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The French Language in Newfoundland and Labrador, 2001 to 2016: Facts and Figures

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Correction notice

August 8, 2019

Corrections have been made to this product.

Please take note of the following changes:

All data and analysis found in this product are now based on the universe “Population excluding institutional residents”, except when pertaining to language of work. Furthermore, all references to the “official language minority” population have been removed so that the analysis now focuses on language characteristics.

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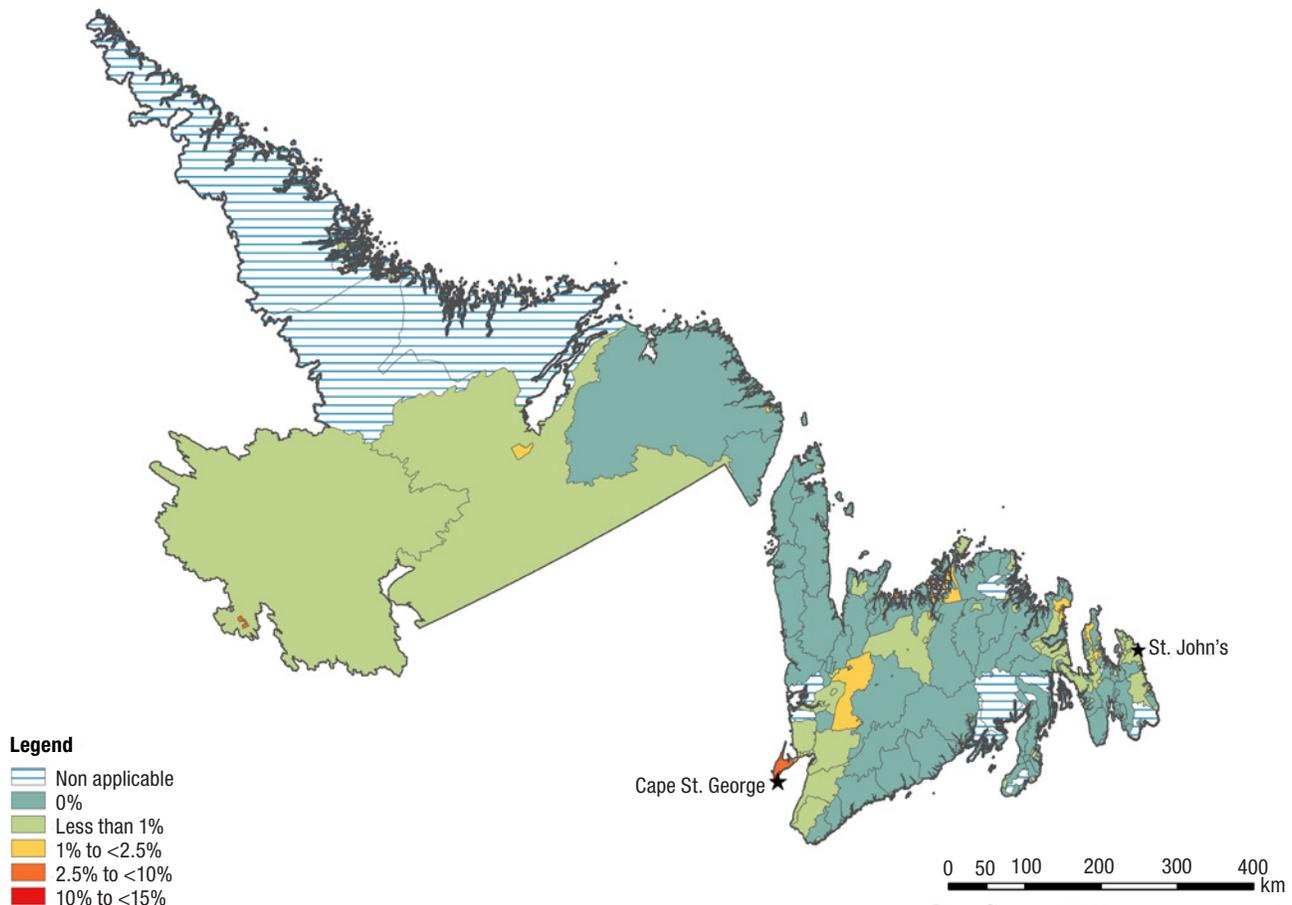
The French Language in Newfoundland and Labrador, 2001 to 2016: Facts and Figures

by Alejandro A. Páez Silva and Émilie Lavoie

The purpose of this document is to present an overview of the prevailing language trends observed between 2001 and 2016¹ in Newfoundland and Labrador. To this end, the document provides census-based information on the population² who reported having French as their first official language spoken, mother tongue, language spoken at home or language used at work as well as on the population who reported speaking French well enough to conduct a conversation.

Map 1

Population with French as their first official language spoken, census subdivisions, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population, 2016.

- In 2016, the number of persons with French as their first official language spoken reached 2,430 and represented 0.5% of Newfoundland and Labrador's total population that year. In both relative and absolute terms, these are the highest figures the province has seen for this population since at least 2001.
 - In the 2001 to 2016 period, the number of persons whose first official language spoken is French rose by 330 additional persons, that is, by 15.7%. In relative terms, however, this population has remained relatively stable increasing slightly by 0.1 percentage point over the 15 year period.

1. Please see the document entitled *Methodological Document on the 2011 Census Language Data* (Catalogue no. 98-314-X2011051) for notes on the comparability of the 2011 Census language data to that of prior census years.

2. The "population" refers to all persons excluding institutional residents. Users should note that in the 2001 and 2006 censuses, institutional residents did not receive the long form questionnaire from which language data were collected.

Table 1
Selected French-Language Indicators, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2001 to 2016

	2001		2006		2011		2016		2001 to 2016 Growth
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	percent
Total Population¹	508,075	100.0	500,610	100.0	509,950	100.0	515,680	100.0	1.5
French as First Official Language Spoken ²	2,100	0.4	1,935	0.4	2,100	0.4	2,430	0.5	15.7
Knowledge of French ³	21,035	4.1	23,765	4.7	23,585	4.6	26,065	5.1	23.9
Knowledge of Only French	145	0.0	85	0.0	130	0.0	120	0.0	-17.2
Knowledge of English and French	20,890	4.1	23,680	4.7	23,455	4.6	25,945	5.0	24.2
French as Mother Tongue ³	2,510	0.5	2,225	0.4	3,015	0.6	3,020	0.6	20.3
French Spoken at Home ⁴	3,060	0.6	3,080	0.6	4,295	0.8	4,675	0.9	52.8
French Spoken Most Often at Home ⁵	1,090	0.2	830	0.2	1,445	0.3	1,415	0.3	29.8
Only French Spoken at Home ⁶	425	0.1	290	0.1	745	0.1	450	0.1	5.9
Mostly French Spoken at Home ⁷	470	0.1	360	0.1	405	0.1	480	0.1	2.1
French Spoken Equally Often With Another Language at Home ⁸	195	0.0	180	0.0	295	0.1	485	0.1	148.7
French Spoken Regularly at Home (In addition to the main language)	1,970	0.4	2,250	0.4	2,850	0.6	3,260	0.6	65.5

1. Refers to all persons excluding institutional residents.

2. Following method I in part IV of the *Official Languages Act*, the 'English-French' multiple response is equally redistributed among the 'English' and 'French' single responses.

3. Includes both single and multiple responses.

4. Includes both single and multiple responses to both part A and part B of the question.

5. Refers to French spoken most often at home with or without additional languages spoken regularly.

6. Includes persons who reported only French in Part A of the language spoken at home question (spoken most often) and did not report a language to Part B (spoken regularly).

7. Includes persons who reported French to Part A of the language spoken at home question (spoken most often) and reported at least one other language to Part B (spoken regularly).

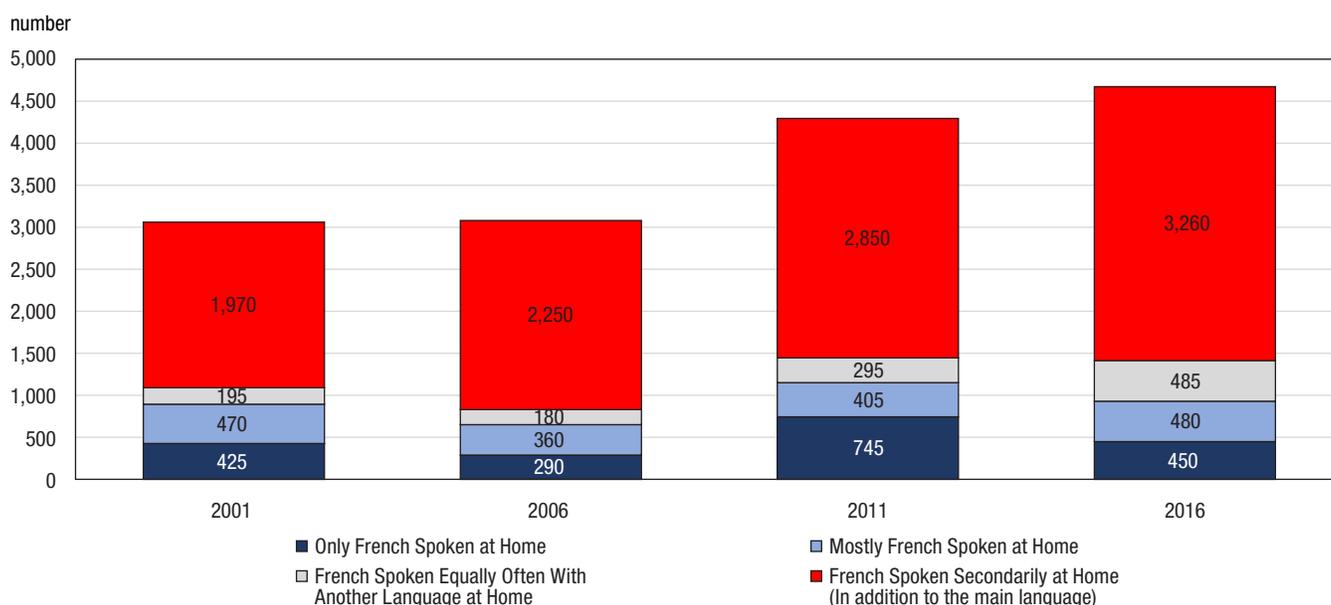
8. Includes persons who reported French and another language to Part A of the language spoken at home question (spoken most often).

Sources: Statistics Canada, Censuses of Population, 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016.

- As of 2016, 26,065 persons reported being able to conduct a conversation in French, either exclusively or with another language – more than ten times the number of persons with French as their first official language spoken. They represented 5.1% of the province's total population that year.
 - ▶ Between 2001 and 2016, the number of persons who reported being able to conduct a conversation in French increased by an additional 5,030 persons which represents a 23.9% increase over that period. In relative terms, this population has increased by 0.9 percentage points.
- In both absolute and relative terms English-French bilingualism in Newfoundland and Labrador has reached new heights as of 2016.
 - ▶ In fact, that year, 25,945 persons reported being able to conduct a conversation in both official languages, up 24.2% since 2001 (+5,055 persons). Collectively, they represented 5.0% of the population in 2016 compared to 4.1% in 2001.
- In 2016, there were 3,020 persons in Newfoundland and Labrador who reported having French as their mother tongue³ either exclusively or in combination with other languages, representing 0.6% of the province's total population.
 - ▶ Compared to 2001, this population has increased by an additional 510 persons which represents a 20.3% increase over the 15 year period.

3. In some cases, the number of respondents whose mother tongue is French is higher than the number given for the population with French as their first official language spoken. As part of the logic used to derive the population with French as their first official language spoken, those who have French as their mother tongue but can no longer speak it well enough to hold a conversation are not included. Similarly, those who can hold a conversation in both English and French and have these languages as their mother tongues but speak English most often at home are likewise excluded from the population with French as their first official language spoken.

Chart 1
French spoken at home, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2001 to 2016



Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016.

- In 2016, 4,675 persons reported speaking French at home at least regularly, they represented 0.9% of the province's population that year. In the 2001 to 2016 period, this population increased by 1,615 additional persons which represents a 52.8% increase.
 - ▶ Among those who reported speaking French at least regularly in 2016, there were 1,415 persons who reported speaking French most often at home whereas more than twice that number (3,260 persons) reported speaking French as a secondary language at home (in addition to the main language). Respectively, these populations represented 0.3% and 0.6% of the province's total population.
 - ▶ Between 2001 and 2016, the number of persons who reported speaking French most often at home increased by an additional 325 persons, that is, by 29.8%. By comparison, the number of persons who reported speaking French as a secondary language at home increased by an additional 1,290 persons which represents a 65.5% increase.
 - ▶ In the 2001 to 2016 period, the growth in the number of persons who reported speaking French equally often with another language at home (+290 persons) accounted for 89.2% of the growth in the number of persons who speak French most often.

Table 2
French Used at Work, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2001 to 2016

	2001		2006		2011		2016		2001 to 2016 Growth
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	percent
Working Population¹	263,280	100.0	274,630	100.0	282,030	100.0	286,035	100.0	8.6
French Used at Work ²	3,040	1.2	4,020	1.5	3,450	1.2	4,155	1.5	36.7
French Used Most Often at Work ³	920	0.3	1,150	0.4	1,245	0.4	1,435	0.5	56.0
Only French Used at Work ⁴	240	0.1	285	0.1	340	0.1	215	0.1	-10.4
Mostly French Used at Work ⁵	460	0.2	585	0.2	585	0.2	740	0.3	60.9
French Used Equally Often With Another Language at Work ⁶	220	0.1	280	0.1	320	0.1	480	0.2	118.2
French Used Regularly at Work (In addition to the main language)	2,120	0.8	2,870	1.0	2,205	0.8	2,720	1.0	28.3

1. Refers to persons aged 15 years and over who worked at least once in the reference period.

2. Includes both single and multiple responses to both part A and part B of the question.

3. Refers to French used most often at work with or without additional languages used regularly.

4. Includes persons who reported only French to Part A of the language used at work question (used most often) and did not report a language to Part B (used regularly).

5. Includes persons who reported French to Part A of the language used at work question (used most often) and reported at least one other language to Part B (used regularly).

6. Includes persons who reported French and another language to Part A of the language used at work question (used most often).

Sources: Statistics Canada, Censuses of Population, 2001, 2006, 2016 and National Household Survey (NHS) of 2011.

- In the 15 years leading to 2016, the number of workers who reported using French at work at least regularly increased from 3,040 in 2001 to 4,155 in 2016, a 36.7% increase. However, in relative terms, their size as a proportion of the total working population has increased only slightly from 1.2% in 2001 to 1.5% in 2016.
 - ▶ Among those who use French at least regularly at work, 1,435 use French most often while 2,720 use French as their secondary language at work (in addition to the main language). Respectively, these workers represented 0.5% and 1.0% of Newfoundland and Labrador's total working population.
 - ▶ Between 2001 and 2016, the number of workers who reported using French most often at work rose by 515 workers which translates to a 56.0% increase. By contrast, the number of workers who reported using French as their secondary language at work have increased by half as much with a 28.3% increase (+600 workers) over the same period.