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Key facts on the French language in Yukon in 2021

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Table of contents

Highlights	4
Ability to conduct a conversation in French	5
French as first official language spoken	6
French as a mother tongue	7
French spoken at home	8
French used at work	9
Instruction in French in primary and secondary schools	10
French among immigrants	10
Mobility and birthplace of the French-speaking population	11
Appendix	12

Key facts on the French language in Yukon in 2021

by **Nicolas Auclair**, **Catherine Frigon** and **Gabriel St-Amant**

This fact sheet gives an overview of the situation of French in Yukon in 2021. It begins by providing information on the changes in the number and proportion of the population who can have a conversation in French, whose first official language spoken is French, whose mother tongue is French, and who speak French at home or use French at work. Next, it presents information on French-language instruction in primary and secondary schools, French spoken among recent and established immigrants, and the mobility and place of birth of individuals whose first official language spoken is French. Additional data on these topics can be found in the appendix.

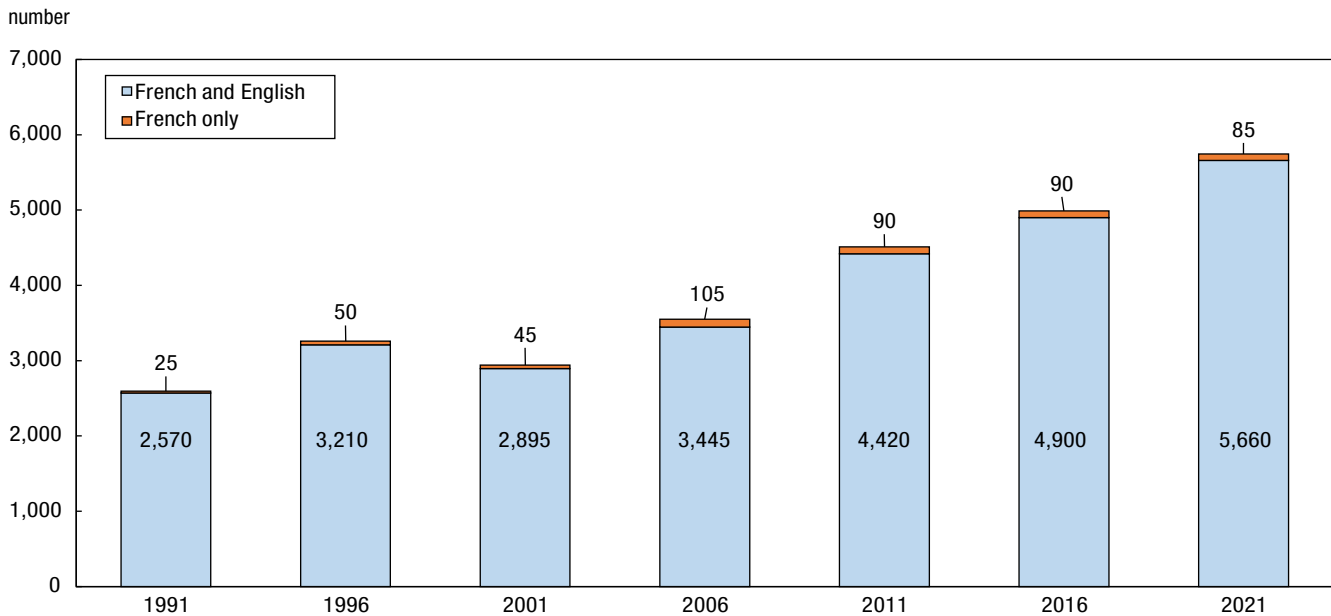
The information in this fact sheet is taken from the Census of Population. To learn more about the census concepts and the historical comparability of data, please refer to the 2021 Census of Population *Languages Reference Guide* and the *Instruction in the Minority Official Language Reference Guide*.

Highlights

- In Yukon, the number and proportion of people who could have a conversation in French, whose mother tongue is French, who spoke French most often at home, or who had French as their only first official language spoken reached all-time highs in 2021.
- Around one in seven Yukon residents (14.4%, or 5,745 people) could conduct a conversation in French in 2021.
- In 2021, 2,205 people (5.5% of the population) spoke French at least regularly at home. Among those with French as one of their mother tongues, more than two-thirds (70.7%) spoke French regularly at home.
- In 2021, 830 workers living in the territory (3.8%) used French at least regularly at work. Many worked in educational services (28.9%) or public administration (26.5%).
- In 2021, 1 in 10 immigrants (10.2%) could conduct a conversation in French, a lower proportion than that of the non-immigrant population (15.3%).
- In 2021, approximately 7 in 10 Yukon residents (70.3%) whose only first official language spoken was French were born in Canada, but outside Yukon.

Ability to conduct a conversation in French

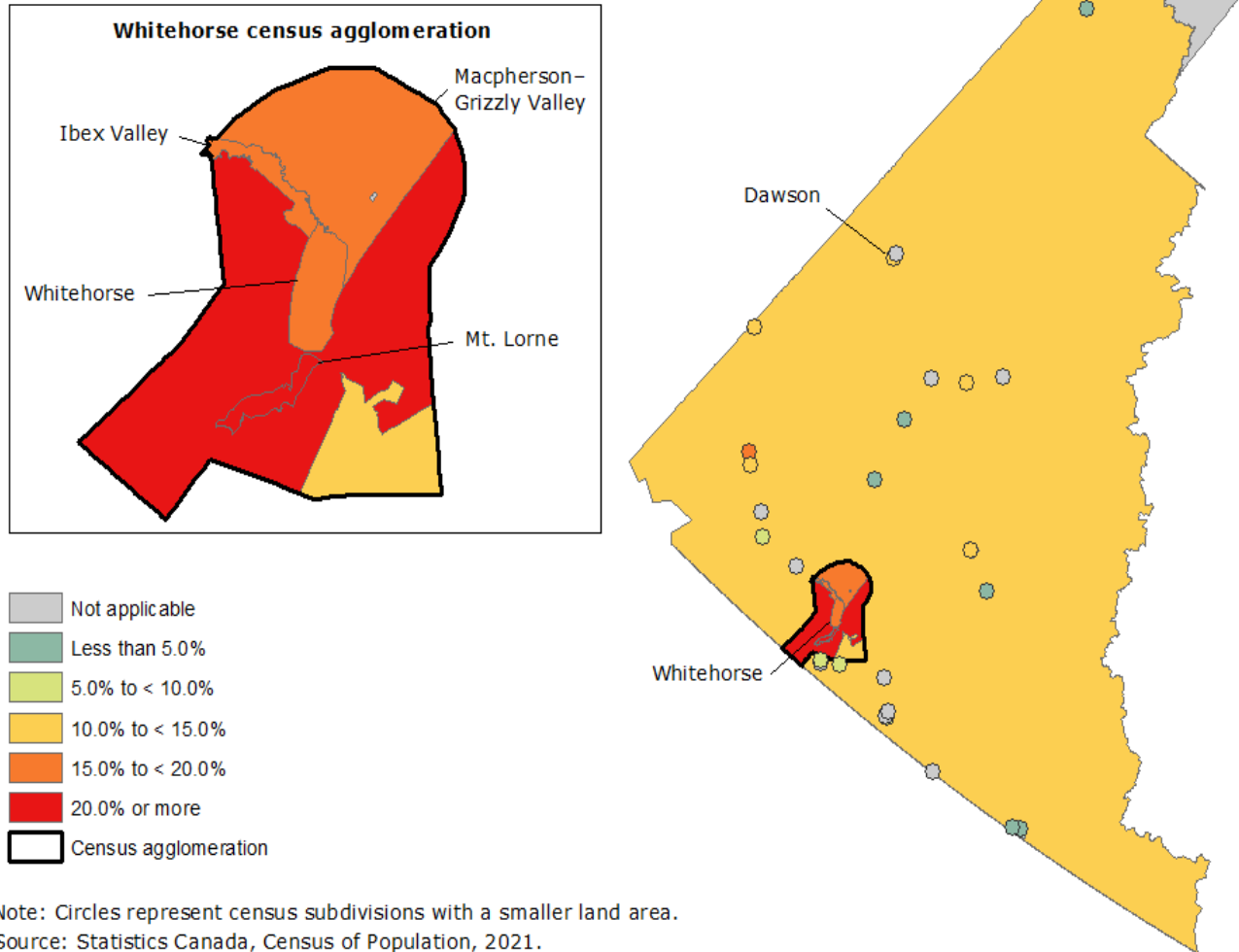
Chart 1
Population who can conduct a conversation in French, Yukon, 1991 to 2021



Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1991 to 2021.

- In 2021, 5,745 Yukon residents (14.4% of the population) could have a conversation in French. Almost all (98.5%, or 5,660 people) could also do so in English.
 - The number of people who were able to have a conversation in French has more than doubled since 1991 (from 2,595 to 5,745). From 2016 to 2021, it continued to rise (+755), reaching a record high.
- From 1991 to 2021, the proportion of the population who can conduct a conversation in French also increased (from 9.4% to 14.4%). In 2021, this was the highest percentage ever observed in a census.
 - This upward trend since 1991 was driven by the growth of the population with French as one of their mother tongues (+1,330) and by the increase in bilingualism among people who first learned English in childhood. Among these people, 3,190 (10.0%) could have a conversation in French in 2021, up from 1,585 (6.5%) in 1991.

Map 1 Proportion of Yukon's population who could have a conversation in French, by census subdivision, 2021

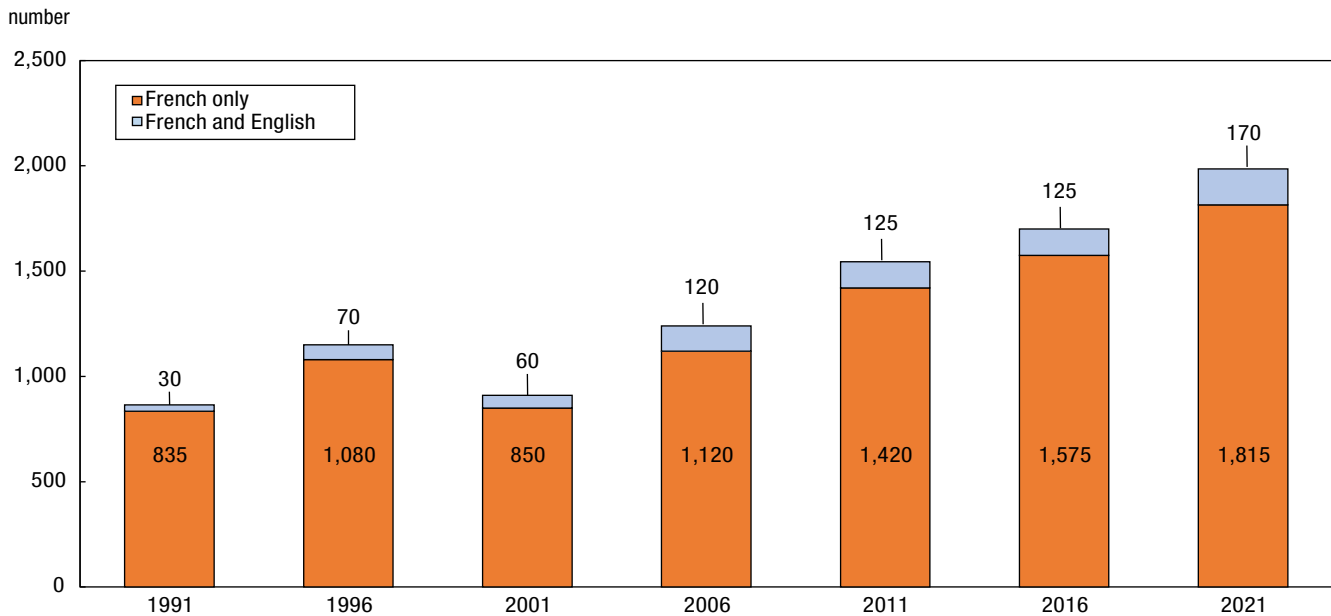


- In 2021, in 17 of Yukon’s 23 municipalities,¹ more than 5% of the population could conduct a conversation in French.
- The municipalities with a population of more than 500 that had the highest proportion of people who spoke French were the capital, Whitehorse (15.9%), Macpherson-Grizzly Valley (15.6%) and Ibex Valley (15.2%). All these municipalities are in the Whitehorse census agglomeration (CA).
- The municipalities with a population of more than 500 that had the highest number of French speakers were Whitehorse (4,425), Macpherson-Grizzly Valley (240) and Dawson (200).

1. In this fact sheet, the term “municipality” refers to a census subdivision for which data are available.

French as first official language spoken

Chart 2
Population with French as their first official language spoken, Yukon, 1991 to 2021

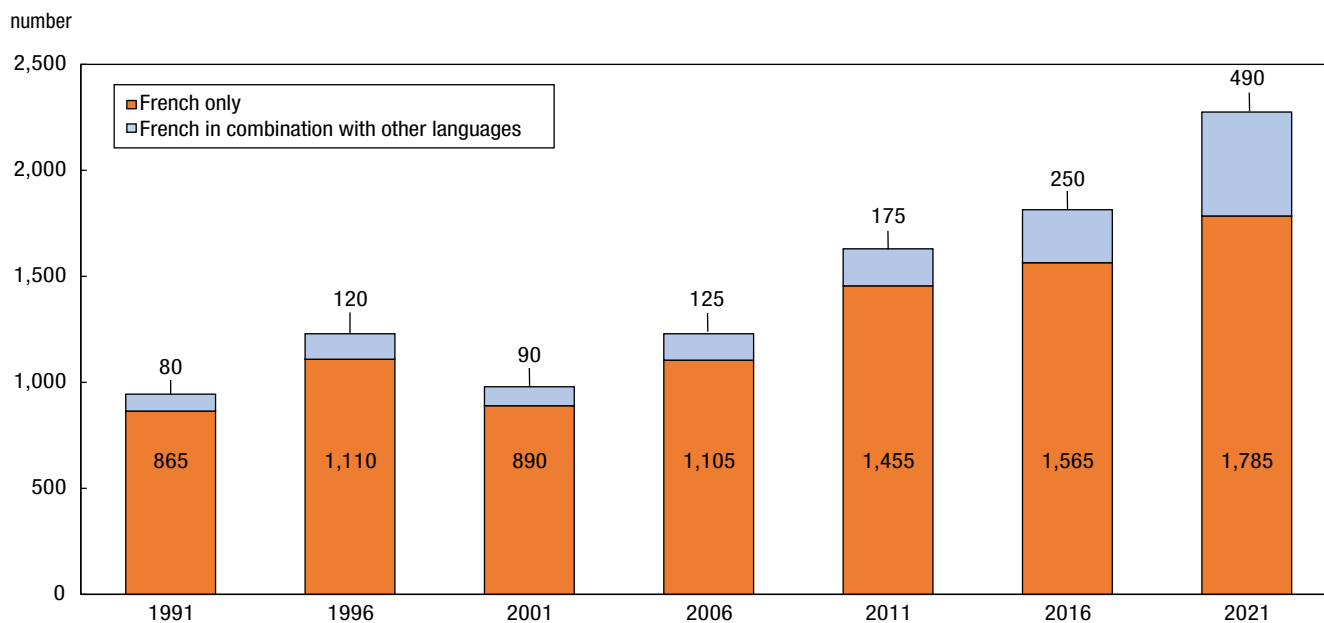


Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1991 to 2021.

- In 2021, 1,815 Yukon residents (4.6% of the population) had French as their only first official language spoken, and 170 residents (0.4%) had English and French as their first official languages spoken.
 - From 1991 to 2021, the number of residents with French as their only first official language spoken rose (+980). Their demographic weight also increased from 3.0% to 4.6%. In 2021, both the number and proportion were the highest ever observed in a census.
 - The number of Yukon residents with English and French as their first official languages spoken also rose from 1991 to 2021 (+140).

French as a mother tongue

Chart 3
Population with French as mother tongue, Yukon, 1991 to 2021

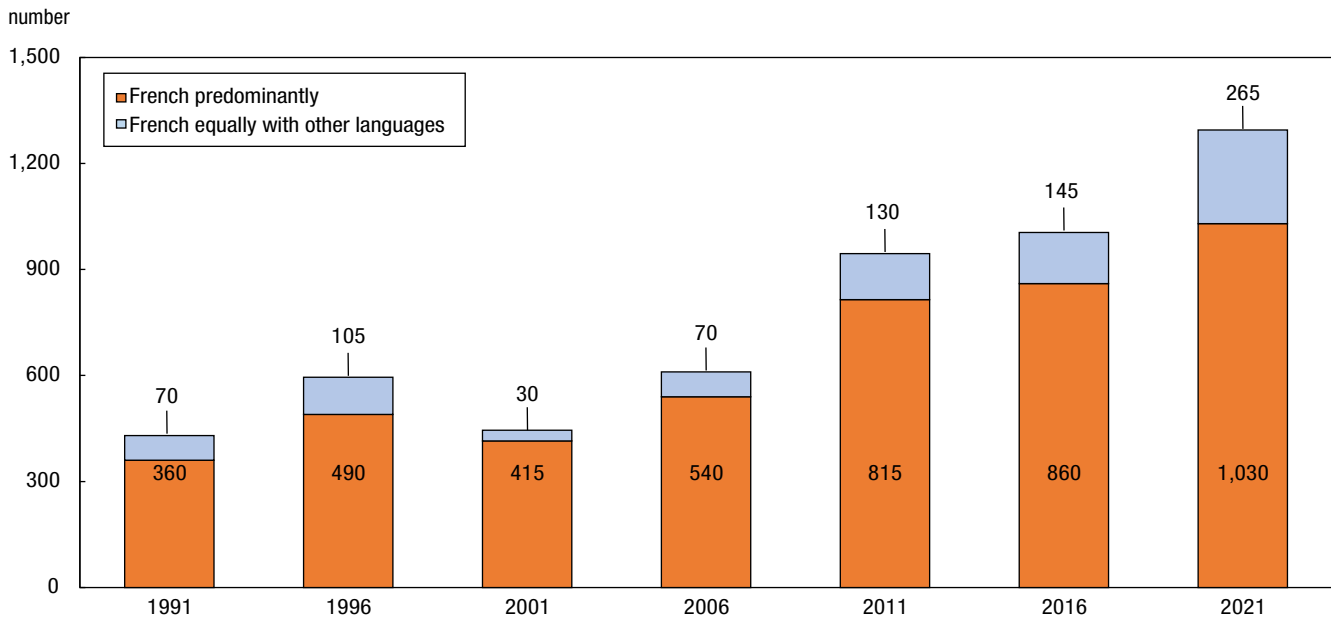


Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1991 to 2021.

- In 2021, 2,275 Yukon residents (5.7% of the population) had French as one of their mother tongues, up from 1991 (945 people, or 3.4%) and 2016 (1,815 people, or 5.1%). In 2021, this number and proportion were the highest ever observed in a census.
 - In 2021, 78.5% of these residents (1,785 people) had French as their only mother tongue, while 21.5% (490 people) had French as a mother tongue along with other languages (mainly English).
- For just over two in five (42.3%) people who had French as one of their mother tongues and who were married or in a common-law relationship, French was also the mother tongue of their spouse or partner.

French spoken at home

Chart 4
Population speaking French most often at home, Yukon, 1991 to 2021

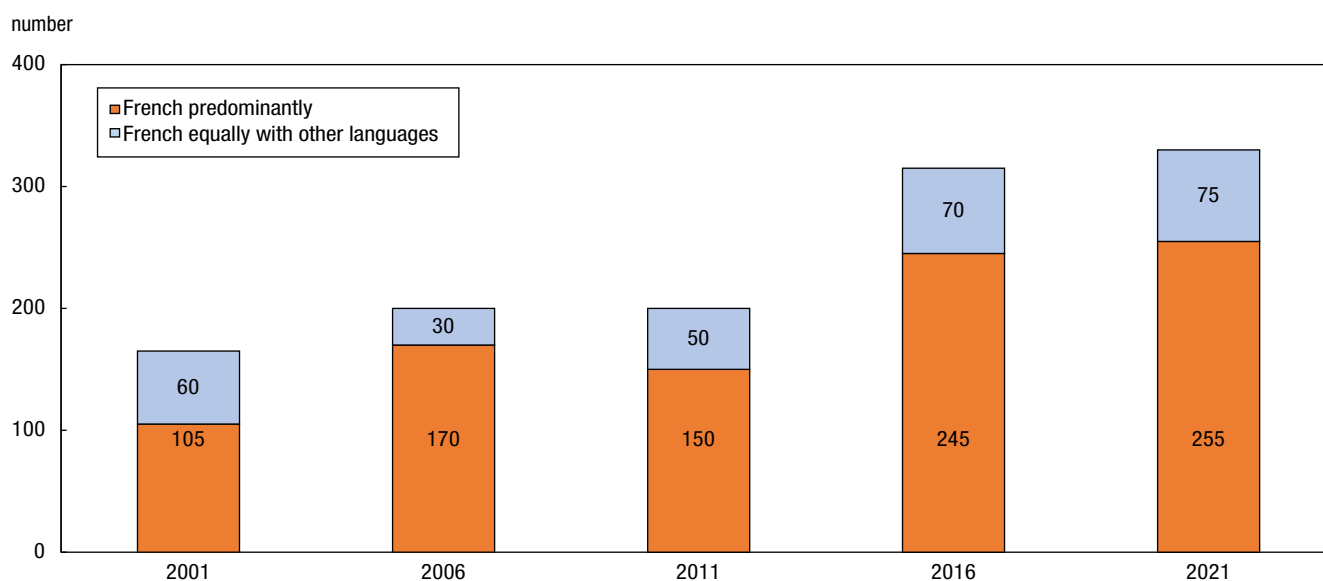


Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1991 to 2021.

- In 2021, 2,205 residents of Yukon (5.5% of the population) spoke French at least regularly at home.
 - Almost three in five of these residents (58.7%, or 1,295 people) spoke French most often at home, predominantly or equally with other languages. This was up from 1991 (+1,260) and 2016 (+290).
 - Moreover, 910 people (41.3%) spoke French regularly at home in addition to their main language (usually English).
- Among people with French as their mother tongue, alone or with other languages:
 - More than two-thirds (70.7%, or 1,605 people) spoke it at least regularly at home in 2021. However, this rate varied by age, ranging from 86.6% among those under age 15 to 59.8% among those aged 45 and older.
 - Just over half (52.4%, or 1,190 people) spoke French most often at home, predominantly or equally with other languages, up from 1991 (44.1%, or 415 people).
- Among Yukon residents whose mother tongue is not French, 600 (1.6%) spoke French at least regularly at home.
 - The vast majority (82.5%, or 495 people) spoke French at home as a secondary language while speaking another language more often (usually English).

French used at work

Chart 5
Population using French most often at work, Yukon, 2001 to 2021



Notes: Among workers who were employed during the census reference week. In 2021, changes were made to the census questions regarding languages used at work. Comparisons with previous cycles must therefore be made with caution. For more information, consult the Languages Reference Guide, Census of Population, 2021.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2001, 2006, 2016 and 2021, and the National Household Survey of 2011.

- In 2021, 830 Yukon residents used French at least regularly at work, accounting for 3.8% of the territory's workers.²
- In Yukon, 330 people, or 1.5% of the territory's workers, used French most often at work, predominantly or equally with other languages.
 - The number of people who used French most often at work increased from 160 in 2001 to 330 in 2021.
- In 2021, among workers who used French at least regularly at work, most worked in educational services (28.9%, or 240 people), public administration (26.5%, or 220 people) or health care and social assistance (10.2%, or 85 people).³
- Among those who spoke French most often at home, predominantly or with other languages, 52.0% also used French regularly at work.
- Among workers who regularly used French at work, close to 9 in 10 (89.8%) lived in the Whitehorse CA.

2. Persons employed during the Census of Population reference week.

3. The industry sectors are based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

Instruction in French in primary and secondary schools

- In 2021, 1,155 (14.1%) of the 8,205 children under 18 living in the territory were eligible⁴ for instruction in French.
 - Almost 9 in 10 eligible children (86.1%, or 995 children) lived in the Whitehorse CA.
- In Yukon, 2,475 people were attending or had already attended a regular French program in a French-language school in Canada, representing 6.6% of the population aged 5 and older.
 - Of those who had never attended a French-language school, 3,260 (8.7%) had actually attended a French immersion program in an English-language school.
 - Among school-aged children⁵ who were eligible for instruction in French, 580 (71.6%) were attending or had already attended a regular French program in a French-language school in Canada.

French among immigrants

- In 2021, the proportions of recent⁶ and established⁷ immigrants living in Yukon who could conduct a conversation in French (11.6% and 9.9%, respectively) were lower than the proportion of the non-immigrant population (15.3%).
 - The proportion of recent immigrants who spoke French at least regularly at home (7.1%) was higher than the one of the non-immigrant population (5.8%). The opposite was observed for the proportion of established immigrants (4.5%).
 - The proportion of immigrants with French as their only first official language spoken (4.8%) was similar to the proportion for the non-immigrant population (4.4%). However, the proportion of immigrants who had English and French as their first official languages spoken (2.0%) was higher than that of the non-immigrant population (0.2%).

4. According to the criteria set out in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, excluding citizenship.

5. Children aged 5 to 17.

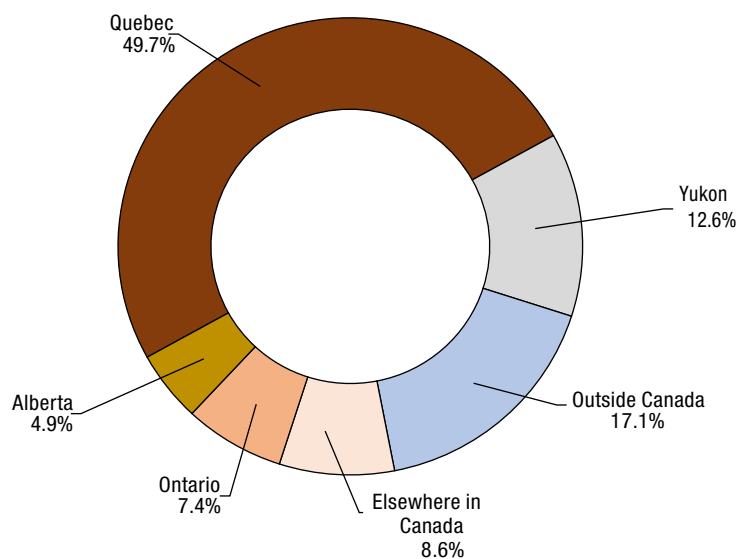
6. Immigrants admitted from 2016 to 2021.

7. Immigrants admitted before 2016.

Mobility and birthplace of the French-speaking population

Chart 6

Place of birth of the population whose only first official language spoken is French, Yukon, 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

- In 2021, among Yukon residents whose only first official language spoken is French, one in eight (12.6%, or 220 people) were born in the territory.
 - Approximately 7 in 10 (70.3%, or 1,235 people) were born in another province or territory, with large proportions coming from Quebec (49.7%, or 865 people), Ontario (7.4%, or 125 people) or Alberta (4.9%, or 85 people).
 - More than 1 in 6 (17.1%, or 300 people) were born abroad, mainly in metropolitan France (11.7%).
- From 2016 to 2021, the net interprovincial migration of the Yukon population whose only first official language spoken is French was positive (+45).
 - While 330 people with French as their only first official language spoken settled in Yukon from another province or territory from 2016 to 2021, 285 people left the territory during the same period.

Appendix

Table 1
Comparison of selected French-language indicators, Yukon, 1991 to 2021

Indicator	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021
	percent						
French as first official language spoken ¹	3.1	3.8	3.2	4.1	4.6	4.8	5.0
French only	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.7	4.2	4.4	4.6
French and English	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Knowledge of French ²	9.4	10.6	10.3	11.8	13.4	14.0	14.4
French only	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2
French and English	9.3	10.5	10.2	11.4	13.1	13.8	14.2
French as mother tongue	3.4	4.0	3.4	4.1	4.8	5.1	5.7
French only	3.1	3.6	3.1	3.7	4.3	4.4	4.5
French in combination with other languages	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.2
French spoken most often at home	1.6	2.0	1.6	2.0	2.8	2.8	3.3
French predominantly	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.8	2.4	2.4	2.6
French equally with other languages	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.7
French used most often at work ³	..	..	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.6	1.5
French predominantly	..	..	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.2	1.2
French equally with other languages	..	..	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.3

.. not available for a specific reference period

1. Corresponds to the sum of the “French” and “French and English” categories.

2. According to the knowledge of official languages.

3. Among workers who were employed during the census reference week. In 2021, changes were made to the census questions regarding languages used at work. Comparisons with previous cycles must therefore be made with caution. For more information, consult the Languages Reference Guide, Census of Population, 2021.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 1991 to 2021, and the National Household Survey of 2011.

Table 2
Frequency of French use at work and frequency of French spoken at home, Yukon, 2021

Frequency ²	French used at work ¹		French spoken at home	
	number	percent	number	percent
Total population	21,905	100.0	39,840	100.0
Only	175	0.8	740	1.9
Mostly	85	0.4	295	0.7
Equally	75	0.3	265	0.7
Regularly	500	2.3	910	2.3
No mention	21,075	96.2	37,635	94.5

1. Among workers who were employed during the census reference week.

2. “Only” includes people who solely use or speak French. “Mostly” includes people who predominantly use or speak French along with at least one secondary language. “Equally” includes people who use or speak French most often equally with at least one other language. Finally, “regularly” includes people who use or speak French as a secondary language and have at least one other main language.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Table 3
Use of French at work,¹ by frequency and industry sectors, Yukon, 2021

Selection of industry sectors	Use of French at work			
	At least regularly ²		Most often	
	number	percent	number	percent
Total	830	100.0	330	100.0
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	10	1.2	0	0.0
Construction	40	4.8	15	4.5
Retail trade	40	4.8	0	0.0
Transportation and warehousing	10	1.2	0	0.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	25	3.0	15	4.5
Educational services	240	28.9	160	48.5
Health care and social assistance	85	10.2	30	9.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	40	4.8	0	0.0
Accommodation and food services	25	3.0	10	3.0
Public administration	220	26.5	35	10.6
Other sectors	100	12.0	65	19.7

1. Among workers who were employed during the census reference week.

2. Workers using French at least regularly includes all those who reported using this language at work, whether it was most often or on a regular basis as a secondary language.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Table 4
French spoken at least regularly at home, by age and mother tongue, Yukon, 2021

Age group	Mother tongue					
	Total		French ¹		Other languages	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Total	2,205	5.5	1,605	70.7	600	1.6
0 to 14 years	565	8.3	355	86.6	205	3.2
15 to 44 years	1,015	6.2	755	72.2	265	1.7
45 years and older	625	3.8	490	59.8	135	0.9

1. Alone or in combination with other languages.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.

Table 5
Comparison of French-language indicators, by immigrant status and period of immigration, Yukon, 2021

Immigration status and period of immigration	Knowledge of French ¹		French spoken at home ¹		First official language spoken			
					French only		French and English	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Total	5,735	14.5	2,265	5.7	1,750	4.4	195	0.5
Non-immigrants	5,090	15.3	1,925	5.8	1,475	4.4	75	0.2
Immigrants	550	10.2	275	5.1	205	4.8	85	2.0
Recent immigrants ²	130	11.6	80	7.1	60	5.3	25	2.2
Established immigrants ³	420	9.9	190	4.5	160	3.8	50	1.2
2011 to 2015	75	7.3	30	2.9	25	2.4	25	2.4
2001 to 2010	155	14.7	95	9.0	70	6.6	30	2.8
1991 to 2000	75	11.0	35	5.1	35	5.1	10	1.5
1980 to 1990	35	9.0	15	3.8	10	2.6	10	2.6
Before 1980	75	6.8	25	2.3	10	0.9	0	0.0
Non-permanent residents	100	10.8	70	7.6	55	5.9	35	3.8

1. Includes all mentions of French.

2. Admitted to Canada between 2016 and 2021.

3. Admitted to Canada before 2016.

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2021.