



Ministry of Finance Pre-Budget Consultation 2023-2024

Provincial Employment Roundtable (PERT)
Submitted to the SRQEA



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About PERT

Our mission

The Provincial Employment Roundtable is a non-profit multi-stakeholder initiative focused on addressing the employment and employability challenges facing Québec's English-speaking community. Through our research and stakeholder work, we engage all levels of policymakers to develop solutions and ensure adequate resources to improve the labour market outcomes of English-speaking Quebecers.



PERT's two main pillars

Research & Policy

- Develop a deeper understanding of the challenges & problems in the employability and employment landscape
- Identify gaps in the data and improve the availability of information
- Develop solutions & policy recommendations

Engagement

- Foster an environment of engagement and collaboration between different stakeholder groups
- Mobilize resources and other solutions
- Work with governments for the benefits of stakeholders



We are pleased to participate in the Ministère des Finances' 2023-24 Pre-budget consultations. We look forward to a new budget that strengthens the government's employability and employment supports for Québec's English-speaking communities and ensures that all Quebecers can participate fully in our economy.

A light gray silhouette map of the province of Quebec, Canada, is positioned on the left side of the slide. The map shows the outline of the province, including its coastline and major geographical features.

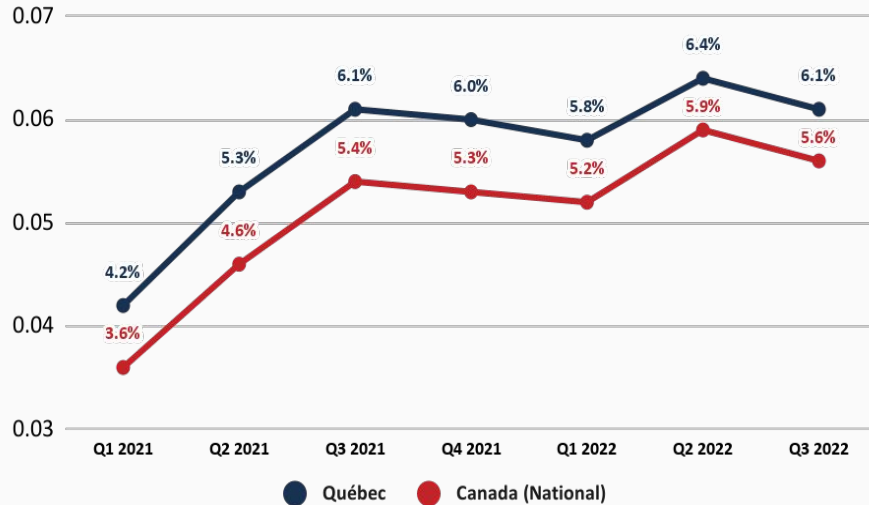
Québec's labour market outlook



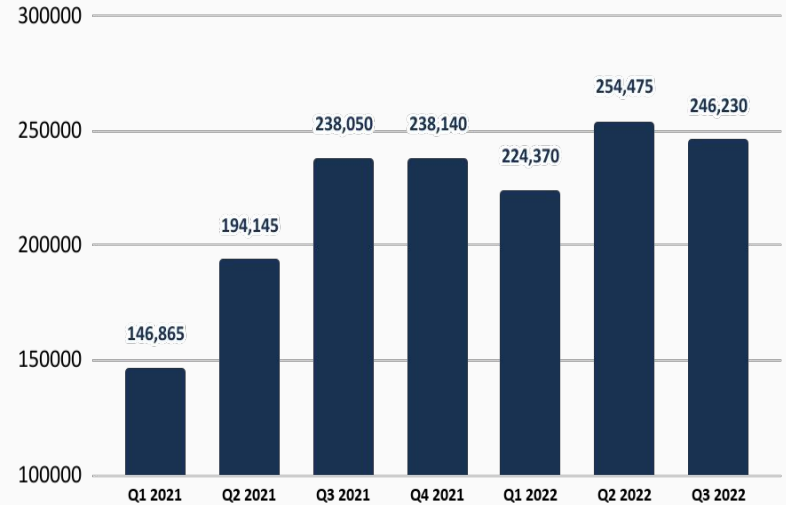
Labour market outlook | Job Vacancy

Job vacancy rate in Québec remains higher than Canada, with Québec's vacancy rate at 6.1% in the third quarter of 2022, compared to national vacancy rate of 5.6%.

Job Vacancy Rate (Quarterly)



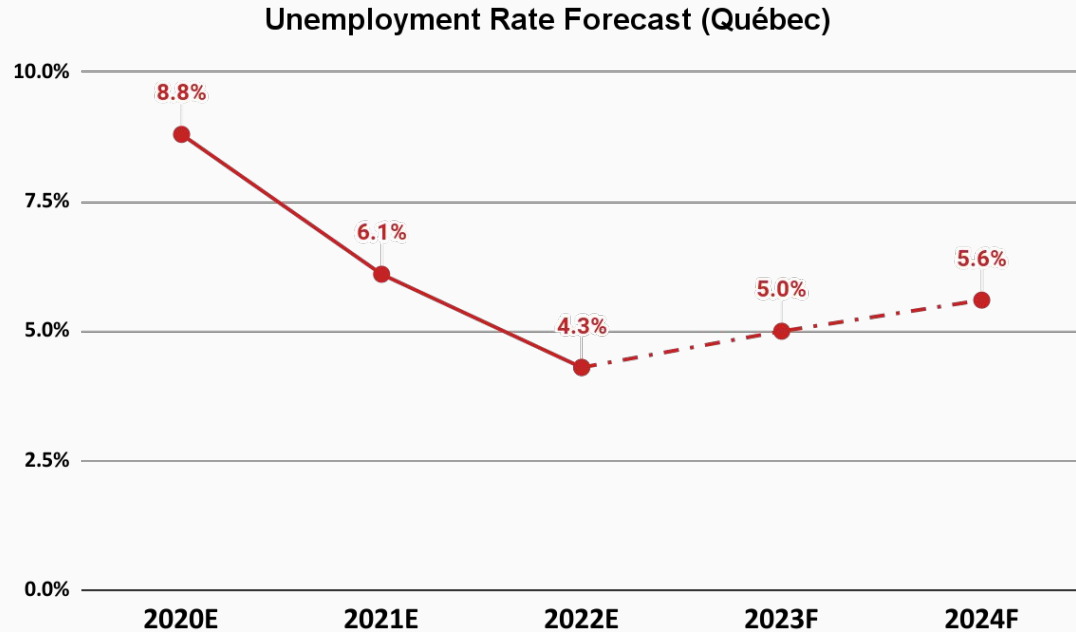
Total Number of Job Vacancies in Québec (Quarterly)





Québec's labour market outlook | Unemployment Projection

After reaching a 4.3% low in 2022 (a gradual decrease since the Covid pandemic), Québec's average unemployment rate is forecasted to rise above 5% in 2023.



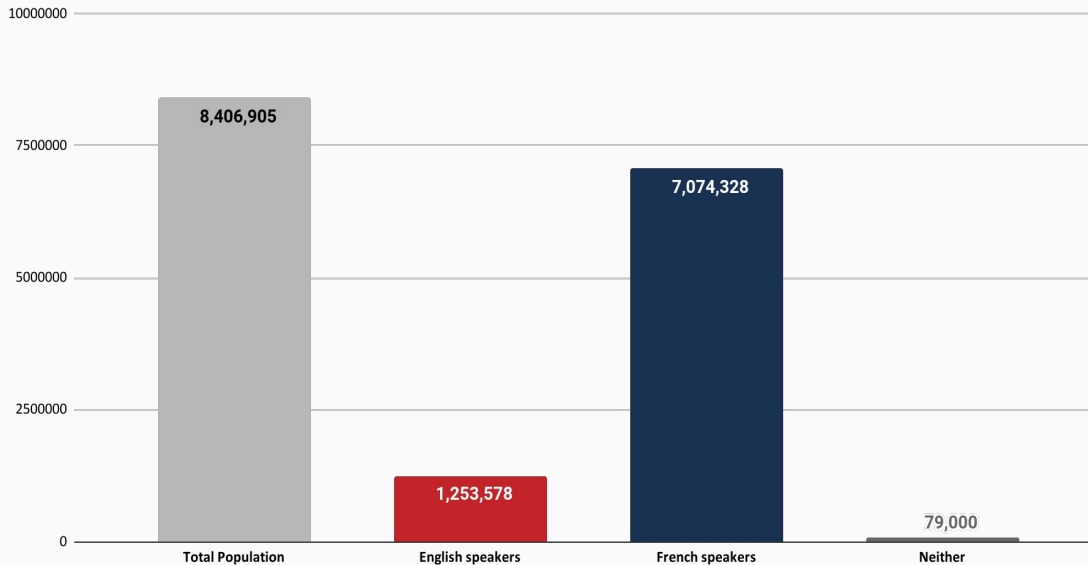


English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market

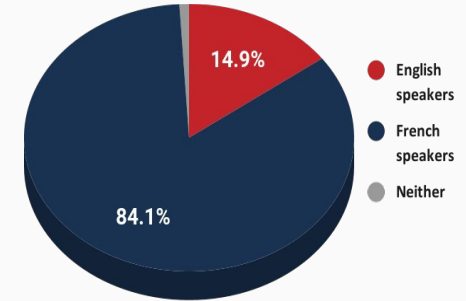


English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Population

Population of Québec (2021) according to First Official Language Spoken



Share of Language Spoken in Québec (2021)



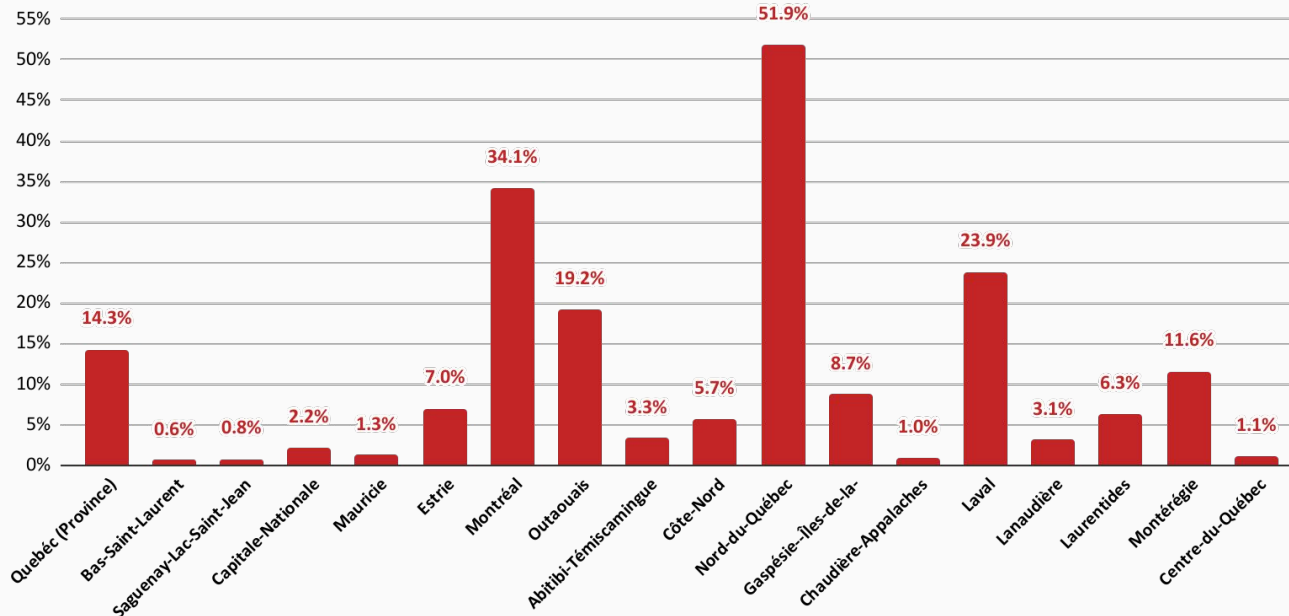
Despite representing 14.9% of Québec's population, English speakers represent less than 1% of Québec's public service. This is a clear example of the under-representativity of English-speakers in certain areas of the labour market.



English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Labour Force Share

In 2016, the 3 regions of Québec with the largest share of English speakers in the labour force were **Nord-du-Québec** (51.9%), **Montréal** (34.1%), and **Laval** (23.9%).

Share of English speakers in Québec Labour Force (by Region)

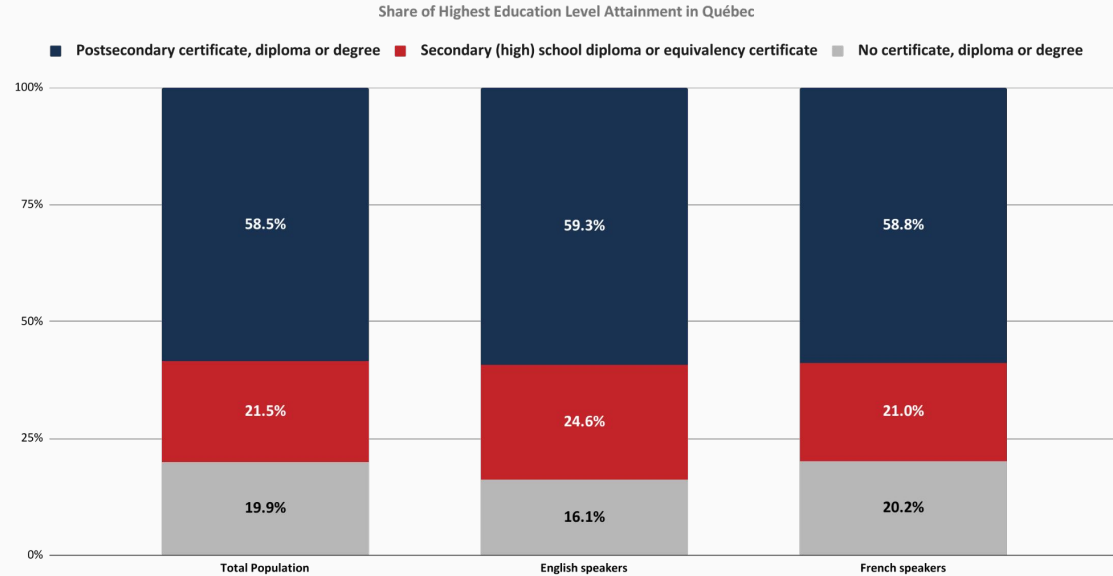


Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2016).



English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Education

Rates of overall educational attainment are higher amongst English speakers (83.9%) than French-speakers (79.8%).



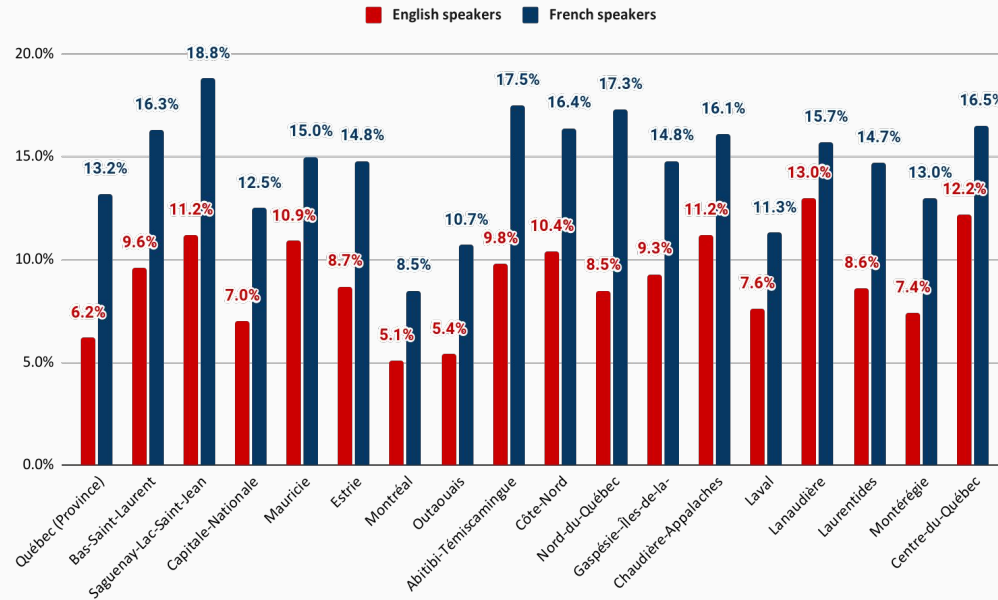


English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Vocational Training

In 2016, in every region of the province, **French speakers had higher rates of vocational education attainment than English speakers.**

Notably, both linguistic communities have significantly lower rates of vocational attainment in the urban regions of Capitale-Nationale, Montréal, Outaouais, and Laval.

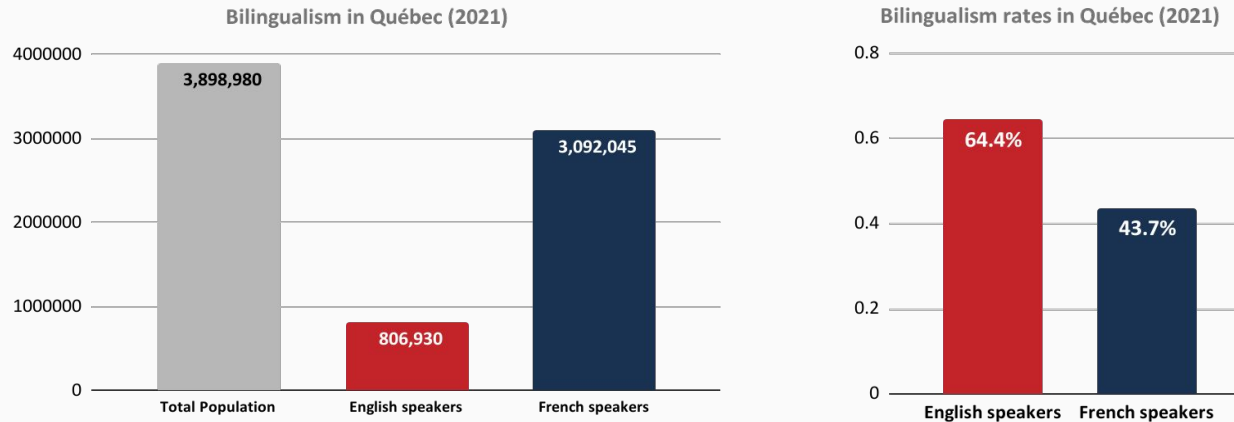
Vocational training attainment by language and administrative region (Québec)





English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Bilingualism

Despite high rates of bilingualism among Québec's English speakers, the community has reported that French-language proficiency remains their top barrier to employment.

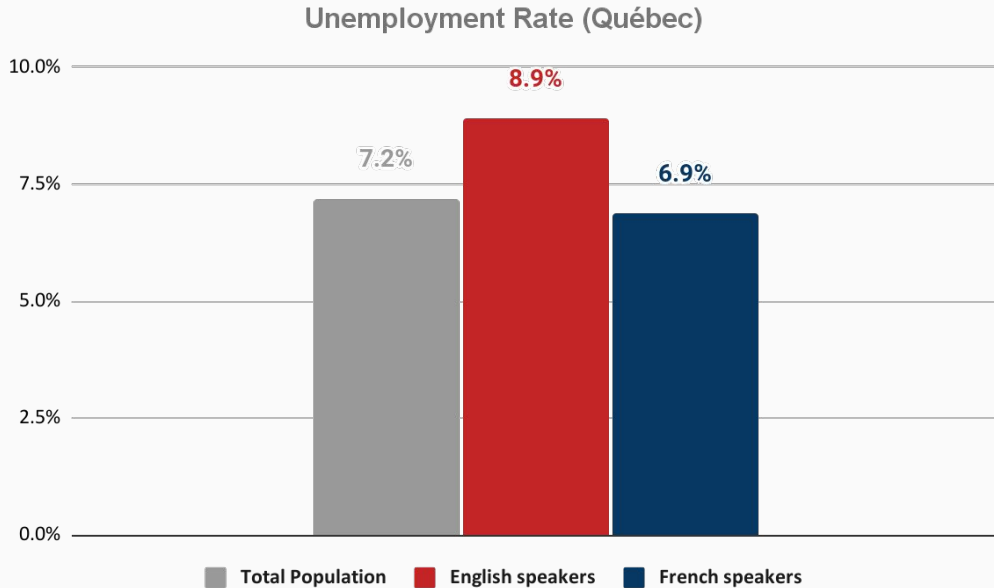


Source: Provincial Employment Roundtable calculations based on data from Statistics Canada (2021).



English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Unemployment

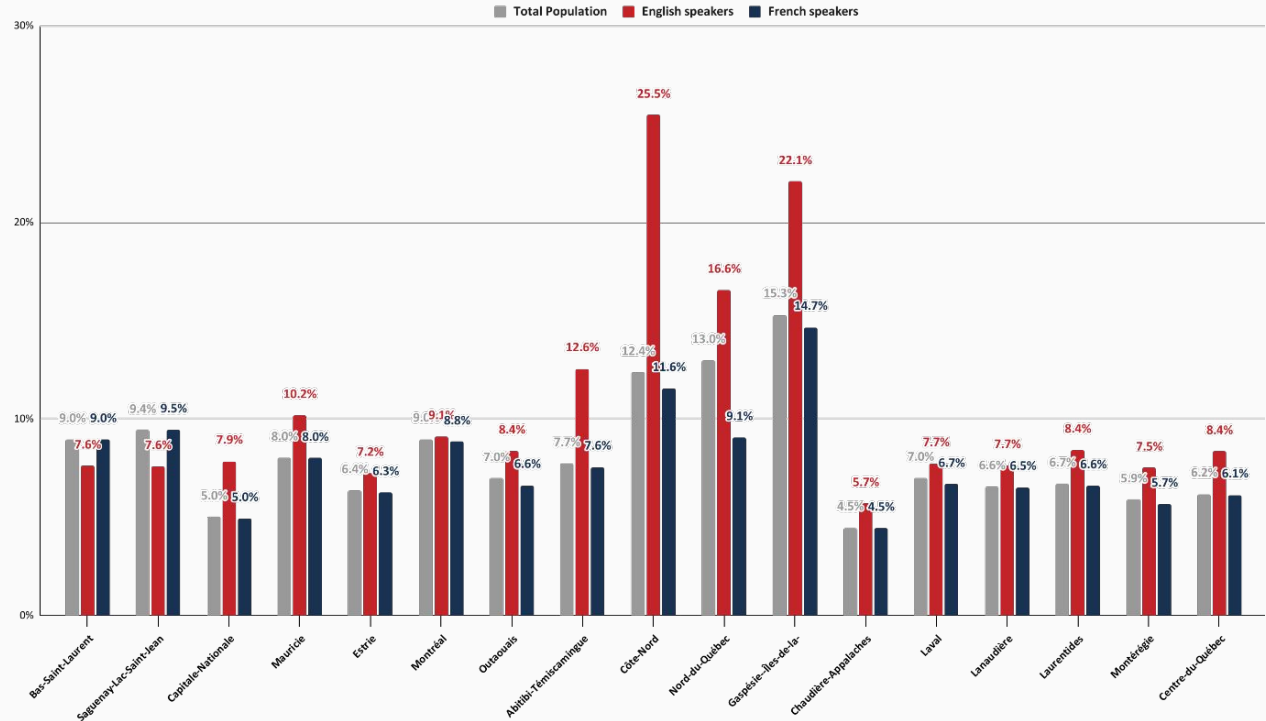
Despite similar levels of education to Francophones, **English speakers experience 2% higher unemployment** than French-speaking Quebecers.





English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Unemployment (by region)

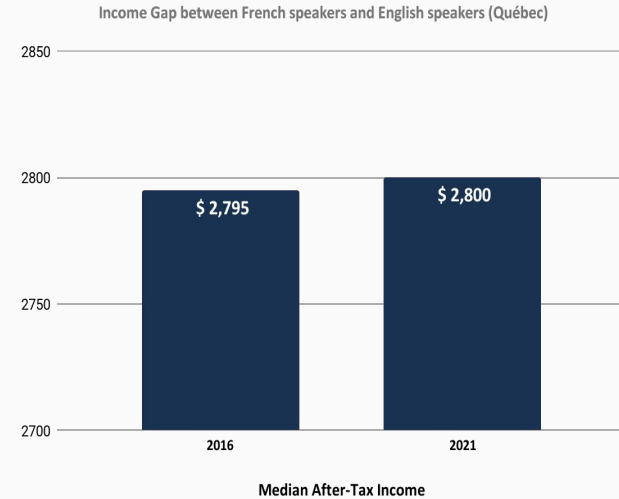
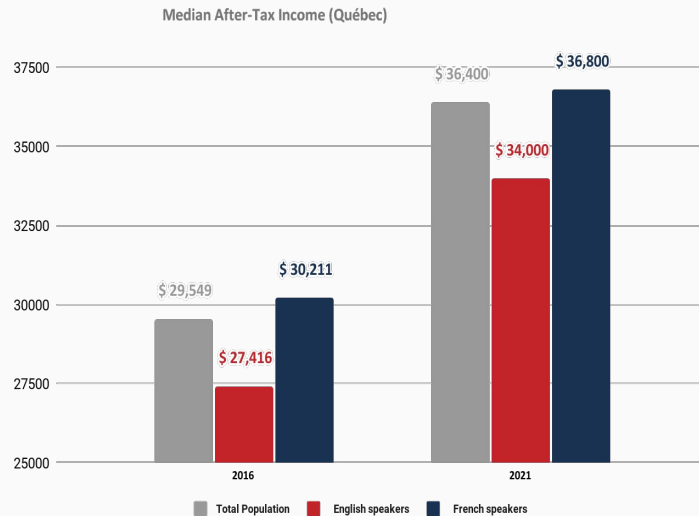
In 2016, the 3 regions in Québec with the highest unemployment rate among English-speakers were **Côte-Nord** (25.5%), **Gaspésie--Îles-de-la-Madeleine** (22.1%), and **Nord-du-Québec** (16.6%).





English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Income

English-speaking Québecers, also **earn an after-tax median income that is \$2,800 less** than French speakers.

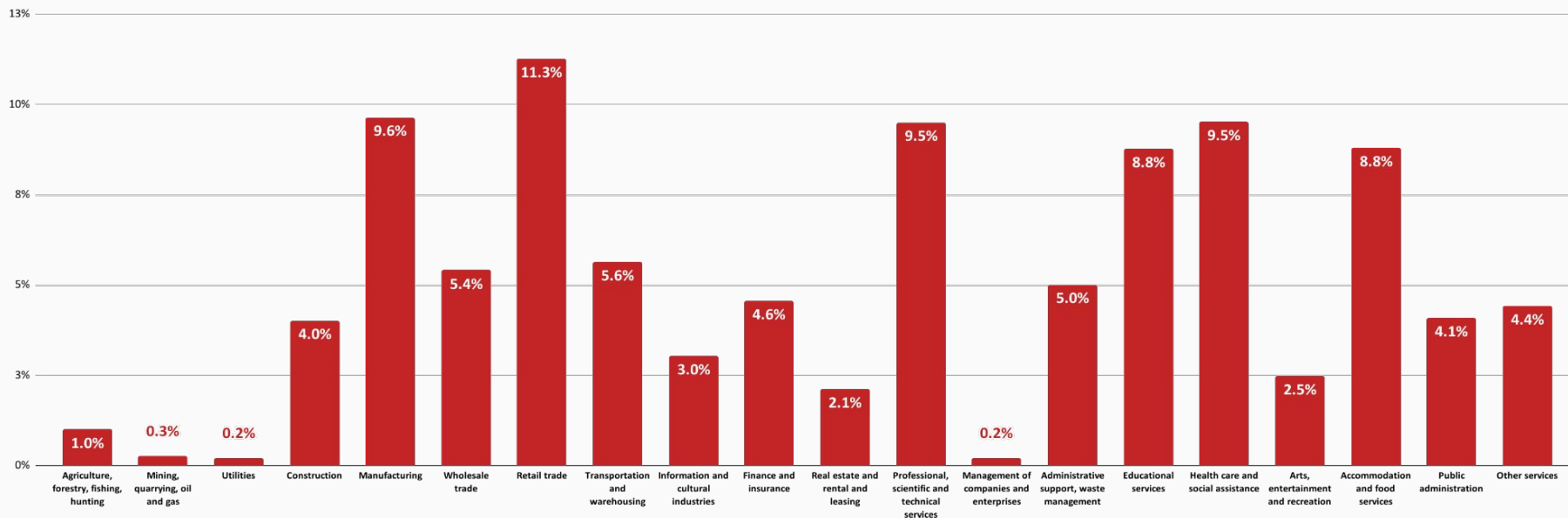




English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Industry

In 2016, the 3 industries in Québec with the highest share of English-speaking workers were **Retail Trade** (11.3%), **Manufacturing** (9.6%), and **Health Care & Social Assistance** (9.5%).

Share of English speakers in Industries of Québec



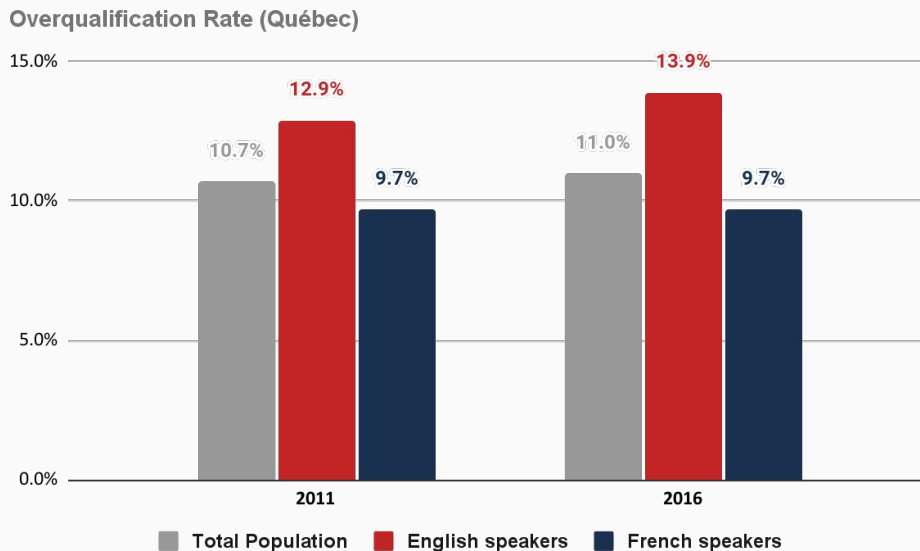


English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Overqualification

English-speakers in Québec have a higher overqualification* rate compared to French-speakers.

In 2016, English-speakers had an overqualification rate of 13.9%, an increase from 12.9% in 2011, while the overqualification rate of French-speakers remain unchanged at 9.7%.

*(*According to Statistics Canada, individuals with a university diploma, certificate, or degree at a bachelor's level or higher are considered overqualified if their job requires a high school diploma or less.)*





English-speaking workers in Québec's labour market | Supports

- Community organizations (regional organizations, employment service deliverers and local non-profits) play an essential role in maintaining the vitality of English-speaking communities.
- More than 70 of these organizations provide programs and services which improve the employability and employment of English speakers. Programs include job preparation, community job boards, French-language training and work placements with employer partners.
- Most crucially, these organizations provide services in English, which is essential for English speakers who face French-language barriers to accessing employment, as they are able to obtain important information about available French language learning supports in their mother tongue.
- They can even function as a pathway to access French-language learning and training



Challenges



Challenges

1. Labour market integration of English speakers

- Over the last few decades, English-speaking communities have faced decreasing vitality, with employment remaining a top issue; **English speakers experience a 2% higher unemployment than French-speaking Quebecers and earn an after-tax median income that is \$2,800 less than French speakers.**
- **English speakers are an underrepresented group in the labour market.** Out of the 17 administrative regions in Québec, 15 are characterized by higher unemployment for English speakers compared to French speakers.
- **Despite representing 14.9% of Québec's population, English speakers represent less than 1% of Québec's public service.**
- There are considerable regional disparities among English-speaking Quebecers. **English speakers in the regions face particular employment challenges** given the limited access to employment opportunities and resources to support their labour market integration.
- At the same time, Québec continues to face significant labour shortages, and these challenges will persist for the coming years as Québec recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Challenges

2. French-language learning for the workplace

- **Despite high rates of bilingualism among Québec's English speakers, French-language proficiency remains the top barrier to employment.**
- French-language learning programs for individuals in the workforce are a particular priority for English speakers looking to integrate into the labour market.

However, the current system for french-language learning isn't meeting the community's needs, particularly when it comes to language learning for the workforce.
- Although French-language training is provided to youth through Québec's standard education system, **adults have low access to quality French-language learning programs.** There is also limited availability of programs, particularly in the regions.
- The majority of French-language learning programs in Québec are targeted to immigrant Quebecers, with limited eligibility for non-immigrant Quebecers.
- In the 2022-23 budget, \$9 million was allocated to the Ministère de la Langue française and \$5.4 million to the Office québécois de la langue française over the next five years with the goal of implementing Bill 96.
- **No specific funds were dedicated to the expansion of French-language learning programs for non-immigrant Quebecers.**
- **It is important that the new language policies prioritize investments in French-language learning** over punitive measures that could marginalize linguistic minorities.



Challenges

3. Support and funding for organizations that deliver employment and employability services to English speakers

- Community Organizations are facing unprecedented challenges to their capacity due to:
 - Limited access to funding
 - The changing nature of employment service delivery
 - Restrictive funding criteria
- COVID, forced most organization to rework their organizational capacities and shift to delivering services primarily online. This shift put a strain on employment service providers and their clients who had to rapidly adapt to build new capacity.
- The current funding arrangement for these organisations makes it difficult for them to keep up with these ever-changing trends and needs in service delivery, let alone serve their population in the first place.
- Funding restrictions also have an impact on employee retention due to an inability to pay competitive salaries. This has resulted in high staff turnover in community organizations and employment service organizations.



Challenges

4. Pathways from Education to Employment

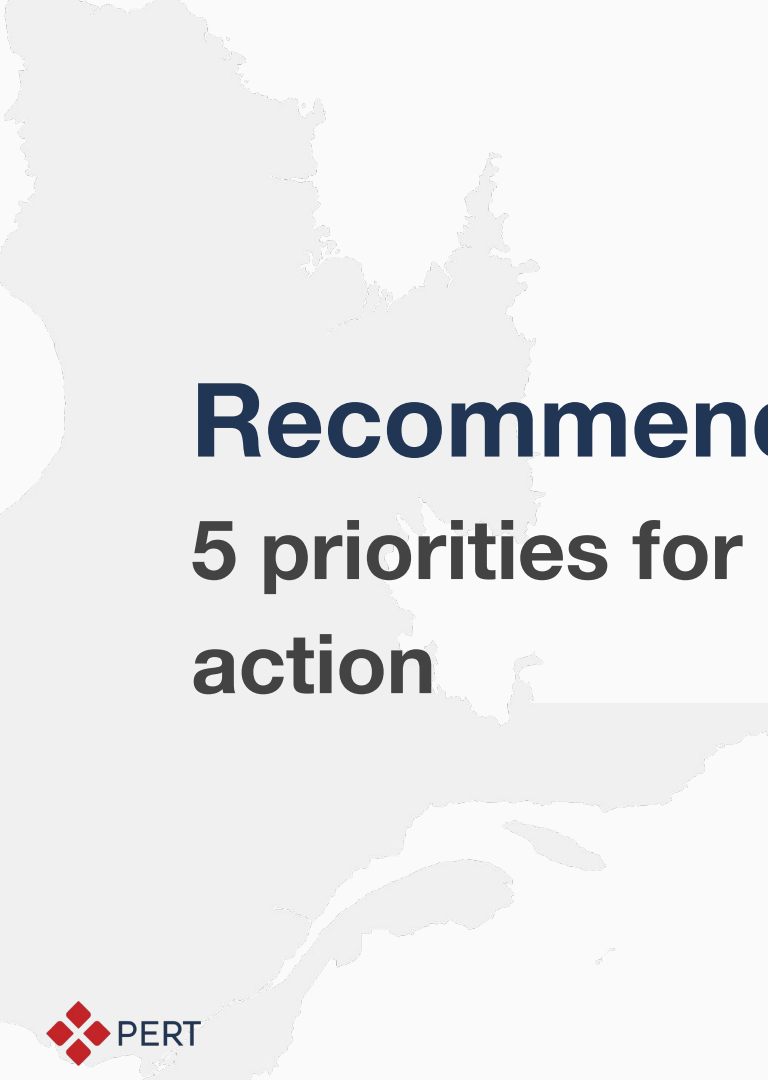
- Despite high levels of educational attainment, English-speaking Quebecers face challenges in transitioning from education and skills training to employment.
- Most English-language post-secondary institutions offer experiential learning programs such as co-ops, internships, work-integrated learning and apprenticeships, however these programs need stronger partnerships with the public and private sectors, as well as adequate funding.
- **Bridging programs are needed to transition graduates of English-language educational institutions into French-language workplaces.**
- English speakers have also had historically low rates of participation in vocational training programs, limiting the number of skilled English-speaking Quebecers with vocational training.
- **English-language vocational centres are in need of more flexibility, funding and collaboration with the government to improve the accessibility and adaptability of their programs.**



Challenges

5. Labour market data on English speakers and other linguistic minorities

- There are considerable limitations to the quantity, frequency and granularity of the labour market data for English-speaking Quebecers and other diverse population groups.
- Statistics Canada is the source of most of the labour market data available on linguistic minority communities in Québec.
- **Non-profit organizations such as PERT generate data on the employment situation of English speakers, however these organizations lack the capacity to develop comprehensive data.**
- Although the Québec government collaborates with the federal government in the generation and production of labour market data, the Québec government does not regularly collect and publish labour market data on linguistic minorities.
- **The Québec government and its stakeholders have limited insight into the labour market reality of English speakers, impacting their ability to develop targeted solutions to their employment challenges.**



Recommendations |

5 priorities for government action



Recommendations

1. Proactive approach to labour market integration of English speakers within Government

- Develop an action plan with the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale specifically aimed at improving the labour market integration of English speakers, with special attention paid to English speakers living in the regions.
- Increasing the proportion of English speakers in the Québec public service from 1% to 5% over the next five years.

2. Develop a flexible funding program targeted for the support of English-language organizations that provide employment and employability support

\$6.2 million in 2023-24 earmarked to increase the capacity for action among English-language employability organizations and partnership networks.

3. Expand French-language learning programs for the workforce

Improve the quality, availability and income-supports available for French-language learning programs for adults in the workforce, including non-immigrant Quebecers who cannot access the majority of programs.



Recommendations

4. Increase support for pathways from education to employment

Funding for transitional and ‘bridging’ programs for English speakers looking to enter or re-enter the workforce at any point in their career.

Support English-language vocational centres through increased flexibility, funding and collaboration with government to improve the accessibility and adaptability of vocational training programs.

5. Invest in improving the labour market data for English speakers

Increase the availability and frequency of labour market data for English speakers and other linguistic minorities. This requires collaboration between the Québec government, the private sector and the non-profit sector to improve the labour market data available.



Thank you!

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Québec 

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