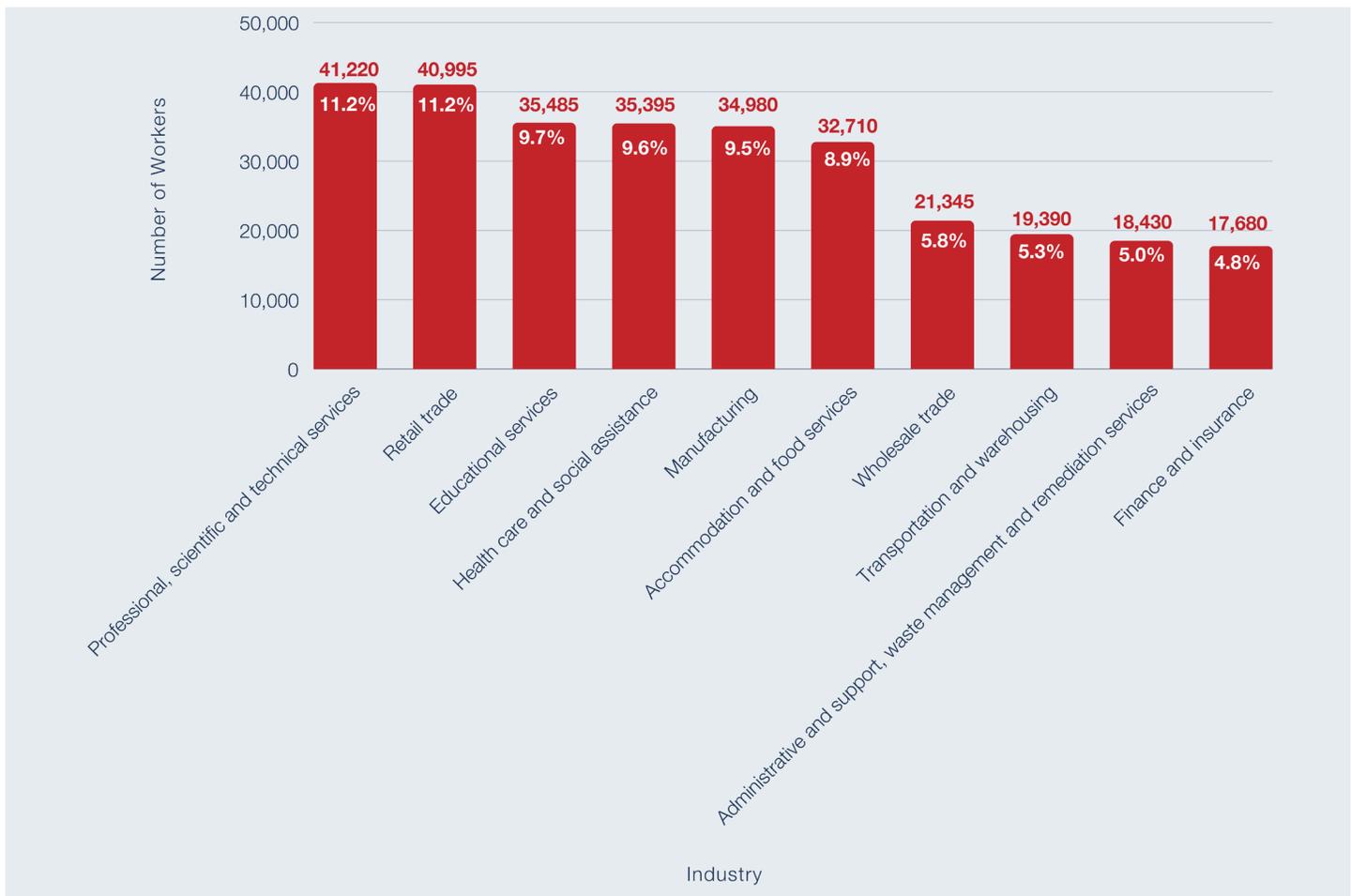
The main industries in which English speakers are engaged are similar to those of the total population (predominantly French speakers) in Montréal.

English speakers have higher engagement in professional, scientific and technical industries, which are prevalent in urban regions.

Typical health care and social assistance occupations in Montréal include doctors, nurses, dentists, orderlies, early childhood educators and social workers.

Typical retail occupations in Montréal include sales associates, cashiers and customer service.

Graph 5: Top 10 Industries in Montréal for English Speakers by Number of Worker



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

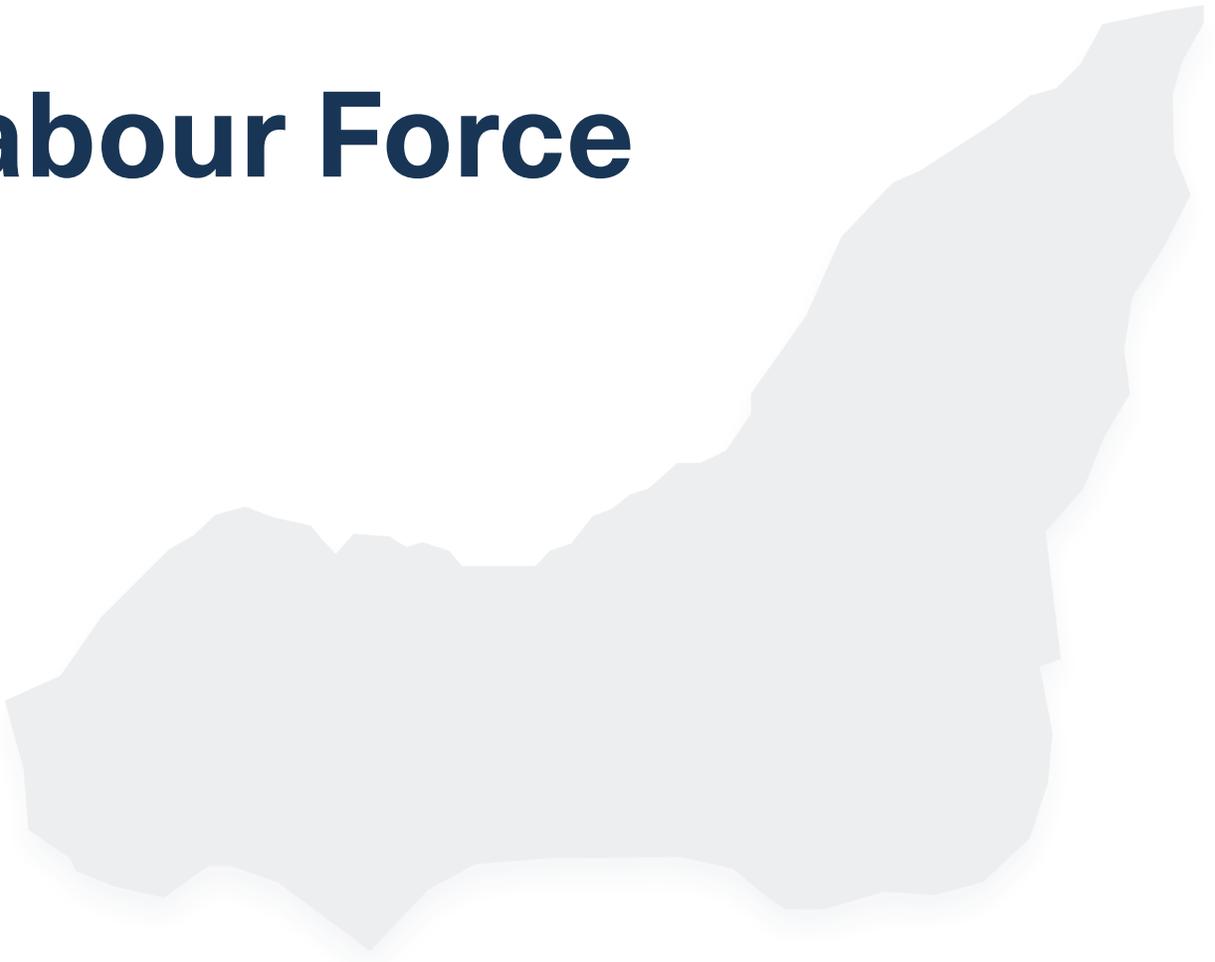
INDUSTRIES

Map 1: Top Industries in Montréal for English Speakers



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

Labour Force



LABOUR FORCE

Total Labour Force

The labour force includes individuals who are employed and those who are unemployed, but actively seeking employment and available for work. Labour force participation is an important metric for understanding the employment and economic status of communities because it indicates the levels of activity in the labour market.

However, several factors must be considered when looking at labour force figures including:

- The proportion of individuals in the labour force who are unemployed
- Cyclical conditions and the time of year when labour force data is collected

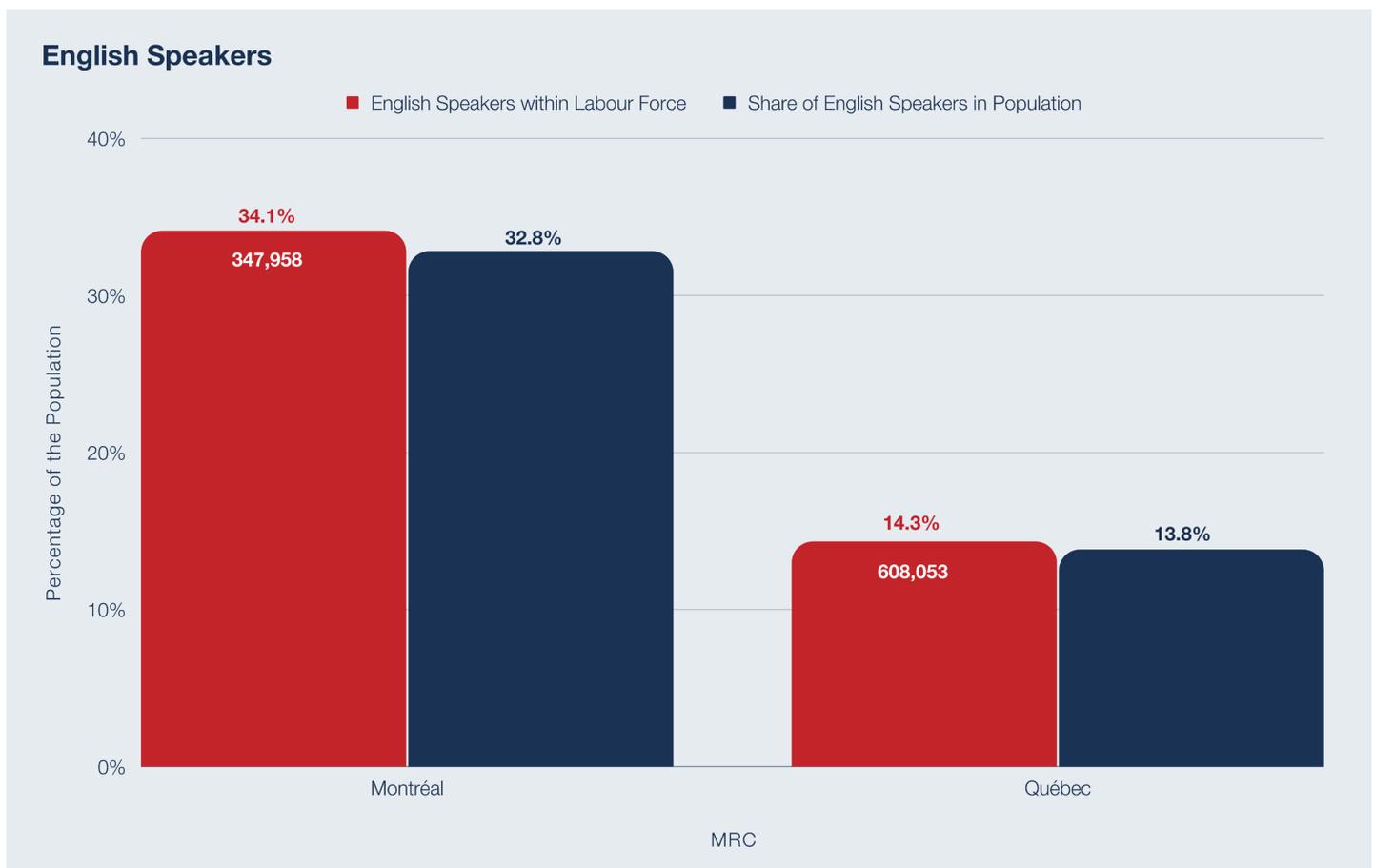
- The types of occupations that employed individuals have
- The income that individuals are earning

English speakers have high levels of participation in Montréal's labour force. They represent a larger share of Montréal's total labour force (34.1%) than their share of the population (32.8%).

There are 347,958 English speakers within the 1,019,360-person labour force of Montréal.

French speakers have roughly the same representation in the labour force as they do in the population (65.3% versus 64.9%).

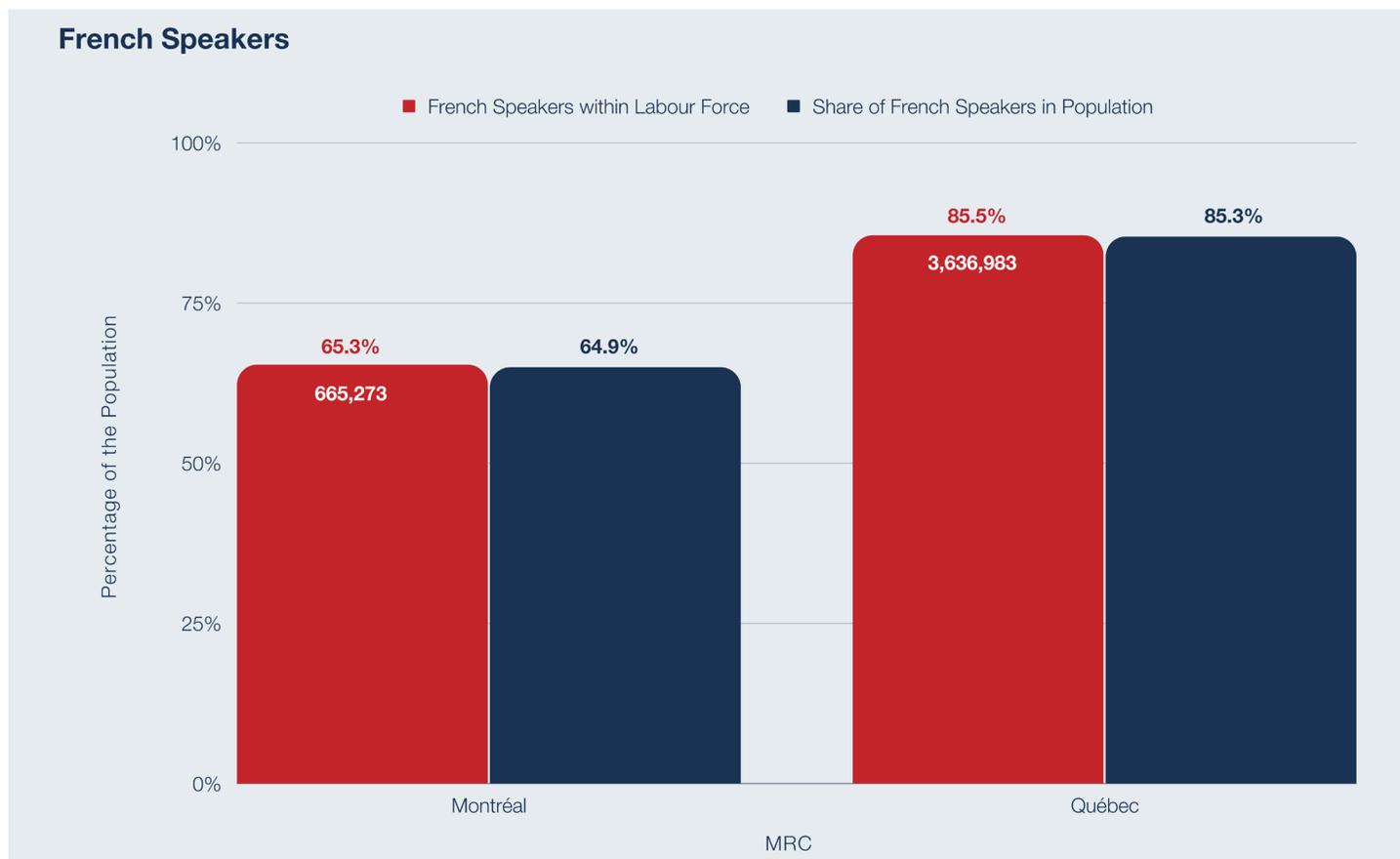
Graph 6a: Labour Force of Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

LABOUR FORCE

Graph 6b: Labour Force of Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

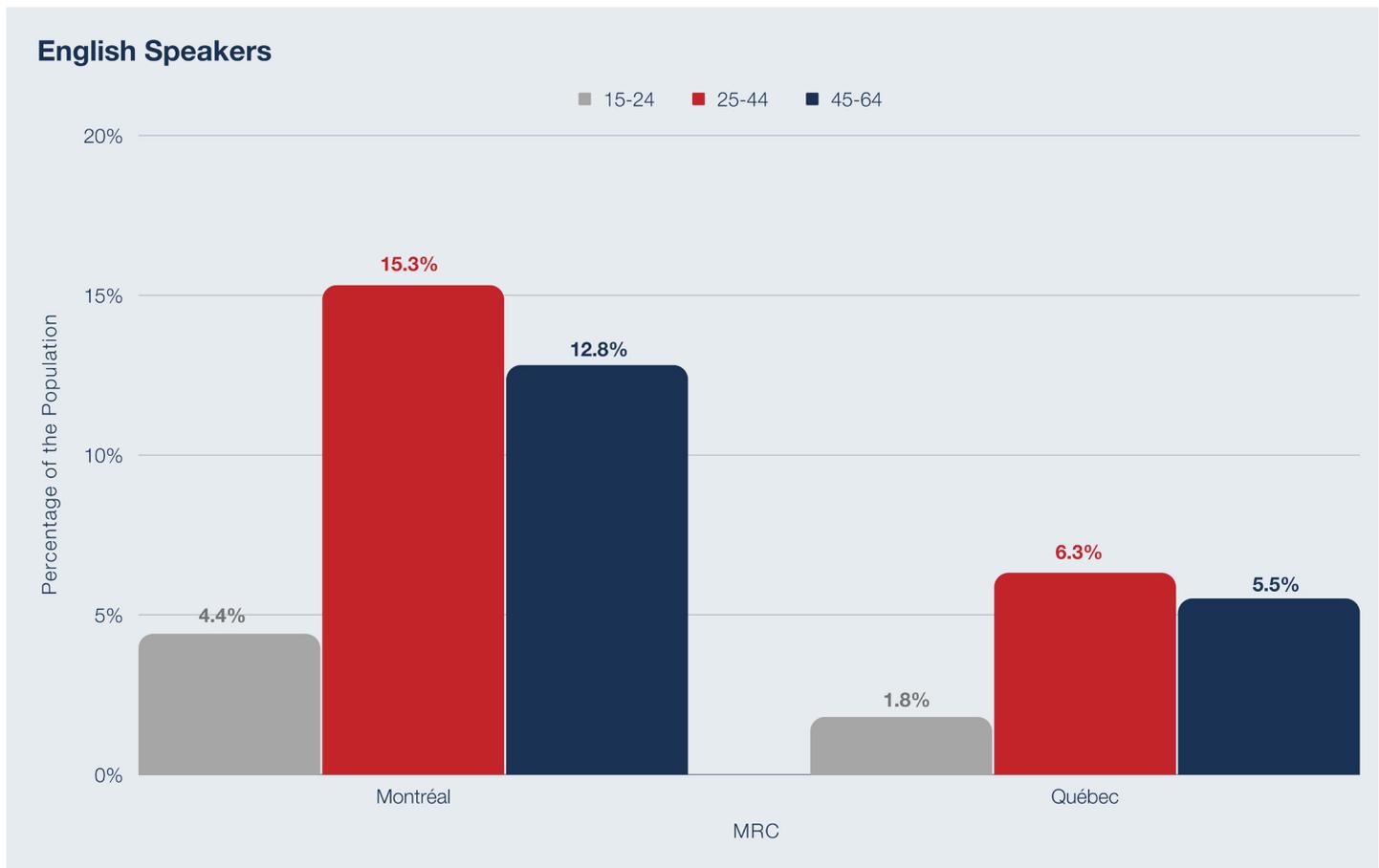
LABOUR FORCE

Age Structure of Labour Force

Within Montréal's labour force, French speakers account for approximately double the number of English speakers in each age group.

Individuals in the 25-44 year old age group constitute the largest portion of the labour force, across both linguistic groups. The single largest age-linguistic group in the labour force is made up of French speakers aged 25-44 (32.2%).

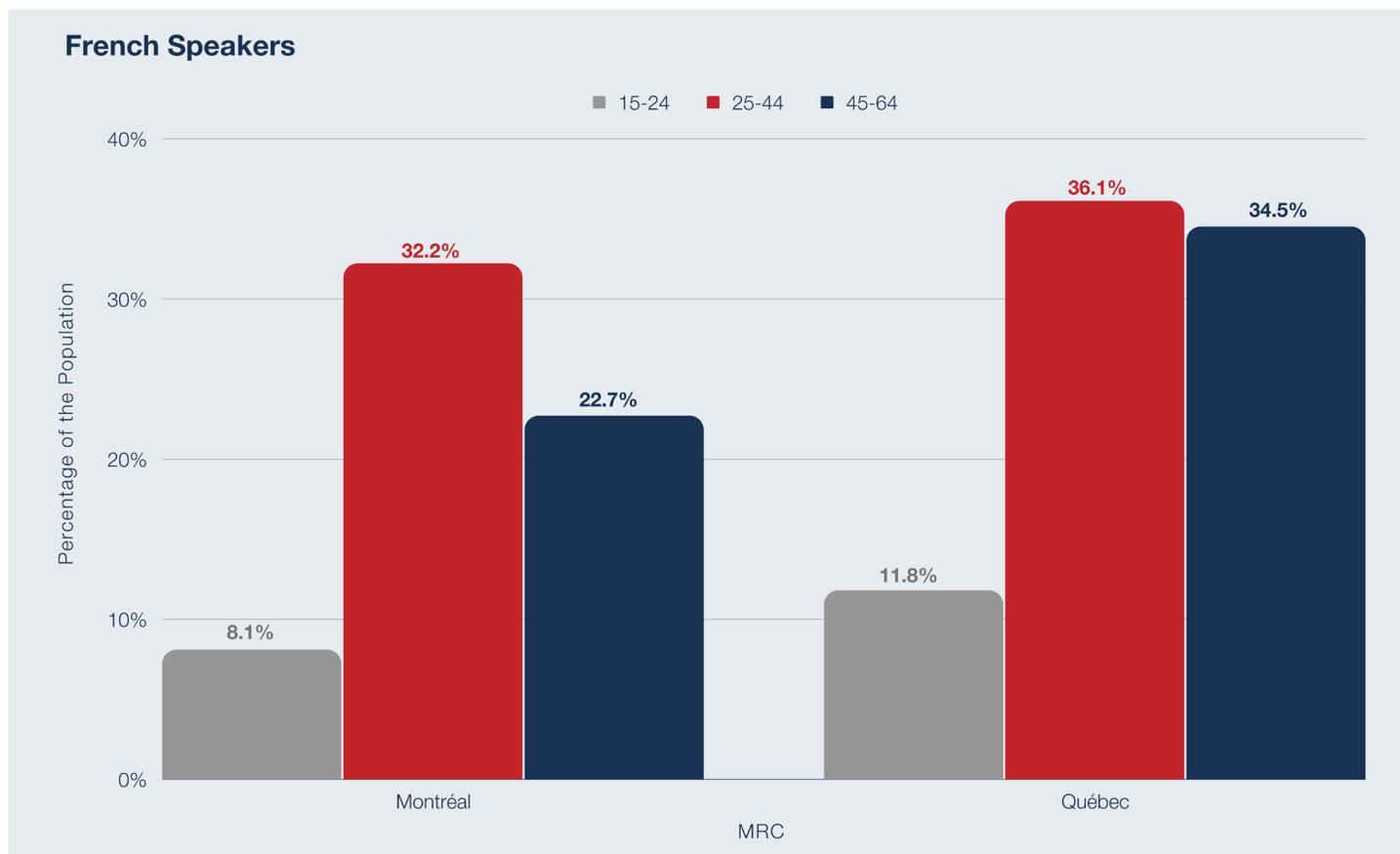
Graph 7a: Age Structure of Montréal's Labour Force



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

LABOUR FORCE

Graph 7b: Age Structure of Montréal's Labour Force



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

LABOUR FORCE

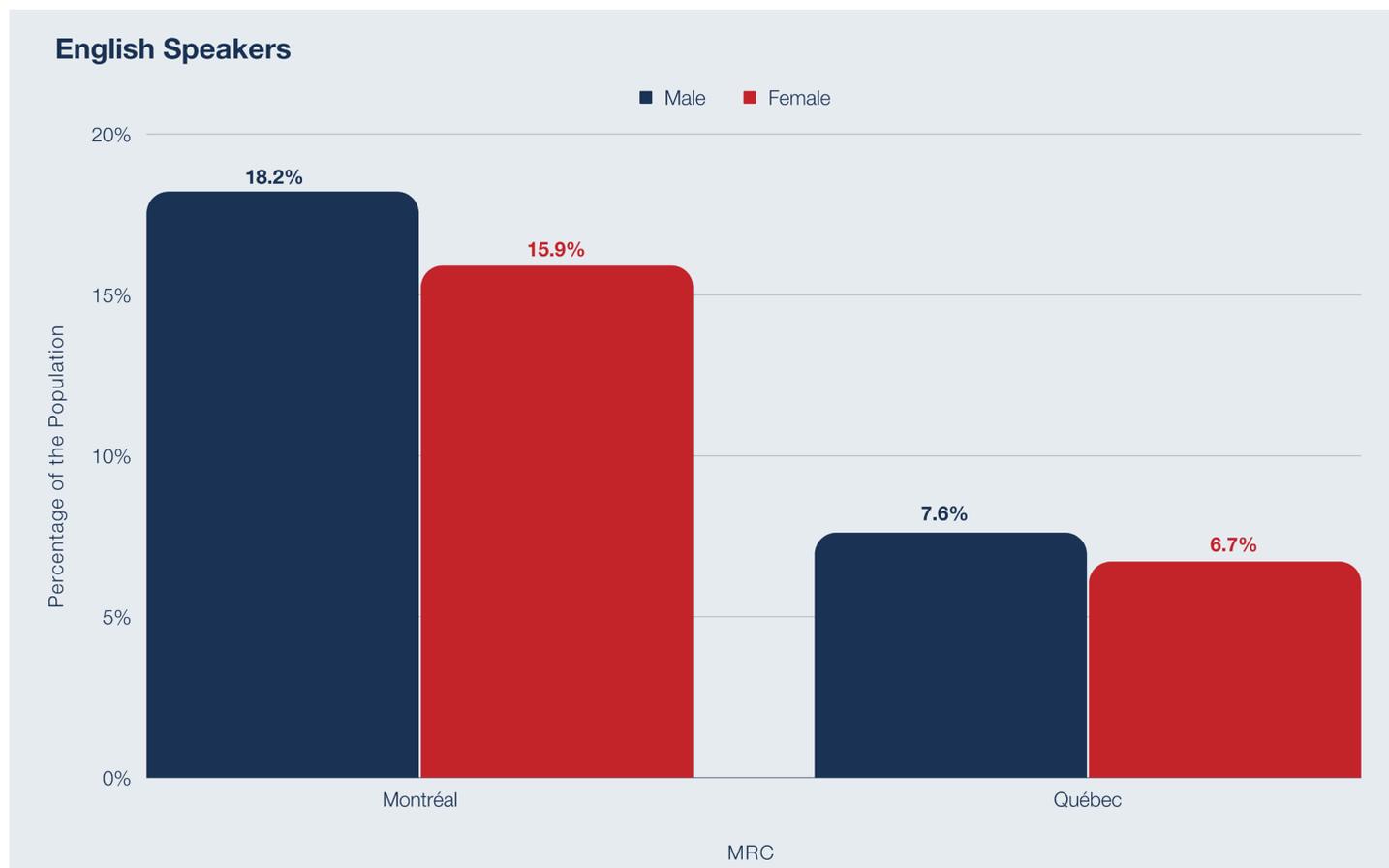
Sex Structure of Labour Force

Among both French and English speakers, there are fewer women in the labour force than there are men. This is typical across most other administrative regions in Québec, as well as at the provincial level.

Among English speakers there are 2.3% more men in the labour force than women. This is the widest gap in labour force participation observed among English-speaking men and women in any region of Québec.

Among French speakers there are 1.7% more men in the labour force than women. This is one of the narrowest gaps in labour force participation observed among French-speaking men and women.

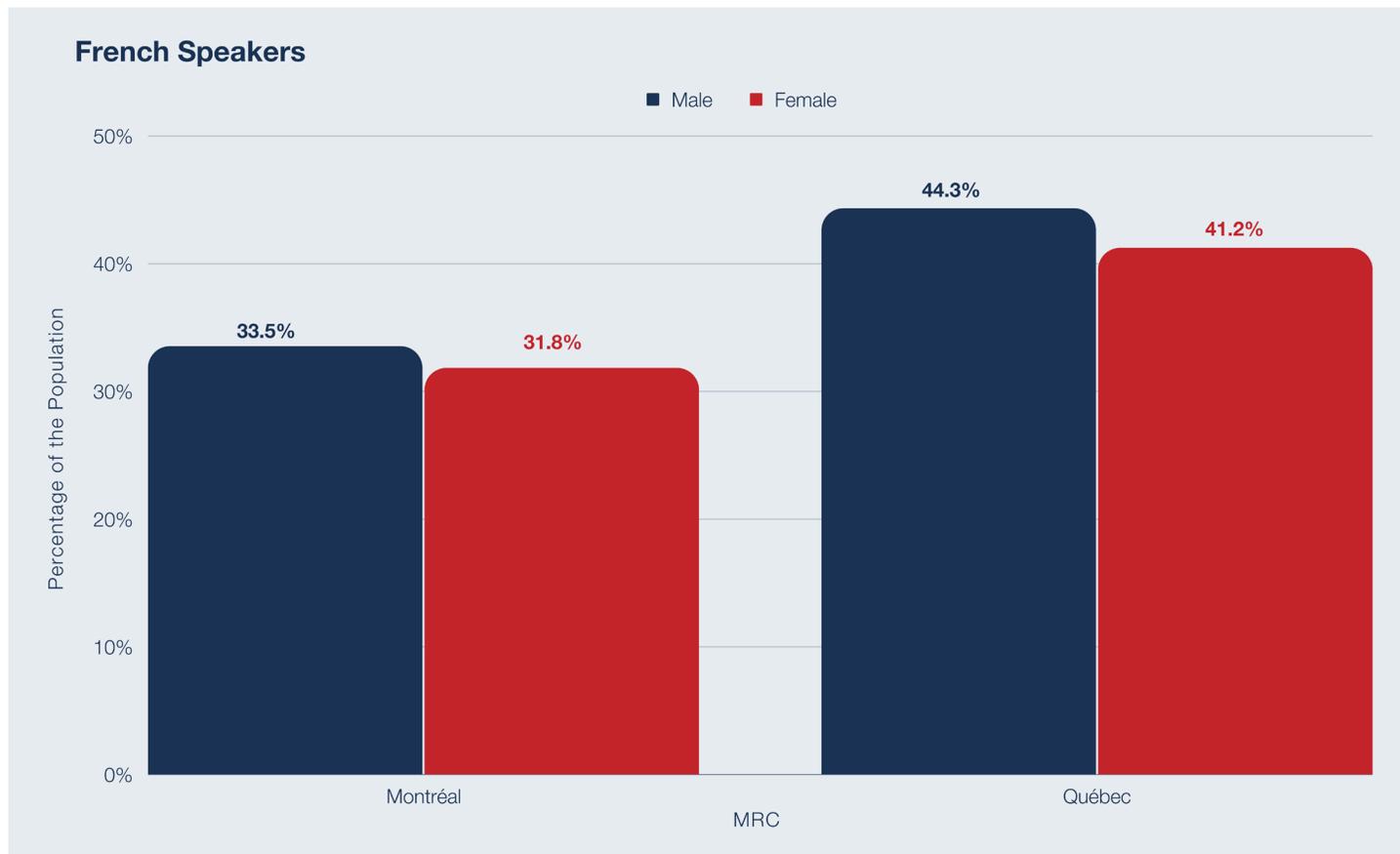
Graph 8a: Sex Structure of Montréal's Labour Force



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

LABOUR FORCE

Graph 8b: Sex Structure of Montréal's Labour Force



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

Unemployment Rate



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Total Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate represents the percentage of individuals in the labour force who do not have paid work and are looking for work. Unemployment rate serves as an official measure of performance of the labour market and can shed light on the income, purchasing power, and socio-economic well-being of communities.

The unemployment rate, however, has its limitations. The unemployment rates in this section capture the work status of individuals at the time Census data was collected in May 2016.

The unemployment rate may not account for:

- Those who work seasonal occupations and have less work or no work during the winter months
- Those who have been out of work for a long time and

have stopped actively looking for work

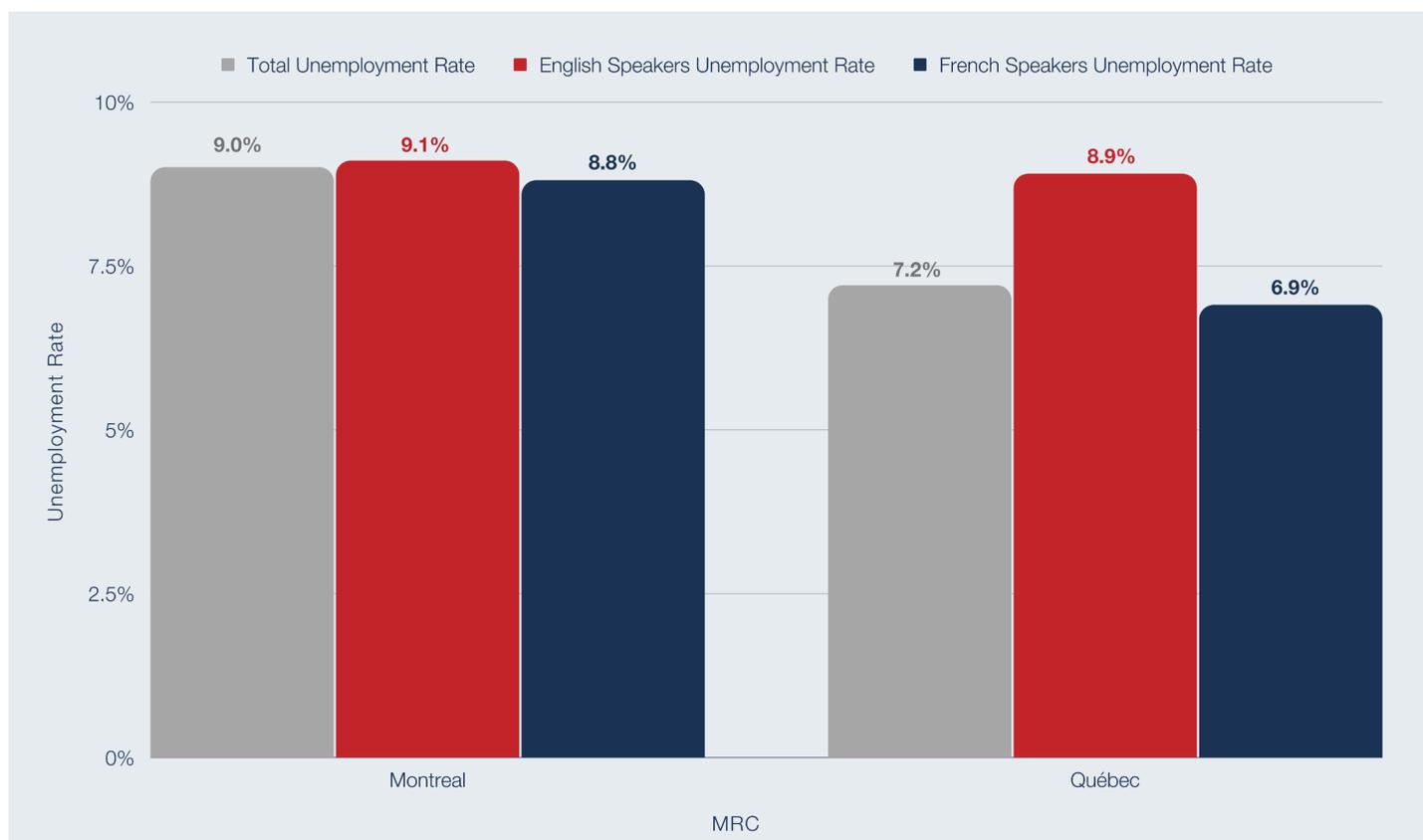
- The quality of work that individuals have.

Part-time, temporary, and low-paying work are still considered employment and are not considered part of the unemployment rate. Despite this, the unemployment rate remains an important official measure and indicates the lost wages, reduced economic growth, and difficulties that communities face due to joblessness.

The unemployment rate for the region of Montréal is 9%, which is significantly higher than the provincial unemployment rate of 7.2%.

English speakers in Montréal experience an unemployment rate of 9.1% in Montréal, while French speakers experience an unemployment rate of 8.8%.

Graph 9: Unemployment Rate in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

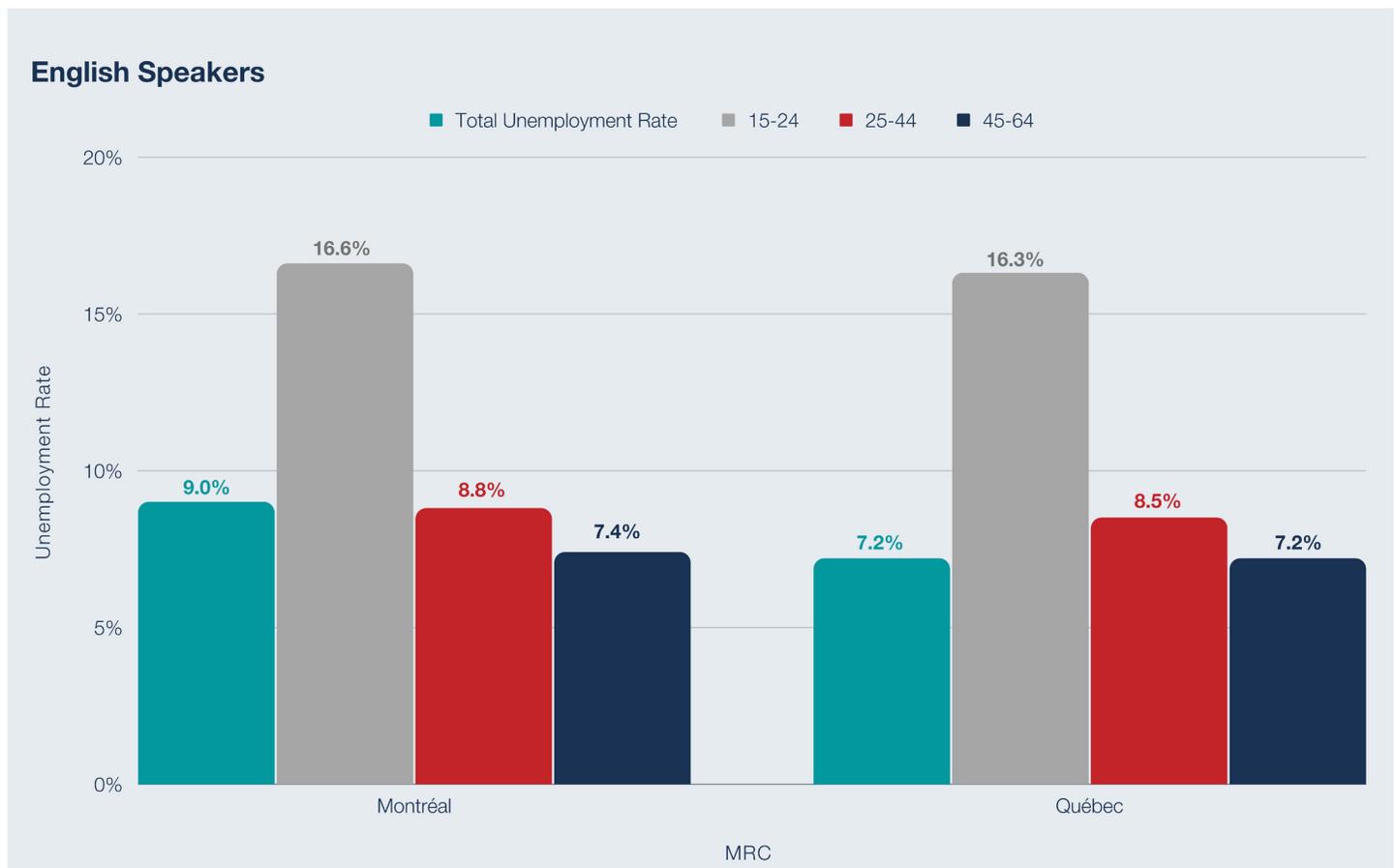
Age Structure of Unemployment Rate

Unemployment rates are highest among youth, which is a trend observed across the province.

English-speaking youth experience a slightly higher unemployment rate (16.6%) than French-speaking youth (15.9%).

Individuals aged 45-64 experience the lowest unemployment rate of any age group, and it is the same among both English and French speakers (7.4%).

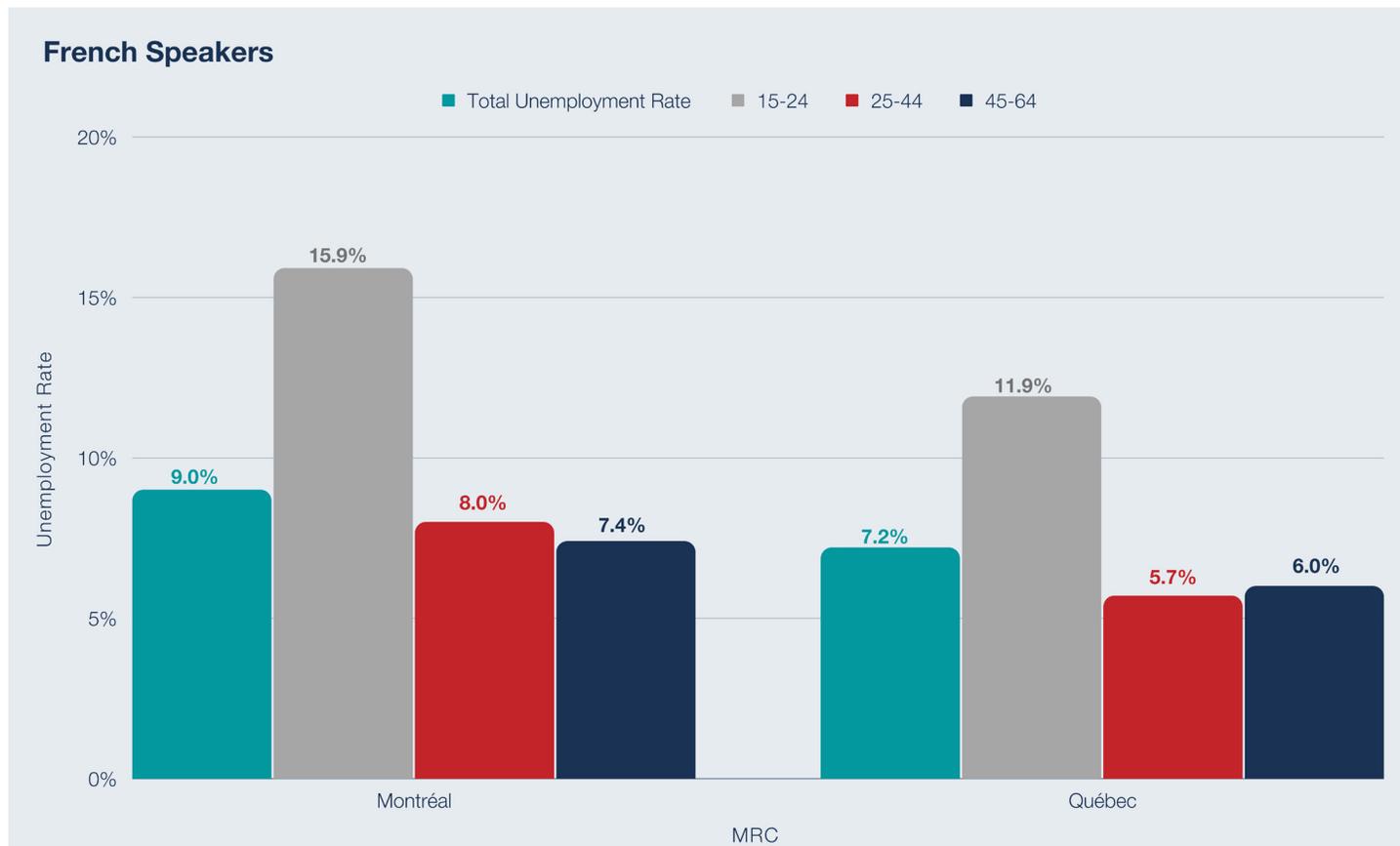
Graph 10a: Age Structure of Unemployment Rate in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Graph 10b: Age Structure of Unemployment Rate in Montréal



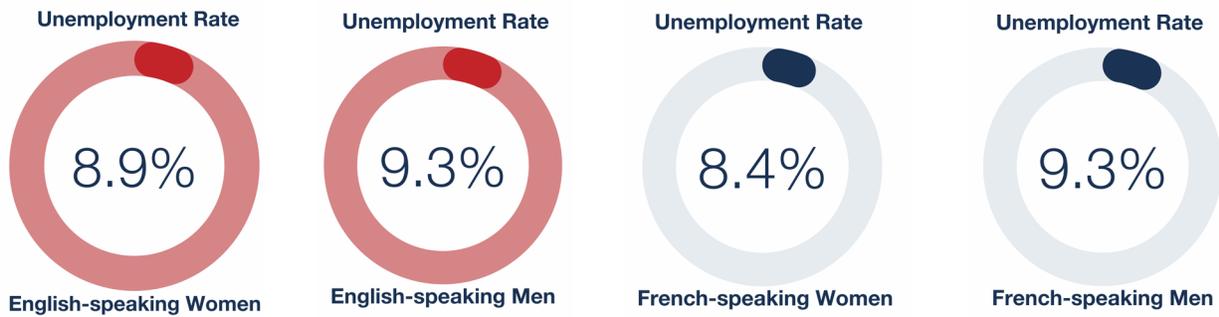
Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

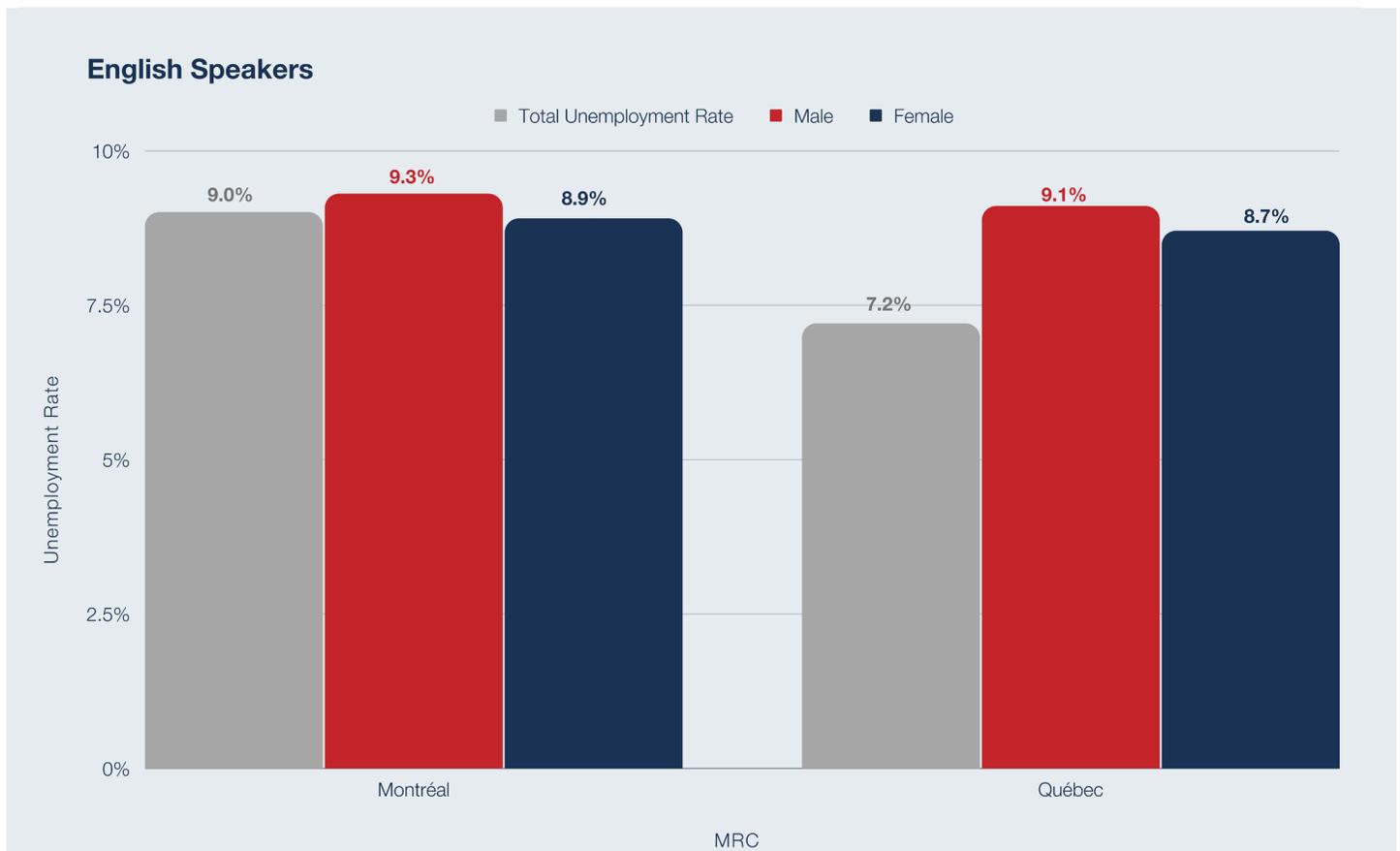
Sex Structure of Unemployment Rate

Men experience a higher unemployment rate than women in Montréal, irrespective of linguistic identity: both English- and French-speaking men have an unemployment rate of 9.3%.

The lowest unemployment rate is experienced by French-speaking women (8.4%). English-speaking women experience an unemployment rate of 8.9%.



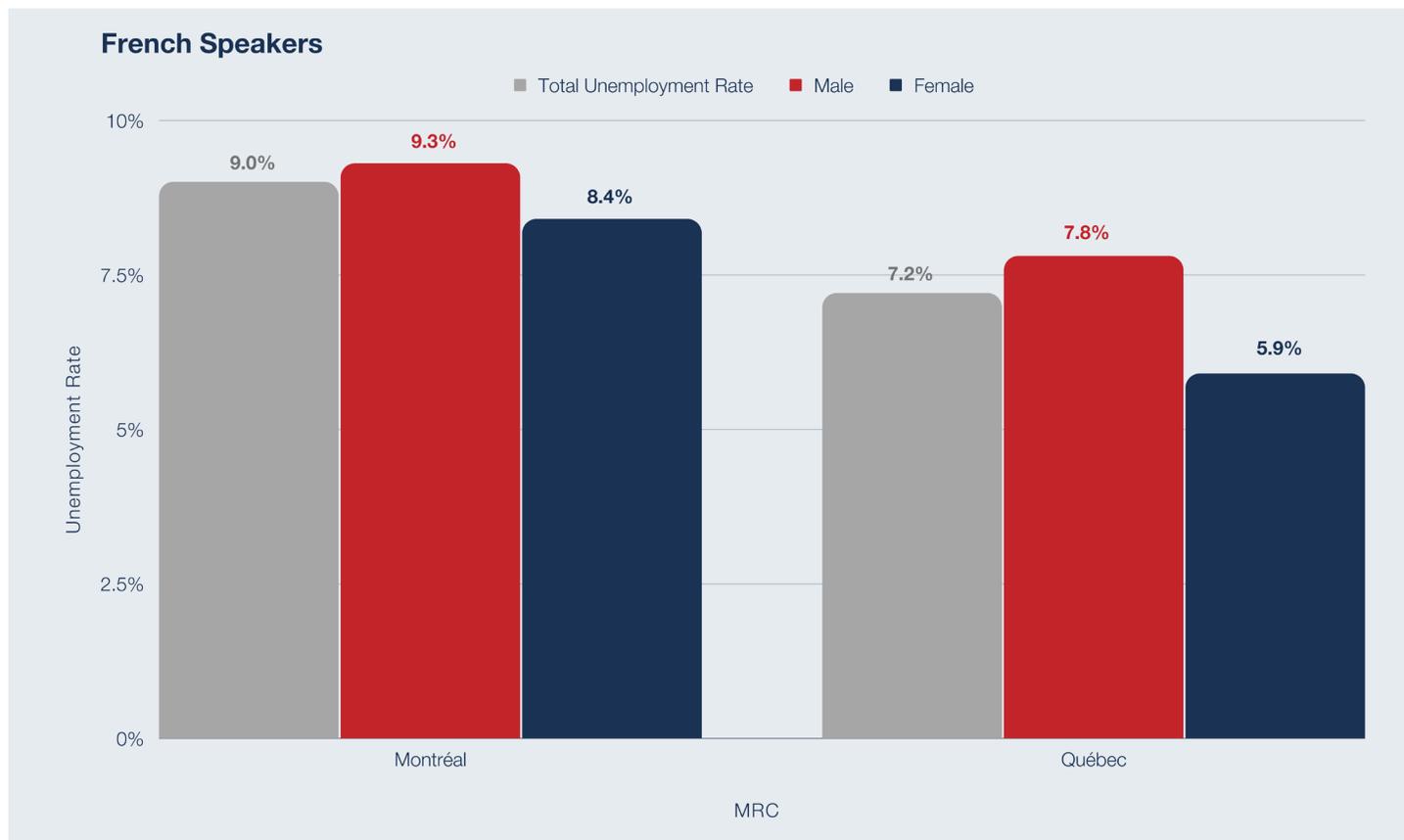
Graph 11a: Sex Structure of Unemployment Rate in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Graph 11b: Sex Structure of Unemployment Rate in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

Work Activity

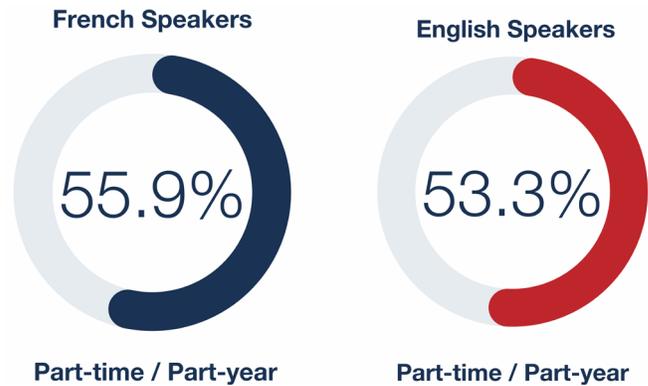


WORK ACTIVITY

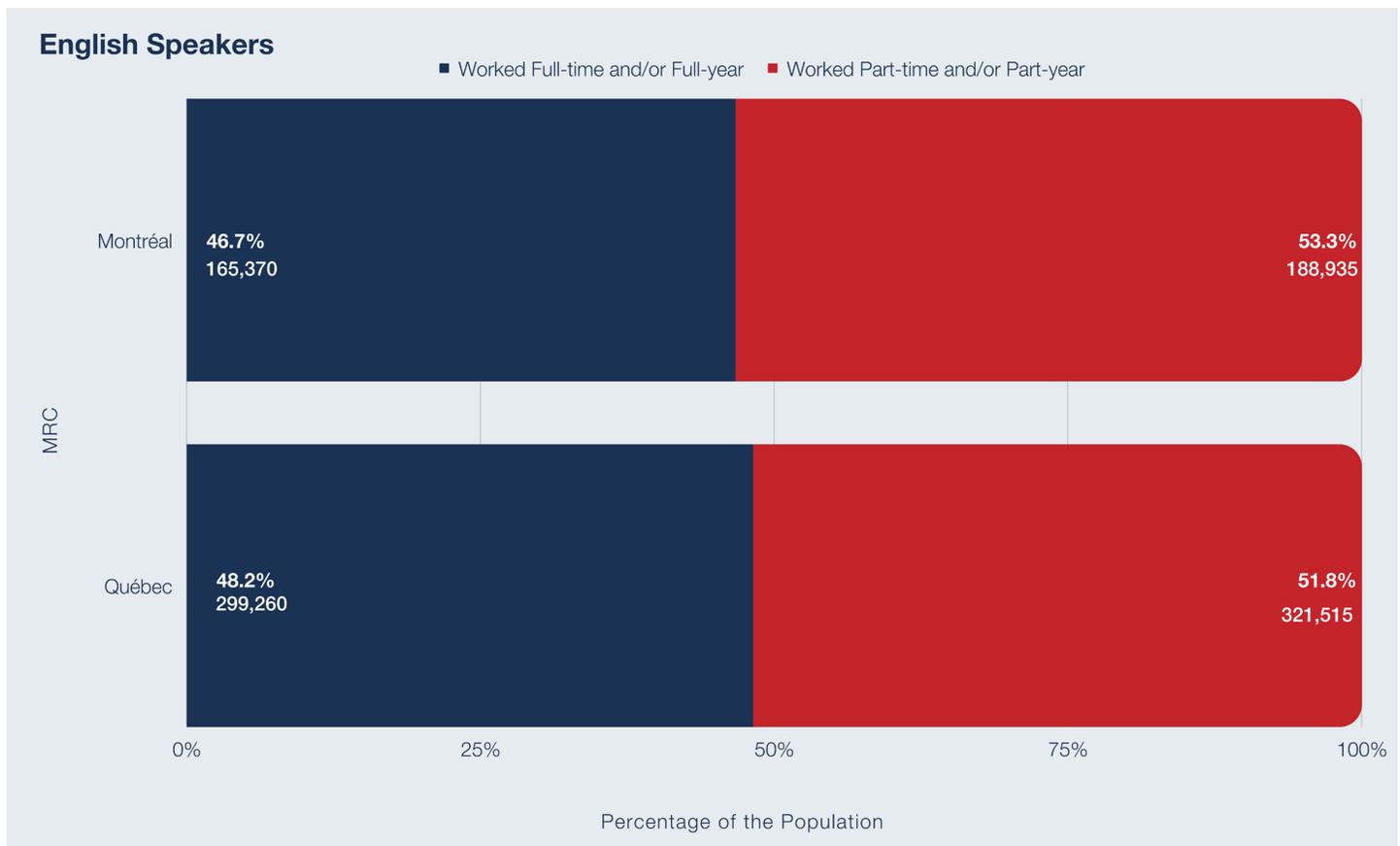
Engagement in Part- and Full-time Work

Across both linguistic groups, the majority of individuals are engaged in part-time or part-year work.

English speakers are engaged in full-time work at a slightly higher rate than French speakers: approximately 46.7% of English speakers work full-time, while 44.1% of French speakers work full-time.



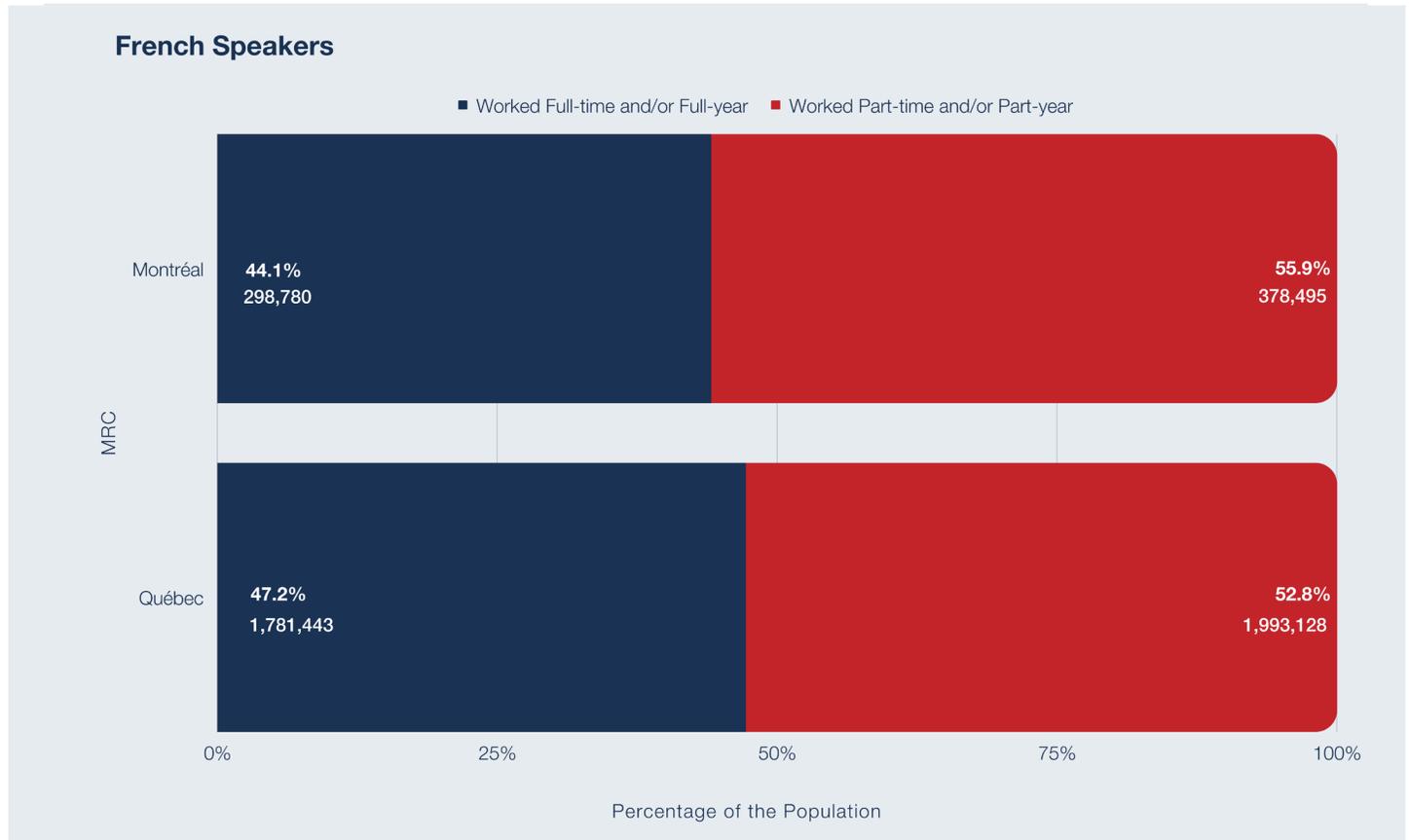
Graph 12a: Work Activity in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

WORK ACTIVITY

Graph 12b: Work Activity in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

WORK ACTIVITY

Average Weeks Worked

English speakers work slightly more weeks per year (42.1) than French speakers (41.7) in Montréal.⁸



Graph 13: Average Weeks Worked in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

8. The data in this section pertains to individuals who speak only English or only French as their first official language. Individuals who speak both official languages were not distributed among English and French speakers in the graph below. This is due to limitations on the data available.

Income



Income

Median After-tax Income

English speakers tend to earn a lower median after-tax income than French speakers. This could be explained in part by the higher unemployment rates that English speakers experience.⁹

Low incomes can also be explained by the type of work that

English speakers have, such as seasonal, part-time, and lower-wage work. This work can have fluctuations in income throughout the year and a lack of career advancement.

English speakers in Montréal earn a lower median after-tax income than French speakers, by approximately \$2,000.

Graph 14: Median After-tax Income in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

9. The data in this section pertains to individuals who speak only English or only French as their first official language. Individuals who speak both official languages were not distributed among English and French speakers in the graph below. This is due to limitations on the data available.

Education



EDUCATION

Educational Attainment

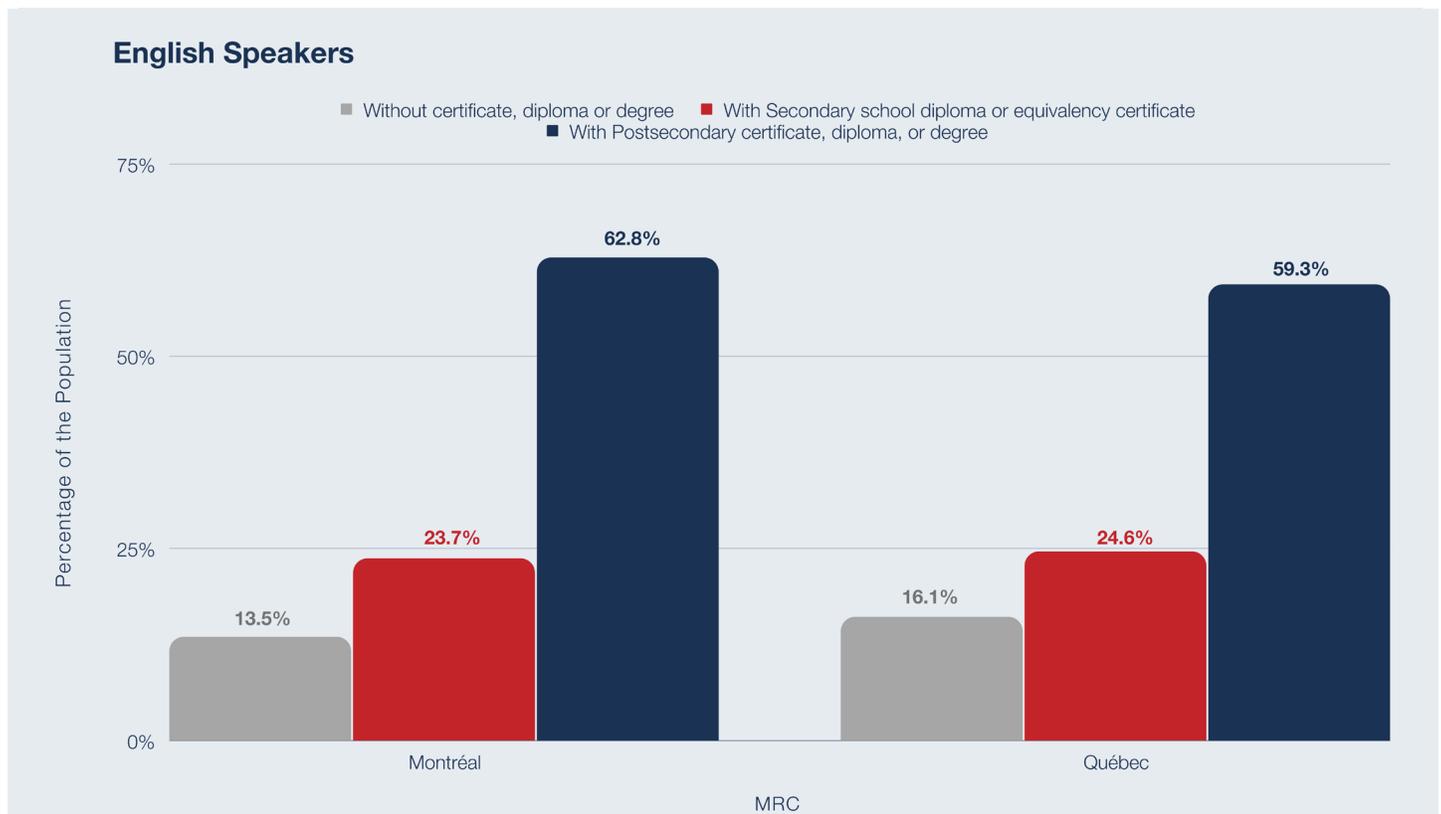
In most developed countries, employment, earnings, and labour productivity rise with educational attainment. Education provides the skills and training that are useful for labour market entry and advancement. In Québec, French is taught within the primary and secondary education systems, providing the opportunity for English-speaking Quebecers to learn French. However, like many skills taught within the standard education system, additional or supplementary training might be needed in order to prepare learners for the labour market. For English speakers with lower levels of French-language proficiency as well as those who did not receive French-language training in Québec, French-language training for the workforce can bridge the language gap and reduce the obstacles they face in obtaining and retaining employment.

Educational attainment remains a key determinant in individuals' employability and employment prospects, although the relationship between education and employment differs for English speakers across Québec.

The majority of English speakers in Montréal have a post-secondary degree (62.8%), as do the majority of French speakers (64.1%). French speakers have a slightly higher rate of post-secondary attainment.

Montréal is one of the only regions in Québec that offers a wide array of English-language post-secondary options, including vocational education, CEGEP, and university. Two of the three English-language universities in Québec are located in Montréal.

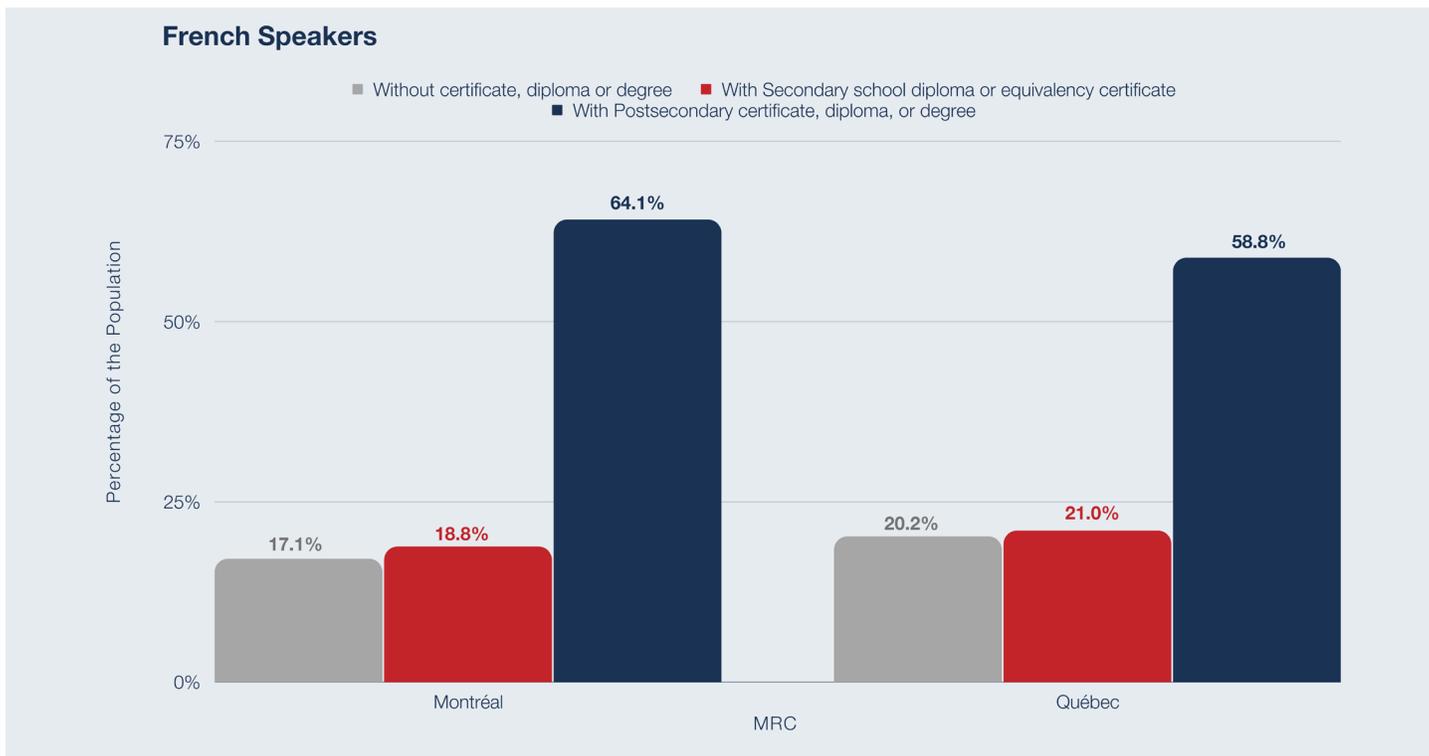
Graph 15a: Educational Attainment in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

EDUCATION

Graph 15b: Educational Attainment in Montréal



Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).

REFERENCES

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