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Francophone Immigrants with Foreign Teacher Education Amid French Teacher Shortages Outside Quebec

by Marc Frenette, Tomasz Handler, Émilie Lavoie and Ndeye Diouf

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Abstract

Providing French-language instruction during formative years is important for official bilingualism, particularly outside Quebec, where French is not the majority language spoken. However, recent reports suggest that several provinces outside Quebec may be facing French teacher shortages. One approach to filling these shortages is actively recruiting and retaining Francophone immigrants who have completed teacher education. Yet, little is known about the potential and actual roles of immigrants in this regard: the size of the group, where these immigrants settle, whether they end up using their teaching credentials and whether they teach in French. The purpose of this study is to answer these questions by using Census of Population data, which contain information on first official language spoken, language used at work, immigrant status, highest level of educational attainment, field of study, location of residence and location of work. The study primarily compares 18- to 60-year-old Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education (obtained outside Canada) (FIFTEs) with their non-immigrant counterparts who obtained their teacher education anywhere (Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education [FNITEs]).

The study finds that, in 2021, a smaller share of 18- to 60-year-old immigrants were Francophone and had completed teacher education compared with non-immigrants in the same age range. Among the key comparison groups, a similar share of FIFTEs and FNITEs resided outside Quebec. FIFTEs living outside Quebec were more likely to reside in Toronto, Alberta and British Columbia, but less likely to reside in the rest of Ontario (excluding Ottawa, where they were about equally likely to reside) and New Brunswick. Among FIFTEs, location of study and immigrant admission class were strongly associated with the probability of residing outside Quebec. Specifically, FIFTEs who studied in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Democratic Republic of the Congo were the most likely to reside outside Quebec, while those who studied in Algeria were the least likely (among locations of study that could be examined separately). With regard to immigrant admission class, economic FIFTEs were less likely to reside outside Quebec than refugee FIFTEs. Employed FIFTEs were far less likely to work as teachers than employed FNITEs. Among FIFTEs, location of work, location of study and immigrant admission class were strongly associated with the probability of working in education. Specifically, FIFTEs working outside Quebec were substantially more likely to be employed as French teachers than their counterparts working in Quebec. FIFTEs who studied in Egypt, Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, France and Lebanon were the most likely to work as French teachers, while economic FIFTEs were more likely to work as French teachers than family or refugee FIFTEs.

Keywords: teachers, immigration, Francophone, labour shortages

1 Introduction

Canada is a bilingual country with two official languages—English and French. While almost one-quarter of Canadians consider French to be their first official language spoken, this population is very highly concentrated in the province of Quebec. Nevertheless, significant Francophone populations exist in several areas outside Quebec. These are often referred to as official language minority communities (OLMCs)—a term that also applies to Anglophone communities in Quebec. The economic and cultural vibrancy of OLMCs relies heavily on robust populations of skilled minority official language speakers.

As demonstrated by Frenette (2024), many Francophone OLMCs (henceforth, "Francophone minority communities" [FMCs]) face challenges in recruiting and retaining skilled minority official language speakers. For example, New Brunswick registered a net loss of one in five young, skilled French speakers (19%) who obtained their postsecondary education between 2010 and 2017 and were followed for two years after graduation. The net losses in New Brunswick were greater among degree holders (one in four). While appropriate policy responses to such retention and recruitment issues are an open question, providing robust education in French in the early years may result in a larger initial supply of skilled Francophones in FMCs. It may then also result in higher French competencies among Anglophones in the community.

In Canada, elementary and secondary school students generally have three pathways for French-language instruction, contingent on availability: attending a French-language school,[1] participating in a French immersion (FI) program within an English-language school or taking French as a second language (FSL) courses in an English-language school. However, a comprehensive study suggests that FI and FSL teacher shortages exist across Canada. More specifically, 42% of principals in schools offering FI reported facing shortages, and 36% reported shortages in other FSL programs (possibly including FI) when surveyed from December 2020 to August 2021 (SOCIUS, 2021). There are also indications that French teacher shortages may become more prevalent. For example, teacher shortages in Ontario are projected to worsen beginning in 2027 because the province is expecting a large number of retirements at that time, and French (along with technology) education is expected to be hit particularly hard.[2]

One strategy for addressing the shortage of French-language educators is to recruit and retain Francophone immigrants who hold foreign teacher education credentials. This approach could help fill the demand for qualified teachers, particularly in regions outside Quebec. However, there is limited information available about the potential and actual roles of immigrants in this regard: the size of this group, where these immigrants tend to settle within Canada, whether they use their teaching credentials once in Canada and whether they are employed to teach in French. The purpose of this study is to address these information gaps by analyzing data from the Census of Population. This dataset contains several key pieces of information used in this study, including individuals' first official language spoken, language used at work, immigrant status, highest level of educational attainment, field of study, location of residence and location of work. The study focuses on comparing 18- to 60-year-old Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education (FIFTEs) with their non-immigrant counterparts who obtained their teacher education anywhere,

1. Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees the right to education in French in FMCs for rights holders (or to education in English for rights holders in Quebec). Children of Francophone rights holders may include those whose parents' first language (mother tongue) is French, those whose parents attended a French-language school in Canada or those who have a sibling who has attended a French-language school in Canada.
2. This is according to a series of briefing documents prepared for the new Ontario Minister of Education (appointed August 16, 2024) and obtained by the Canadian Press. See https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-teacher-shortage-ministry-of-educaiton-1.7339837 for more details.

whether within Canada or abroad. By doing so, the research aims to shed light on the prevalence of FIFTEs in the French education landscape outside Quebec.

The next section describes the policy context behind Canada's strategy regarding official bilingualism, education and immigration. This is followed by a description of the data and methodology used in the study. The results are presented in the next section and then summarized in the concluding section.

2 Policy context

In 2021, the federal government released a document titled *English and French: Towards a Substantive Equality of Official Languages in Canada*, which proposed reforms to modernize the *Official Languages Act* (Canadian Heritage, 2021). According to this document, extensive consultations revealed that most Canadians now view official languages positively, moving beyond past tensions. The document highlighted three main issues with the current act: it needs to more accurately align with the evolving jurisprudence on language rights, support Francophone communities outside Quebec because of declining French transmission and improve the act's application mechanisms. To address these issues, six guiding principles were proposed: recognizing linguistic dynamics, promoting bilingual learning, strengthening institutions supporting OLMCs, protecting and promoting French, enhancing federal bilingualism requirements, and regularly reviewing the act.

One key principle involves promoting bilingual learning. The document proposes several administrative measures for attracting and retaining Francophone teachers, including

- creating a dedicated Francophone immigration corridor for teachers
- prioritizing French-language teacher recruitment in the next Action Plan for Official Languages
- developing a unified framework for recognizing teaching credentials across Canada.

On May 15, 2023, Bill C-13, titled "An Act to amend the *Official Languages Act*, to enact the *Use of French in Federally Regulated Private Businesses Act* and to make related amendments to other Acts," was passed by the House of Commons. This act aims to modernize and strengthen the *Official Languages Act* by promoting the equality of both English and French, while also protecting the French language by recognizing its status as a minority language in Canada and North America. Notably, the act underscores the Canadian government's commitment to supporting FMCs by increasing Francophone immigration to restore their demographic weight. It includes measures to encourage acceptance and appreciation of English and French and learning in one's own language throughout one's life, from early childhood to postsecondary education, especially in OLMCs. Additionally, the act calls for the creation of an updated action plan to support these initiatives (Government of Canada, 2023a, 2023b). In response, the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023–2028 was proposed, featuring substantial investments to enhance French-language education (Canadian Heritage, 2023). The plan includes

- $16.3 million over five years for recruiting and retaining French teachers in FMCs
- up to $15.2 million for recruitment and retention in French-language schools in FMCs
- $242.8 million over four years to support French second-language programs nationwide.

To further advance and solidify these goals, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced on January 16, 2024, a new set of policies and programs as part of the five-year action plan (IRCC, 2024). IRCC outlined that this initiative includes a new corridor for French-language teachers, increased funding for Francophone community support and targeted selection through Express Entry. The government will invest more than $137 million over five years to back this and other high-priority efforts. The initiative sets ambitious targets for admitting new

immigrants to FMCs, aimed at bolstering the growth and vitality of these communities. These targets refer specifically to the share of immigrants admitted in FMCs who are Francophone and have since been revised to 8.5% in 2025, 9.5% in 2026 and 10.0% in 2027.[3]

It is important to note that the current study (described in the next section) focuses on the situation that preceded these initiatives. However, the results may still inform future immigration, settlement or retention policies and strategies.

3 Data and methods

This study is concerned with a group of immigrants who could potentially help reduce French teacher shortages in Canada, particularly outside Quebec: FIFTEs. Several questions are asked, including "What share of immigrants are FIFTEs?", "Where do FIFTEs settle?" and "Do FIFTEs work as French teachers, especially outside Quebec?"

To answer these questions, the study primarily relies on the 2021 Census of Population, but results are also shown using the 2016 Census of Population, when possible. The Census of Population includes several variables useful for this analysis, including first official language spoken, language used at work, immigrant status, highest level of educational attainment, field of study, location of residence and location of work.

The study mainly compares 18- to 60-year-old FIFTEs—a group of 4,685 in Canada (3,985 in Quebec and 700 outside Quebec) in 2021—with their non-immigrant counterparts who obtained their teacher education anywhere (Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education [FNITEs]). FNITEs make up a group of about 102,000 in Canada (85,845 in Quebec and 16,155 outside Quebec) in 2021. FIFTEs are defined as Francophones (based on the first official language spoken) who are immigrants (excluding immigrants who were admitted prior to 1980) and have completed teacher education[4] outside Canada. FNITEs are Francophones who are not immigrants and have completed their teacher education in any location in the world.

Two main outcomes are examined in the study. The first is the share of FIFTEs who resided outside Quebec, while the second is the share of employed[5] FIFTEs who worked as French teachers outside Quebec.[6] These measures provide an estimate of the "potential" and the "actual" roles of immigrants in addressing French teacher shortages outside Quebec: the potential share of FIFTEs available to work as French teachers outside Quebec and the actual share of FIFTEs working as French teachers outside Quebec. As a benchmark, these outcomes are also measured for FNITEs.

The concept of "French teacher" is based on three pieces of information: industry, occupation and language used at work. First, teachers are identified based on industry (elementary and

3. See https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-teacher-shortage-ministry-of-educaiton-1.7339837, https://francopresse.ca/immigration/2024/10/24/ottawa-reduit-limmigration-permanente-mais-augmente-sa-cible-francophone/ (available in French only), and https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2024/10/20252027-immigration-levels-plan.html for more details.
4. In this study, teacher education programs are degree programs and are identified by the following Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2021 codes (used in the 2021 Census of Population): 13.0101, 13.0201, 13.0202, 13.0203, 13.0299, 13.1017, 13.1018, 13.1019, 13.1202, 13.1203, 13.1205, 13.1206, 13.1207, 13.1208, 13.1212, 13.1301, 13.1302, 13.1303, 13.1305, 13.1306, 13.1307, 13.1308, 13.1309, 13.131, 13.1311, 13.1312, 13.1314, 13.1315, 13.1316, 13.1317, 13.1318, 13.1319, 13.132, 13.1321, 13.1322, 13.1323, 13.1324, 13.1325, 13.1326, 13.1327, 13.1328, 13.1329, 13.133, 13.1331, 13.1332, 13.1333, 13.1335, 13.1337, 13.1338 and 13.1339. The CIP 2011 (used in the 2016 Census of Population) does not include the codes 13.1212 and 13.1339.
5. Individuals had to be employed at some point since January 1 of the Census of Population reference year, namely 2015 for the 2016 Census and 2020 for the 2021 Census.
6. The sociodemographic and immigrant characteristics of FIFTEs and employed FIFTEs are more or less similar (see Table A1 in the Appendix).

secondary schools) and occupation (teachers, principals and administrators; henceforth, "teachers"). Teachers are then classified as French teachers if they reported using French "only," "mostly" or "equally" at work. Teachers who did not indicate using French ("no mention") or indicated using French "regularly" but did not specify it as their most often used language were not classified as French teachers.

After comparing these outcomes between the two groups of interest (FIFTEs and FNITEs), the study proceeds by examining the factors related to the probability that FIFTEs reside outside Quebec or work as French teachers outside Quebec in a multivariate framework (through a series of linear probability models[7]). The covariates for this analysis include demographic variables (sex[8] and, for the work outcomes, location of work) and immigrant characteristics (age at admission, location of study, number of years since admission[9] and immigrant admission category[10]). Note that FNITEs are not included in this analysis since, as non-immigrants, they do not have any immigrant characteristics. Thus, FIFTEs and FNITEs are not compared in a multivariate framework. Instead, the factors related to the key outcomes are examined in a multivariate framework for FIFTEs—the primary group of interest in the study.

7. Marginal probability effects from logit and probit models were quite similar.
8. A binary sex variable is available to the authors from the 2016 Census of Population, but not from the 2021 Census of Population. Consequently, for the 2021 analysis, the study uses the binary sex variable on the T1 personal master file (tax data), which has been linked to the Census of Population.
9. Since the analysis is conducted on a single year of data (either 2021 or 2016), the number of years since admission captures not only the effects of the number of years since admission, but also admission cohort year effects. Separating the two effects would require more than one year of data. However, this is beyond the scope of the study, since the main focus is instead on the role of pre-migration characteristics (e.g., location of study and immigrant admission category).
10. This information comes from immigrant admission records, which are integrated with the Census of Population. Immigrants are grouped into three admission categories: economic (federal skilled workers, Quebec skilled workers, Canadian Experience Class, caregivers, Atlantic Immigration Program, federal entrepreneurs, Quebec entrepreneurs, federal investors, Quebec investors, Quebec self-employed and Provincial Nominee Program); sponsored (sponsored spouses or partners, sponsored parents or grandparents, and sponsored children), labelled as "family" in this study; and refugee (protected persons in Canada, dependents abroad of a protected person in Canada, government-assisted refugees, privately sponsored refugees, public policy or humanitarian and compassionate grounds sponsored by family, and humanitarian and compassionate grounds). Those who were admitted prior to 1980 do not have information on their admission category and, as such, are excluded from this study.

4 Results

Before examining the main outcomes of the study, it is important to understand the relative size of FIFTEs across all of Canada. Table 1 shows the percentage of all 18- to 60-year-old immigrants and non-immigrants who are Francophones, Francophones with teacher education or Francophones with foreign teacher education (shown for immigrants only). The results indicate that a smaller share of immigrants aged 18 to 60 were Francophone in 2021 (10.1%) compared with their non-immigrant counterparts (24.8%). Immigrants in this age group were also considerably less likely to be Francophone and to have completed teacher education (0.2%) compared with their non-immigrant counterparts (0.7%).

Table 1
Percentage of immigrants and non-immigrants who are Francophone and who are Francophone with teacher education and percentage of immigrants who are Francophone with foreign teacher education, 2016 and 2021

	Immigrants			Non-immigrants	
	Francophone	Francophone with teacher education	Francophone with foreign teacher education	Francophone	Francophone with teacher education
			percent		
2021					
Overall	10.1	0.2	0.1	24.8	0.7
Sex					
Men	10.1	0.1	0.1	24.7	0.3
Women	10.0	0.3	0.1	24.9	1.2
Age					
Under 35 years old	9.5	0.1	0.0	22.3	0.5
35 to 44 years old	11.5	0.2	0.1	25.5	1.0
45 years old or over	9.5	0.3	0.1	27.1	0.9
2016					
Overall	9.8	0.2	0.1	26.3	0.7
Sex					
Men	9.8	0.1	0.0	26.3	0.3
Women	9.7	0.3	0.1	26.3	1.1
Age					
Under 35 years old	10.3	0.1	0.0	23.7	0.5
35 to 44 years old	11.9	0.2	0.1	26.7	1.1
45 years old or over	8.1	0.2	0.1	28.7	0.7

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.
Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 and 2021 Census of Population and 2017 to 2021 T1 personal master files.

Of course, some immigrants obtain their teacher education after admission to Canada. While this may address teacher shortages, it is less informative for immigrant selection policy, which is typically based on pre-admission characteristics. Table 1 also shows the percentage of 18- to 60-year-old immigrants who were Francophone and had completed teacher education outside Canada.[11] Overall, this figure stood at 0.1% in 2021 (roughly half of all Francophone immigrants with teacher education). Notably, there are no differences between men and women in this regard—unlike for immigrants and non-immigrants who obtained their teacher education anywhere, where teacher education was far more predominant among women. For example, 0.3% of 18- to 60-year-old women who were immigrants were Francophone and had teacher education in 2021, compared with 0.1% of their male counterparts. The table also shows that younger immigrants (under 35 years old) were less likely to be Francophone and have completed foreign teacher education than older immigrants. Note that the table also shows results for 2016, which are very much in line with the 2021 results.[12]

The analysis now shifts to the two main outcomes of the study: FIFTEs residing outside Quebec and working as French teachers outside Quebec.

4.1 Residing outside Quebec

The share of FIFTEs residing outside Quebec relates to their potential impact on relieving French teacher shortages outside Quebec, especially compared with FNITEs.

Table 2 displays the share of FIFTEs and FNITEs who resided in Quebec or outside Quebec. The results suggest that 14.9% of FIFTEs resided outside Quebec in 2021, which was almost as high as the share of FNITEs who resided outside Quebec (15.8%). However, some interesting differences emerge when looking at specific provinces or cities outside Quebec. For example, compared with FNITEs, relatively fewer FIFTEs resided in New Brunswick (0.5% of FIFTEs compared with 3.4% of FNITEs) or in the rest of Ontario, which excludes the Ontario part of Ottawa–Gatineau and Toronto (2.5% of FIFTEs compared with 4.3% of FNITEs). In contrast, FIFTEs were more likely to live in Toronto (3.9%), Alberta (2.2%) or British Columbia (1.9%) than FNITEs (0.8% in Toronto, 1.6% in Alberta and 0.9% in British Columbia). Roughly the same shares of FIFTEs and FNITEs resided in the Ontario part of Ottawa–Gatineau and Manitoba.

11. Pre-admission educational credentials (including highest level completed and field of study) are not known in the Census of Population. As a second-best option, this study focuses on immigrants who obtained their teacher education in a foreign country. This may include some instances where immigrants were admitted with no teacher education but then completed teacher education outside Canada.
12. The table also shows results by age group. Although the percentage of immigrants who are Francophone and had completed teacher education outside Canada was generally lower among individuals under the age of 25, this is expected as many in this age group may be too young to have completed teacher education. Beyond age 25, no meaningful differences were found across age groups.

Table 2
Distribution of location of residence of Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education and Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education, 2016 and 2021

	2021		2016	
	Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education	Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education	Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education	Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education
	percent			
Quebec	85.1	84.2	85.6	81.7
Outside Quebec (overall)	14.9	15.8	14.4	18.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	x	0.0	x	0.0
Prince Edward Island	x	0.1	x	0.2
Nova Scotia	x	0.7	x	0.7
New Brunswick	0.5	3.4	0.4	3.8
Ontario	9.0	7.6	8.7	9.0
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario part)	2.7	2.5	2.8	2.6
Toronto	3.9	0.8	4.2	1.0
Rest of Ontario	2.5	4.3	1.6	5.4
Manitoba	0.9	1.0	x	1.1
Saskatchewan	x	0.3	0.5	0.5
Alberta	2.2	1.6	1.6	1.7
British Columbia	1.9	0.9	2.4	1.1
Yukon	x	0.1	x	0.1
Northwest Territories	x	0.1	x	0.1
Nunavut	x	0.0	x	0.0

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 and 2021 Census of Population.

The results for 2016 were more or less similar, both overall and by location of residence. However, there were a few differences compared with the 2021 results. For example, the shares of FIFTEs and FNITEs residing in Alberta were very similar. Although results could not be reported for FIFTEs residing in Manitoba, they could be reported for Saskatchewan (revealing equal shares of FIFTEs and FNITEs residing in that province).

Table 3 also shows the share of FIFTEs and FNITEs residing outside Quebec in 2021 and 2016, but by age and sex. The share of FIFTEs residing outside Quebec in 2021 was greater among men (16.4%) than among women (14.2%). This was not the case for FNITEs, among whom men (15.9%) and women (15.8%) registered almost identical shares residing outside Quebec. In 2016, the share of male FIFTEs who resided outside Quebec (14.6%) was only moderately higher than that of their female counterparts (14.1%).

Table 3
Percentage of Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education and Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education who resided outside Quebec by sex and age group, 2016 and 2021

	Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education	Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education
	percent	
2021		
Sex		
Men	16.4	15.9
Women	14.2	15.8
Age		
Under 35 years old	22.2	11.9
35 to 44 years old	12.7	14.6
45 years old or over	15.4	19.0
2016		
Sex		
Men	14.6	17.7
Women	14.1	18.5
Age		
Under 35 years old	14.0	16.2
35 to 44 years old	10.7	16.6
45 years old or over	17.9	21.3

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.
Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 and 2021 Census of Population and 2017 to 2021 T1 personal master files.

In 2021, FIFTEs under the age of 35 years were more likely to reside outside Quebec (22.2%) than their older counterparts (12.7% among 35- to 44-year-olds and 15.4% among those 45 years old or over). This was not the case among FNITEs, where the share residing outside Quebec was greater among older age groups. It was also not the case in 2016, since FIFTEs under the age of 35 years registered an average share residing outside Quebec (14.0%).

Table 4 focuses on the same outcome—the share residing outside Quebec—but by location of study (for FIFTEs only). The share of FIFTEs who resided outside Quebec in 2021 varied considerably by location of study. Those who studied in Algeria (5.7%) were the least likely to reside outside Quebec among individual countries that could be reported. At the opposite end of the spectrum, those who studied in the United Kingdom (62.5%), United States of America (50.0%) and Democratic Republic of the Congo (46.2%) were the most likely to reside outside Quebec. Those who studied in France also ranked above average in this regard (25.3%). Note that France and Algeria were by far the two most common locations of study among FIFTEs (see Table A1 in the Appendix). Results by location of study were quite similar in 2016, except that the results for the United Kingdom could not be reported.

Table 4
Percentage of Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education who resided or intended to reside outside Quebec by immigrant characteristics, 2016 and 2021

	2021	2016
	percent	
Location of study		
France	25.3	25.0
Algeria	5.7	4.7
Democratic Republic of the Congo	46.2	41.7
United States of America	50.0	45.5
Lebanon	23.1	27.8
Côte d'Ivoire	28.6	33.3
Cameroon	14.3	20.0
Egypt	23.5	x
Switzerland	x	45.5
Mauritius	x	83.3
United Kingdom	62.5	x
Belgium	x	23.1
Haiti	x	37.5
Rest of the world (excluding Canada)	8.4	6.5
Age at admission		
Under 25 years old	22.5	11.1
25 to 34 years old	14.8	14.3
35 to 44 years old	13.5	12.1
45 years old or over	17.6	26.9
Number of years since admission		
0 to 4	23.0	16.8
5 to 9	14.4	12.8
10 to 14	11.4	11.2
15 to 19	10.7	14.1
20 to 24	21.1	20.4
25 or more	15.0	18.5
Immigrant admission category		
Economic	13.7	13.3
Family	16.2	17.2
Refugee	20.2	16.2

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 and 2021 Census of Population.

Table 4 also reveals that FIFTEs who were admitted under the age of 25 were the most likely to reside outside Quebec in 2021 (22.5%), but this was not the case in 2016 (when those who were 45 years old or over at the time of admission were the most likely to reside outside Quebec). The share residing outside Quebec also varied by the number of years since admission in both 2021 and 2016, although there was no clear monotonic pattern. Finally, economic FIFTEs were less likely than family and refugee FIFTEs to reside outside Quebec, both in 2021 and in 2016.

At this point, it would be premature to draw firm conclusions on the factors associated with the probability of residing outside Quebec among FIFTEs. The reason is that many of the factors examined so far may be correlated, and thus, it is difficult to ascribe independent roles for any of them. A multivariate framework is more appropriate for that purpose, since comparisons between variable categories (e.g., those who studied in France and those who studied in Algeria) can be made while accounting for differences in other characteristics (e.g., age at admission).

Table 5 shows results from a linear probability model where the dependent (or outcome) variable is equal to 1 if the individual resided outside Quebec and 0 otherwise. The sample in this case was restricted to FIFTEs since FNITEs do not have any immigrant characteristics to contribute to the model.

Table 5
Regression of residing outside Quebec on sociodemographic and immigrant characteristics, Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education, 2016 and 2021

	2021		2016	
	coefficient	standard error	coefficient	standard error
Sex (reference group = men)				
Women	-0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03
Age at admission (reference group = under 25 years old)				
25 to 34 years old	-0.08	0.07	0.09 †	0.05
35 to 44 years old	-0.09	0.07	0.10 †	0.05
45 years old or over	-0.08	0.08	0.22 **	0.07
Location of study (reference group = rest of the world, excluding Canada)				
France	0.17 ***	0.03	0.20 ***	0.04
Algeria	-0.01	0.02	-0.01	0.02
Democratic Republic of the Congo	0.34 *	0.14	0.33 **	0.13
United States of America	0.41 **	0.15	0.46 ***	0.13
Lebanon	0.14 †	0.08	0.22 *	0.09
Côte d'Ivoire	0.19 †	0.10	0.23 †	0.14
Cameroon	0.06	0.06	0.16	0.10
Egypt	0.18 *	0.07	x x	x
Switzerland	x x	x	0.40 **	0.14
Mauritius	x x	x	0.76 ***	0.14
United Kingdom	0.51 **	0.18	x x	x
Belgium	x x	x	0.16	0.10
Haiti	x x	x	0.36 *	0.17
Number of years since admission (reference group = 0 to 4)				
5 to 9	-0.07 †	0.04	0.00	0.03
10 to 14	-0.07 †	0.04	0.00	0.03
15 to 19	-0.07 †	0.04	0.02	0.05
20 to 24	-0.01	0.05	0.04	0.05
25 or more	-0.10	0.07	0.02	0.07
Immigrant admission category (reference group = economic)				
Family	0.03	0.03	0.06 †	0.03
Refugee	0.07 †	0.04	0.04	0.04
Intercept	0.22 **	0.08	-0.08	0.06
Adjusted R^2	0.08		0.14	

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

† significantly different from reference category (p < 0.10)

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

** significantly different from reference category (p < 0.01)

*** significantly different from reference category (p < 0.001)

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 and 2021 Census of Population and 2017 to 2021 T1 personal master files.

The results presented in Table 4 by location of study and by immigrant admission category were generally preserved through regression analysis in both 2021 and 2016 in Table 5. Specifically, FIFTEs who studied in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Democratic Republic of the Congo were the most likely to reside outside Quebec. In contrast, those who studied in Algeria were the least likely to reside outside Quebec (among locations of study that could be examined separately), although they are not distinguishable (in terms of statistical significance)

from those who studied in the rest of the world (excluding Canada) and the other countries listed in the table. Also, those who studied in France ranked relatively high in terms of their probability of residing outside Quebec.

The fact that FIFTEs from the United Kingdom and United States of America (two countries where the official language is English) were the most likely to reside outside Quebec is perhaps not surprising, since there are more English teacher job opportunities outside Quebec. However, the fact that FIFTEs from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and France (two countries where the official language is French) also ranked high in terms of their probability of residing outside Quebec may be related to a high demand for French teachers outside Quebec (either in French schools or in FI programs).

The regression results confirmed the finding that economic FIFTEs were less likely than family or refugee FIFTEs to reside outside Quebec, although the results were not always statistically significant.

Finally, the results also revealed no statistically significant differences between men and women, or by age at immigration (at least for 2021), and some moderate differences by the number of years since immigration in 2021.

4.2 Working as a French teacher outside Quebec

The share of FIFTEs working as French teachers outside Quebec relates to their actual impact on relieving French teacher shortages outside Quebec, especially when compared with FNITEs.

Table 6 shows the industrial and occupational distribution of FIFTEs and FNITEs in 2021[13] for the overall sample of individuals who worked, as well as for those who worked in Quebec and outside Quebec. Of interest is the share of workers who were employed as teachers. Overall, it stood at 39.0% for FIFTEs, which was far below the rate among FNITEs (73.7%). Although the gap was not as large outside Quebec (52.3% compared with 79.7%), it was still sizable. Moreover, FNITEs outside Quebec were considerably more likely to work as French teachers (71.1%) than FIFTEs (46.8%).

While FIFTEs were considerably less likely to work as teachers compared with FNITEs, FIFTEs were more likely than FNITEs to work in non-teaching (or principal or administrator) jobs in elementary or secondary schools, particularly outside Quebec (9.0% of FIFTEs compared with 4.1% of FNITEs). The same held true in educational services (excluding elementary and secondary schools), where 9.9% of FIFTEs were employed compared with 3.3% of FNITEs. FIFTEs (22.9%) were far more likely to work in health care and social assistance or public administration than FNITEs (6.3%)—a trend that was also seen in Quebec (24.9% of FIFTEs compared with 6.3% of FNITEs) and, to a lesser extent, outside Quebec (10.8% of FIFTEs compared with 6.3% of FNITEs).

13. Results in this section are available only for 2021 since the language at work variable was somewhat different in the 2016 Census of Population.

Table 6
Industrial and occupational distribution of Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education and Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education, overall and by location of work, 2021

	Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education			Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education		
	Overall	Worked in Quebec	Worked outside Quebec	Overall	Worked in Quebec	Worked outside Quebec
			percent			
Industry or occupation						
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; utilities; wholesale trade; arts, entertainment and recreation; and other services (except public administration)	3.7	3.3	6.3	1.9	1.9	2.1
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	x	x	x	0.1	0.0	0.2
Construction	x	x	x	0.3	0.3	0.3
Manufacturing	5.8	6.6	x	0.7	0.7	0.3
Retail trade, and accommodation and food services	4.3	4.3	x	1.5	1.6	1.2
Transportation and warehousing; information and cultural industries; finance and insurance; real estate and rental and leasing; professional, scientific and technical services; management of companies and enterprises; and administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	9.2	9.8	5.4	3.1	3.2	2.6
Teachers, principals and administrators in elementary and secondary schools	39.0	36.4	52.3	73.7	72.6	79.7
Teachers, principals and administrators in elementary and secondary schools (French language at work)	35.9	33.9	46.8	70.3	70.1	71.1
Teachers, principals and administrators in elementary and secondary schools (other languages at work)	3.1	2.5	6.3	3.4	2.5	8.5
Elementary and secondary schools (excluding teachers, principals and administrators)	8.9	8.7	9.0	7.6	8.2	4.1
Educational services (excluding elementary and secondary schools)	5.8	5.1	9.9	4.8	5.1	3.3
Health care and social assistance, and public administration	22.9	24.9	10.8	6.3	6.3	6.3

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds who were employed at some point since January 1, 2020. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population.

The trends in French teacher employment[14] by sex and by age group were also different between FIFTEs and FNITEs (Table 7). While male FIFTEs were more likely to work as French teachers (40.0%) than their female counterparts (34.2%), the opposite was true among FNITEs (66.1% of men and 71.4% of women). Similarly, the share working as French teachers increased with age among FIFTEs but declined with age among FNITEs.

Table 7
Percentage of Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education and Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education who worked as French teachers by sex and age group, 2021

	Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education	Francophone non-immigrants with teacher education
	percent	
Sex		
Men	40.0	66.1
Women	34.2	71.4
Age		
Under 35 years old	28.6	76.9
35 to 44 years old	32.5	72.6
45 years old or over	38.6	64.4

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds who were employed at some point since January 1, 2020. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population and 2017 to 2021 T1 personal master files.

Table 8 displays the percentage of FIFTEs who were employed as French teachers by various immigrant characteristics in 2021. FIFTEs who studied in Egypt, Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, the United States of America, France, Lebanon and Cameroon were substantially more likely to work as French teachers than FIFTEs who studied in other parts of the world (excluding Canada). Likewise, economic FIFTEs were about twice as likely to work as French teachers than family or refugee FIFTEs.

The table also shows results by age at admission, as well as by the number of years since admission. These results are somewhat more mixed and highlight the importance of adopting a multivariate approach.

14. For the remainder of this section, the outcome shifts to working as a French teacher (not necessarily outside Quebec). The reason is because the sample sizes are too small to report many of the results if they are generated specifically for individuals working outside Quebec. This issue will be dealt with in the multivariate analysis (Table 9).

Table 8
Percentage of Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education who worked as French teachers by immigrant characteristics, 2021

	Percent
Location of study	
France	45.1
Algeria	49.1
United States of America	45.5
Lebanon	42.1
Côte d'Ivoire	53.3
Cameroon	38.9
Egypt	56.0
Rest of the world (excluding Canada)	24.6
Age at admission	
Under 25 years old	31.0
25 to 34 years old	35.1
35 to 44 years old	38.5
45 years old or over	30.6
Number of years since admission	
0 to 4	30.5
5 to 9	29.8
10 to 14	38.4
15 to 19	47.5
20 to 24	33.3
25 or more	22.6
Immigrant admission category	
Economic	40.6
Family	23.8
Refugee	20.6

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds who were employed at some point since January 1, 2020. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population.

To this end, Table 9 shows the results of a linear probability model where the dependent variable equals 1 if the individual was a French teacher and 0 otherwise. The key covariate of interest in the model is the location of work. FIFTEs who worked outside Quebec were 14 percentage points more likely to work as French teachers compared with their counterparts who worked in Quebec (significant at 1%).

Table 9
Regression of working as a French teacher on sociodemographic and immigrant characteristics, Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education, 2021

	Coefficient		Standard error
Location of work (reference group = Quebec)			
Outside Quebec	0.14	**	0.05
Sex (reference group = men)			
Women	-0.03		0.04
Age at admission (reference group = under 25 years old)			
25 to 34 years old	0.02		0.08
35 to 44 years old	0.05		0.09
45 years old or over	0.08		0.11
Location of study (reference group = rest of the world, excluding Canada)			
France	0.20	***	0.04
Algeria	0.21	***	0.05
United States of America	0.17		0.15
Lebanon	0.20	†	0.11
Côte d'Ivoire	0.29	*	0.12
Cameroon	0.16		0.10
Egypt	0.32	**	0.10
Number of years since admission (reference group = 0 to 4)			
5 to 9	-0.02		0.05
10 to 14	0.11	*	0.05
15 to 19	0.23	***	0.06
20 to 24	0.07		0.07
25 or more	0.09		0.08
Immigrant admission category (reference group = economic)			
Family	-0.12	**	0.04
Refugee	-0.10	†	0.05
Intercept	0.16		0.10
Adjusted R2	0.09		

† significantly different from reference category (p < 0.10)

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

** significantly different from reference category (p < 0.01)

*** significantly different from reference category (p < 0.001)

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds who were employed at some point since January 1, 2020. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population and 2017 to 2021 T1 personal master files.

Table 9 also indicates that FIFTEs who studied in Egypt, Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, France and Lebanon were substantially (and significantly) more likely to work as French teachers than those who studied in countries comprising the reference group (all countries not shown in the table, with the exception of Canada, since FIFTEs earned their credentials outside Canada by definition). These differences ranged from 20 to 32 percentage points.

Family FIFTEs were 12 percentage points less likely and refugee FIFTEs were 10 percentage points less likely than economic FIFTEs to work as French teachers. Although the differences are substantially smaller than those shown in Table 8, economic FIFTEs were still considerably more likely than the other two groups to work as French teachers.

Finally, results in Table 9 also suggest that there were no significant differences by sex or by age at immigration. FIFTEs who immigrated 10 to 19 years earlier were significantly more likely to work as French teachers than their counterparts who immigrated 0 to 4 years earlier.[15]

The fact that FIFTEs were more likely to work as French teachers outside Quebec compared with in Quebec is notable. One possible reason is economic—teacher salaries are generally lower in Quebec than in other large provinces, such as Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.[16] If non-teaching employment opportunities are more lucrative, they could attract FIFTEs away from teaching. However, FIFTEs employed as teachers (including French teachers) earned considerably more than FIFTEs in other jobs, suggesting that teaching may have generally been a first choice from an economic perspective. Moreover, the gap in median earnings between FIFTEs employed as teachers and FIFTEs employed in other jobs was actually lower outside Quebec than in Quebec. In other words, relatively poorer earnings prospects outside teaching were not likely a factor behind the higher prevalence of FIFTEs in teaching jobs outside Quebec compared with in Quebec.[17] Although it is not possible to pinpoint the reasons behind this trend, other factors may play a role, such as differences in credential recognition, supply and demand conditions in the teacher market, and worker preferences.

5 Conclusion

French teacher shortages have been reported outside Quebec, raising concerns about the long-term viability of French in FMCs. One way to address these shortages is through actively recruiting and retaining Francophone immigrants who already have teacher training. The purpose of this study was to document the relative size of this group; where these immigrants tend to settle in Canada; and their propensity to work as teachers in elementary and secondary schools, particularly in French. In other words, the study aimed to quantify the potential and actual roles played by immigrants in relieving French teacher shortages in FMCs.

The study finds that among all 18- to 60-year-old immigrants in 2021, 0.2% were Francophones with teacher education (about half of whom obtained it outside Canada, or 0.1%), compared with 0.7% of non-immigrants in the same age range.

Among the key comparison groups, 14.9% of FIFTEs resided outside Quebec—about the same share as FNITEs (15.8%). FIFTEs living outside Quebec were more likely to reside in Toronto, Alberta and British Columbia, but less likely to reside in the rest of Ontario (excluding Ottawa, where they were about equally likely to reside) and New Brunswick. Among FIFTEs, location of study and immigrant admission class were strongly associated with the probability of residing outside Quebec. Specifically, FIFTEs who studied in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Democratic Republic of the Congo were the most likely to reside outside Quebec, while those who studied in Algeria were the least likely (among locations of study that could be examined separately). With regard to immigrant admission categories, economic FIFTEs were less likely to reside outside Quebec than refugee FIFTEs.

15. As noted in the Data and methods section, this may be interpreted as the effect of the number of years since immigration or an entry cohort year effect.
16. Statistics Canada table 37-10-0243-01.
17. The median earnings (in 2020 dollars) of FIFTEs who worked as teachers in Quebec were around $71,600, compared with $35,200 for those who worked in other jobs, while FIFTEs who resided outside Quebec earned $69,200 in teacher jobs and $42,700 in other jobs. In comparison, median earnings for FNITEs were $74,300 for teachers and $64,100 for other jobs for workers in Quebec, and $85,200 for teachers and $66,800 for other jobs for workers outside Quebec.

Overall, 39.0% of employed FIFTEs worked as teachers, which was far below the rate among FNITEs (73.7%). Although the gap was not as large outside Quebec (52.3% of FIFTEs compared with 79.7% of FNITEs), it was still sizable. Moreover, FNITEs outside Quebec were considerably more likely to work as French teachers (71.1%) than FIFTEs (46.8%).

Among FIFTEs, location of work, location of study and immigrant admission class were strongly associated with the probability of working in education. Specifically, FIFTEs working outside Quebec were 14 percentage points more likely to be employed as French teachers than their counterparts working in Quebec. FIFTEs who studied in Egypt, Côte d'Ivoire, Algeria, France and Lebanon were the most likely to work as French teachers, while economic FIFTEs were more likely to work as French teachers than family or refugee FIFTEs.

As discussed in the Policy context section, recent federal initiatives have been developed to recruit and retain French teachers, including immigrant French teachers, particularly in FMCs. These initiatives were developed shortly after the reference periods for this study (2021 and 2016). Thus, it will be insightful to monitor French teacher shortages in FMCs in light of recent initiatives and the possible role played by immigrants in the years to come.

6 Appendix

Table A1
Sociodemographic and immigrant characteristics of Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education, 2016 and 2021

	Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education		Francophone immigrants with foreign teacher education who were employed at some point since January 1 of the year before the census	
	2021	2016	2021	2016
	percent			
Sex				
Male	29.2	28.9	29.8	30.6
Female	70.8	71.1	70.2	69.4
Age at admission				
Under 25 years old	4.3	4.9	4.0	4.8
25 to 34 years old	50.6	52.2	51.0	52.5
35 to 44 years old	38.0	35.9	38.1	35.9
45 years old or over	7.3	7.0	6.8	6.9
Location of study				
France	20.3	17.9	22.7	19.9
Algeria	15.0	14.5	15.5	14.0
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1.4	1.6	1.4	1.4
United States of America	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.0
Lebanon	2.8	2.4	2.6	2.1
Côte d'Ivoire	2.2	1.6	2.1	1.6
Cameroon	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.9
Egypt	3.6	2.8	3.5	2.8
Switzerland	0.4	1.5	0.6	1.6
Mauritius	x	0.8	x	0.5
United Kingdom	0.9	0.5	0.8	0.7
Belgium	1.5	1.8	1.4	2.1
Haiti	2.0	1.1	2.1	1.2
Rest of the world (excluding Canada)	45.7	49.7	43.4	49.2
Number of years since admission				
0 to 4	17.2	27.4	14.6	22.6
5 to 9	24.4	29.5	23.3	31.6
10 to 14	28.2	22.9	30.0	24.5
15 to 19	17.9	9.6	19.6	10.4
20 to 24	8.1	6.6	8.3	7.4
25 or more	4.3	3.7	4.3	3.5
Immigrant admission category				
Economic	69.6	69.5	73.4	70.8
Family	21.0	20.5	18.0	19.9
Refugee	9.5	10.0	8.7	9.3

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

Notes: The samples include 18- to 60-year-olds. Immigrants exclude those who were admitted prior to 1980.

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2016 and 2021 Census of Population and 2017 to 2021 T1 personal master files.

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