



The French Presence in MANITOBA

1,680

people **can speak French, but not English**

0.1%

of population

38,378

people **speak French as their first official language**

2.9%

of population¹

58,635

people **have French as a mother tongue or speak it at home**

4.4%

of population²

81,790

people **have French as a mother tongue, or speak it at home, or use it at work or have it as a language of instruction at school**

6.3%

of population³

112,115

people **can speak French, including 110,435 (8.3%) who can speak both English and French**

8.4%

of population

EDUCATION

For 2020–2021 in public schools from junior kindergarten to Grade 12:⁴

**48,603
STUDENTS**

were in **regular French-as-a-second-language programs or core French language programs**

**27,234
STUDENTS**

were in **French immersion programs**

**5,952
STUDENTS**

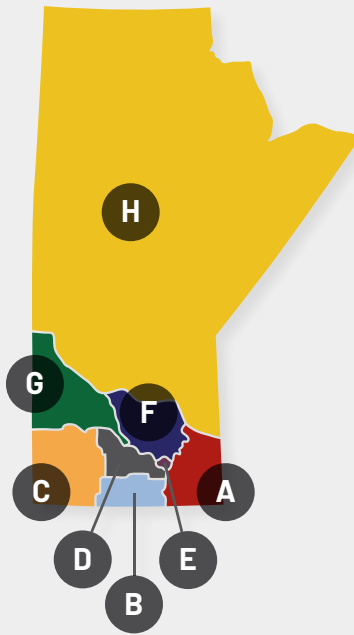
were in **education programs in the minority official language (French)**











WHERE DO PEOPLE LIVE

WHO SPEAK FRENCH AS THEIR FIRST OFFICIAL LANGUAGE?⁵

There are 15 designated bilingual municipalities in the province.⁶



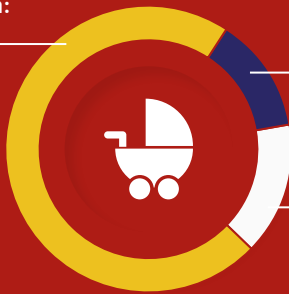
Economic Regions:

- A  Southeast: **22.7%**
- B  South Central: **4.8%**
- C  Southwest: **3.4%**
- D  North Central: **4.0%**
- E  Winnipeg: **58.9%**
- F  Interlake: **3.3%**
- G  Parklands: **1.6%**
- H  North: **1.2%**

WHERE WERE THEY BORN?⁷

In Manitoba:

72%



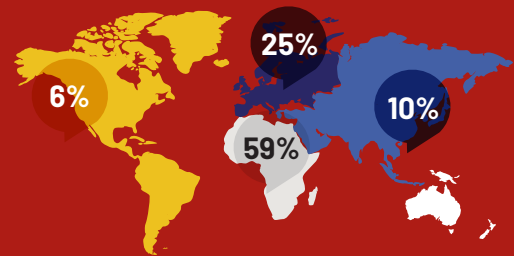
Elsewhere in Canada:

13%

Abroad:

15%

WHERE WERE FRENCH-SPEAKING IMMIGRANTS BORN?⁷



MEDIA

NEWSPAPER



La Liberté

RADIO



CKXL Envol FM 91.1 (Winnipeg) and Radio-Canada ICI Première and ICI Musique

TELEVISION



ICI Radio-Canada Télé and Unis TV

CELEBRATE!

FEBRUARY

Saint-Boniface hosts the **Festival du Voyageur**, the largest winter festival in Western Canada, where visitors from around the globe come to bask in the “joie de vivre” of French Canadian culture and the history of Francophones, Métis and First Nations.

Louis Riel Day commemorates the life of the important Métis leader and is a public holiday in the province.

JUNE

Every year on French Canada’s biggest holiday, **Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day**, Francophones gather in La Broquerie and in Saint-Boniface to celebrate their French culture with concerts, sports and recreational activities, a parade and much more.

FOR MORE EVENTS, CHECK OUT
[BONJOURMANITOBA.COM/EN/CALENDAR/](https://www.bonjourmanitoba.com/en/calendar/)

HISTORY

🌿 **From time immemorial**, Indigenous peoples and their languages have been present in the land that we now call Manitoba.

🌿 **17th century**: British explorers and traders make their way to the shores of Hudson Bay, in present day Manitoba, marking the beginning of the English-speaking presence in the region. In 1670, the Hudson’s Bay Company is created.

🌿 **1730s**: Pierre Gaultier de La Vérendrye and his sons are the first Europeans to reach the Forks of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, in the heart of what is now Winnipeg.

🌿 **19th century**: The Métis, people of mixed European and Indigenous ancestry, enjoy particular political influence in what is now Manitoba, especially through their involvement in the fur trade. Most Métis are French-speaking, but many speak English or even Gaelic.

🌿 **1870**: At the insistence of Louis Riel’s provisional government, composed of both English speakers and French speakers, guarantees are written into the provincial constitution to preserve the province’s linguistic duality when it joins the Canadian federation. These guarantees protect the bilingualism of the legislature and the courts, as well as denominational schools.

🌿 **1890**: Because Francophones have become a minority in the province as a result of waves of migration from Ontario, Great Britain and Eastern Europe after the 1870s, the provincial government abolishes the official status of French in the legislature and courts, and it prohibits teaching in French (and in any language other than English) in public schools.

🌿 **1916**: The Association d’éducation des Canadiens français du Manitoba is created. It is replaced in 1968 by the Société franco-manitobaine (renamed Société de la francophonie manitobaine in 2017) as the province’s main Francophone organization.

🌿 **1979**: The Supreme Court rules that the 1890 act is unconstitutional and restores bilingualism to the legislation and courts.

🌿 **1981**: The Manitoba government creates the Secrétariat des services en langue française.

🌿 **1989**: The province introduces its French Language Services Policy.

🌿 **1993**: After French has been gradually reintroduced into the school curriculum beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, Franco-Manitobans win a major victory with a Supreme Court ruling that confirms their right to have their own school board, which is finally created a year later.

🌿 **2016**: The provincial government adopts the *Francophone Community Enhancement and Support Act*, which contributes to the vitality of French-speaking communities.

Sources and notes:

Unless indicated otherwise, all data is from Statistics Canada, *Census Profile*, 2021 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001, Ottawa.

¹ For additional information, please see our [Snapshots of official languages in Canada \(2021\)](#).

² [Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0214-01.](#)

³ Data provided by Statistics Canada, from 2021 Census of Population (2A-L). Includes all individuals having French alone or in combination with another language as a mother tongue, or a language spoken at home, or a language used at work or, among school-aged children who could speak French, had attended a regular French-language school or a French immersion program.

⁴ [Statistics Canada. Table 37-10-0009-01.](#)

⁵ [Statistics Canada. Table 98-10-0196-01.](#)

⁶ <https://ambm.ca/en/municipalities/>

⁷ Data provided by Statistics Canada, from 2021 Census of Population (2A-L).