

Y4Y QUEBEC ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION Y4Y QUÉBEC Gap Analysis

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BACKGROUND

This report summarizes findings from a recent survey conducted by Y4Y Quebec with 103 English speaking youth in Quebec. Y4Y Quebec is a provincial non-profit youth network committed to addressing the issues facing English-speaking youth ages 16-30. This study builds upon the previous work and momentum built by Y4Y Quebec, including a July 2017 report on the employability challenges of English-speaking youth in the province. The report found that:

- (1) English-speaking youth experience persistent challenges in employability, as measured by higher rates of unemployment and underemployment than French-speaking youth (see Table 1 in the Appendix). As many youth are leaving to seek jobs outside of Quebec, this has an impact on both the vitality and capacity of the English-speaking community, including its political and social representation.
- (2) While proficiency in both official languages has been identified as a main reason for this exodus of English-speaking youth, other factors, such as perceived job and educational opportunities and sense of affiliation with the province also plays a role.
- (3) A number of recommendations have been identified with the intention of both providing opportunities for English-speaking youth to improve their fluency in French, as well as promoting the existence of key resources, particularly for English-speaking communities in the regions of Quebec.

SURVEY METHODS

Y4Y Quebec administered an on-line survey to gain an in-depth understanding of the issues English-speaking youth face in the province of Quebec. Survey respondents were identified through a series of youth consultations at various locations throughout the province (in Gatineau, Gaspé, Lower North Shore, Lennoxville, Magdalen Islands and other locations) (see Table 2). There were a total of 103 respondents: 53 were collected on the long survey form (14 questions) and 50 were collected on the short form (6 questions). The surveys had Likert-scale as well as open-ended questions. A copy of both survey forms is attached. Results are presented below and organized according to the survey questions; a summary of the quantitative (descriptive) data as well as the qualitative analysis of youths' responses to open-ended questions is presented.

RESULTS

How would you rate your level of attachment to Quebec society? (see Figure 1 below)

Regardless of how youth rated their attachment to Quebec society, there was a common theme of being more closely attached to the city/town or region where they lived in Quebec. For instance, one youth, who had strong attachment to Quebec society, stated: "I identify strongly as being a Townshipper, then as a Canadian, then as a Quebecer. I think it's hard to feel attached to the national (provincial) identity of Quebec as an English-Speaker given the dialogue surrounding the status of English in Quebec."

One youth who had a moderate level of attachment to Quebec society said: "I am fairly attached to Montreal and to [what is] going on in the city, but I'm quite detached from the rest of the province." Another youth with low attachment stated: "I am strongly attached to the Lower North Shore...but it doesn't seem like a part of

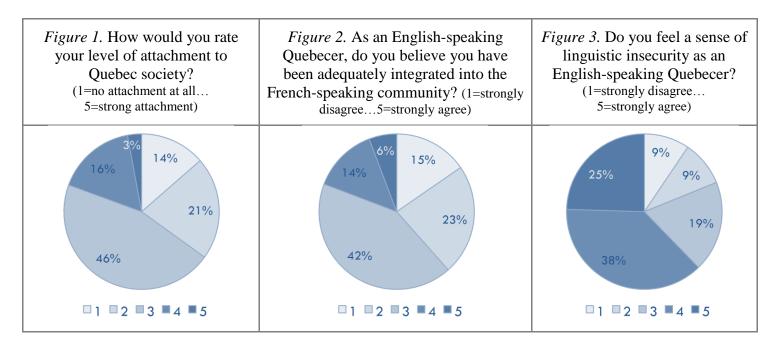
Quebec." Finally, a youth who didn't feel attached to the province said: "My attachment is almost entirely to friends and sub-communities such as the Montreal tech community, rather than Quebec itself."

19 percent of youth surveyed had a high level of attachment to Quebec society (rating of 4 or 5).

Those with a high level of attachment to Quebec society enjoyed the "cultural and linguistic diversity" and "truly appreciate living in a bilingual community", but also felt disconnected at times because "its hard not being perfectly bilingual" and as another youth stated: "being in a remote area and as an English-speaker, I feel sometimes disconnected because of my language."

46 percent of youth surveyed had a moderate level of attachment to Quebec society (rating of 3).

Those youth who showed a moderate level of attachment to Quebec society were concerned with language barriers and opportunities elsewhere in Canada. One respondent who felt "somewhat attached" said: "I love many of the Quebec traditions and being involved in my community," but "all the organizations I spend most [of my] time volunteering with are Canada-wide so I can do it [any]where." Several youth also brought up the "language barrier [that] makes it harder to feel attached to Quebec society." They say they don't always feel welcomed in Quebec as English speakers because "the language barrier can make it difficult when trying to communicate with others who do not speak English."



35 percent of youth surveyed had a low level of attachment to Quebec society (rating of 1 or 2).

Youth respondents with a low level of attachment to Quebec society were frustrated with the language and cultural barrier and with being able to get services in English: "Being English proves difficult to get jobs or even being provided basic services due to lack of ... communications." One youth felt that they were only in the province for college, because "It's hard to get a job in Quebec when my French isn't fluent. Even when I'm at certain stores I feel like I get attitude if I don't answer in French. It makes me nervous to continue my education in this province."

As shown in Figure 2 above, the majority of youth surveyed do not feel integrated into Quebec society: Only 1 in 5 English-speaking youth surveyed feel adequately integrated into the French-speaking community of Quebec. Nearly two in five youth do not feel integrated. According to Figure 3, the majority of these youth also feel a sense of linguistic insecurity: Nearly 2 in 3 English-speaking youth say they feel a sense of linguistic insecurity as an English-speaking Quebecer.

Do you believe learning both official languages is important?

All survey respondents felt that it was at least somewhat important to learn both of Canada's official languages with 92 percent of youth believing it to be of high importance (rating of '4' or '5' on Likert scale). Bilingualism was viewed as key to being competitive in the Quebec job market: "If you want to live in Quebec for sure. There are so many more job opportunities across Canada if you are bilingual" and "both languages are essential to live in the province of Quebec. This facilitates going to school as well as finding employment." Another youth stated: "being bilingual opens so many more doors for you in the job market as well as in life in general."

Having the ability to speak French and English was also seen as important because "bilingualism improves communication and helps eliminate the barrier between the Quebecers and Canada" and between French and English-speaking Quebecers. Another youth added: "Living in the province of Quebec, I believe it would benefit everyone if we all spoke both languages, it would be easier to connect with one another." One youth agreed that "we should promote linguistic duality and provide an abundance of opportunities for all Canadians to learn their second official language," but felt that, "bilingualism is not a realistic objective for many people in our society and we must strive to accommodate and support them."

Do you believe that appropriate media infrastructure (newspaper, radio, local television) associated with your linguistic community is important for your sense of belonging or your self-identification?

More than two-thirds of the 53 youth surveyed (68%) believed that having the appropriate media infrastructure associated with their linguistic community is important for their sense of belonging and self-identification. One in four youth (26%) were neutral on this issue and only three youth (6%) felt it was not important. Several youth mentioned not having a sufficient number of media outlets in English, especially in the regions of Quebec. "There needs to be more [media] in English so we feel that we are involved in Quebec Society," stated one youth. "It is important to have local media in our language. [The] government [should put officials in place] to make sure our region is represented," added another survey respondent. Others referred to a sense of belonging: "Seeing media focused on my linguistic community allows us to feel more included" and "I think it is important to be able to turn on the radio or TV[.] [H]earing something in your language gives you a sense of belonging."

Are there any concerns or fears you have living in Quebec society as an English-speaker in the province?

33 of 103 youth respondents to this question did not have any concerns or fears living in Quebec society as an English-speaker (32.0%). Several of these youth were fully bilingual and felt that this was key to integration: "I don't have any major fears or concerns. I am lucky to have a close-knit community. I also am bilingual."

Several youth were concerned not only with language discrimination, but also with the visibility of the English language and fear of it "becoming even less important" in Quebec society. They were also very concerned with their level of proficiency using the French-language, or with "not being able to communicate with French speaking people." Some English-speaking youth just [don't] feel welcome because of the political landscape and Bill 101, which defines French as the official language of Quebec.

There were also concerns about the educational system. One youth felt that: "the history curriculum that is taught in all the schools in Quebec...is very Franco-Quebec centered and includes little to no world history." Others were concerned with access to services in English, especially with regard to health care: "It is crucial when one is seeking medical services that the nurse or doctor is able to understand what the patient is trying to say. [When] they diagnose and help the individual, any miscommunication could lead to a terrible error. I have personally experienced nurses and doctors unable and unwilling to communicate in English..."

The ability to find meaningful employment in Quebec was another fear expressed by survey participants. "I am worried I will have trouble finding work as an English-speaker," stated one respondent. "I am most scared of not achieving professional success to the level I might elsewhere", another youth stated regarding a lack of opportunities for growth. Without better job prospects, "English-speaking Quebecers will leave the region and the province."

How important is it for you to improve your French skills? ... Do you feel you have access to the necessary resources to improve your French language skills?

There were mixed responses to the question regarding youth access to resources to improve their French language skills. Approximately half of youth surveyed (52%) felt that it was important to improve their language skills while one-fourth felt it was somewhat important and another fourth felt it was not important.

Overall, approximately three in five youth indicated that they had sufficient access to resources in the province to improve their French language skills, with the remaining youth reporting limited or no access to these resources.

52% of youth surveyed feel it is important to improve their French skills (rating of 4 or 5).

Several youth who felt it was important to improve their French skills had also studied French in school or learned it in childhood and considered themselves to be bilingual. Most reported having sufficient access to the necessary resources to improve their French skills, be it through family members, their school or in their community. For those more self-reliant youth, the Internet was a considered a good way to improve French skills.

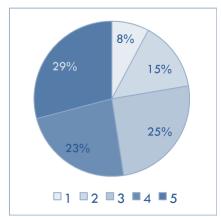


Figure 4. Improving French Skills (1=not important... 5=very important)

Some felt that language resources existed, but did not fully meet their needs: "We take French courses at the college, but they are very difficult and do not accommodate for French beginners." Another respondent was concerned with time constraints and access to French-language training: "Yes, but it costs money and time. As a professional, I can't afford to miss work to take classes. As a Canadian, I don't have access to free French

classes that immigrants have access to. I think it would have been great in my early years to have access to full-time French classes."

Others were interested in improving their French language skills, but didn't know where to find the resources in their community: "I am looking into finding resources around my hometown during the summer. I don't feel that these opportunities are well advertised." Some youth were concerned that these resources were not available in the Quebec regions: "As an immigrant I am eligible for French language courses from the government. However the quantity and quality of the courses is lacking/limited outside of the Montreal region."

There were also several youth who felt that resources available to improve their language skills were insufficient: "I am already bilingual, however, I don't believe there are enough resources. Private tutors are the only option most of the time. The school curriculum is not sufficient." Someone who moved to Quebec from another province and who helps others move into the province stated: "I find that there is a lack of publicly-funded French and 'Francisation' courses for English speakers from Quebec and from other provinces."

25% of youth surveyed feel it is somewhat important to improve their French skills (rating of 3).

A number of youth felt their French language skills were sufficient because their parents or family members spoke French to them or they took French-language training in school. One respondent felt that their immersion into French culture was key to learning the language: "I have been learning French for a while and the people around me speaking in French all the time is more than enough to improve my French speaking skills."

23% of youth surveyed do not feel it is important to improve their French skills (rating of 1 or 2).

The majority of youth (3 in 4) who were not worried about improving their French skills also felt that they had adequate access to the resources to do so. One unconcerned youth responded: "Yes, because I have access to French news stations and channels. I also have access to a French class" and another added: "Yes I have [access to] all the resources, but don't need them." Others were already fluent in French or felt they could comfortably carry out a conversation in French.

According to the "2016 Cross-Canada Official Languages Consultations" by Canadian Heritage, the following issues were identified as being a priority. From your perspective, rank the following issues in order of importance.1 (see Table 3 in the Appendix)

"Ensuring access to quality public and federal services in the official language of your choice" was the most important of the five Canadian Heritage issues identified, according to 39.8 percent of survey respondents (two-thirds ranked it #1 or #2). In second place with 26.2 percent of youth ranking it most important was "ensuring the opportunity to live, learn, and access quality work in the official language of your choice." The third highest ranking went to "recognition of the English-speaking community by all levels of government (13.6% ranking this issue #1) followed by encouraging transmission of the English language to future generations (11.7%) and the ability of the English-speaking community to organize and lobby for its needs and rights (8.7%)

Excerpts from the survey, from youth who ranked the first issue as most important, included: "Everyone should have access to services in their language of choice" and "[you] should be allowed to go to school in whatever

¹ On the short-form, this question was asked as follows: "Based on information from consultations done by the Ministry of Canadian Heritage, Y4Y Québec has identified the following five issues as key issues our organization could address. How should Y4Y Québec prioritize these issues? Rank the issues from 1-5 (1 being the most important and 5 being the least important)."

language you want." Another youth stated: "I think this is fundamental and you should not have to fight to access these services in your [official language]." Several youth mentioned their ability to access health services in English, for instance: "When I go to a public establishment, I want to be spoken to in English because it makes me feel accepted and want to come back. Especially medical buildings and hospitals." Other youth respondents added: "Because it's important to be able to understand important documents from the government and hospitals" and "Public health is paramount. People should be able to access health care in the official language of their choice."

Youth who were the most concerned with the priority "ensure the opportunity to live, learn, and access quality work in the official language of your choice" felt that they should have the right to choose to attend an Englishlanguage school and have access to equal employment opportunities. "Sometimes our [English] language sets us back in interviews", said one youth. And "all the jobs here are mostly French" added another youth. "We should feel comfortable working in our mother tongue." However, a few survey respondents did feel that it was their responsibility to learn the French language if they wanted to fully integrate into the workplace and society: "I believe that it is very important that people become bilingual and/or have access to ways of doing so" and "Work is our main concern, and people need a fun engaging way to learn French because people should want to be bilingual in my opinion."

Youth who ranked "recognition of the English-speaking community by all levels of government" as most important felt that changes need to take place so that the English-speaking community is recognized by the Quebec government and represented in the government decision-making process. They felt that "English-speakers are often not well represented in the government of Quebec" and that "all levels of government should be able to speak in English. English is just as much a part of Quebec as French." Others felt that "many governmental institutes are unfair and discriminatory toward the English-speaking community" and to facilitate youth representation: "It would be nice if the [Quebec] government recognized youth for funding."

Survey respondents who ranked "encourage transmission of the English language to future generations" most important felt that it was crucial to ensure the future of youth in Quebec and "to be able to fight for [your] rights and needs." One youth stated: "Encouraging transmission of English language to youth/future organizations is essential. All of our youth ensure every aspect of our future, [and] this should not only include French."

And finally the few youth who ranked "Ability of the English-speaking community to organize and lobby for its needs and rights" as most important expressed the need for advocacy in the English-speaking community and believed that everyone should have "quality service no matter their language" and felt they deserved "the right to live and learn in their native tongue."

Please list 3 priorities you would like to see worked on by a group representing Quebec's English-speaking linguistic minority youth community?

The following is a list of the top priorities that survey respondents identified as important for a group representing youth in Quebec's English-speaking community:

- Accessing to employment opportunities in English/Ability to work in your first language;
- Ensuring the right to live, learn and work in the language of your choice;
- Improving access to high quality services available in the English language (health, employment, housing, legal, educational, etc.);
- Improving resources for and the quality of French-language training (French courses);

- Ensuring bilingual services/bilingual training and English CEGEP programs;
- Guaranteeing equality, respect, fairness, diversity, and inclusion in Quebec society;
- Ensuring representation of English-speakers in Quebec government;
- Providing youth with a voice in provincial and federal government;
- Building a sense of community/Rebuilding a sense of the English-speaking community;
- Making English-speakers feel welcome in Quebec/Acceptance of the English language;
- More integration of French and English, finding ways for English speakers to better communicate with others living in Quebec;
- Helping youth from all backgrounds come together to encourage openness to diversity;
- Opportunities for youth in rural communities to be bridged with youth from urban ones, and a road connecting the English-speaking communities together.

In your opinion, what should the government do in order to help English-speaking youth succeed in Quebec society?

Youth felt strongly that the government should acknowledge bilingualism in Quebec and ensure that services are available in French and English to everyone on-island and off-island, especially vulnerable populations like seniors and unemployed youth. "There needs to be more programs involving the youth of English/Minority languages or those in remote areas to provide services and life experiences that may not be readily available to them." Youth were also concerned about feeling represented in Quebec society. They felt that "language restrictions should be reduced" and that we need to "have more lenient language laws." More French teachers and opportunities to learn French were called for along with the creation of more inclusive programs, and resources "to improve French-language skills" as well as "English programs to help French speakers." More funding for and access to English-language schools and community services were mentioned, "so that people can receive the same information and resources" regardless of the ability to speak the French language. Several youth also brought up the need for government to create more and better job opportunities for English speakers in the province and provide more "English-friendly work environments."

Have you made any sacrifices (i.e. missed educational or job opportunities) as an English-speaking Quebecer? Please explain.

There were 48 youth who provided definitive answers to this question, and exactly half of them had made sacrifices and half of them had not. Youth who had not made sacrifices often reported having a mastery of the French language. Most sacrifices came in regard to missed employment opportunities due to a lack of French-language skills for the workplace. "You lose job opportunities if you're not bilingual," stated one youth. One survey respondent expressed her frustrations over not being proficient in French: "[I] lost a job opportunity in a health centre because of a lack of French, [now I'm] currently working as a waitress spending a lot of money on student loans for the training to be able to work at a health centre." Other youth felt they had to leave to province to find work (in English): "I am unable to find employment in Quebec because I don't speak French. I have to work in Ontario" and "It is nearly impossible to find a job in Quebec in my field in English ... I may need to move elsewhere for work."

Is your connection to Quebec society positive or negative? Please explain.

18 of 49 youth who responded to this question (37%) reported having a positive connection to Quebec society and another 18 youth felt "neutral" (37%). The remaining 13 youth (26%) had a negative connection to Quebec society. Youth who felt a positive connection stated: "I enjoy living in Quebec and enjoy the cultural values here. In general, despite the intolerance of some, people are very welcoming here." Another youth, who felt a "positive [connection] for the most part, stated that he'd "never had trouble obtaining employment," but "negative in the sense that as an English-speaking resident, [he] feels like an outsider and there are not as many resources available to [him]." One youth who reported neutrality said: "I don't necessarily feel out of place constantly in Quebec, I'm happy where I am, but I do feel out of place [when I] have to speak to someone who only [speaks] French." Most youth who reported a negative connection also reported an inability to communicate in the French language and a dislike of the "language politics" in the province.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

One in five youth surveyed had a strong level of attachment to Quebec society while more than one-third of youth had weak attachment or no attachment at all. Youth survey respondents were closely attached to the city/town or region where they lived, but less so to Quebec (in general).

Over 90 percent of youth believe that learning both official languages is important for young Quebecers, and that being bilingual was necessary to find meaningful employment in their field of work or study. Just over half of youth surveyed felt that it was important to improve their French-language skills. The other half felt they were already proficient or were not able to learn the language for a variety of reasons (time, money, etc.).

One in five youth surveyed believed they had been adequately integrated into the French-speaking community of Quebec and nearly two-thirds of youth reported feeling a sense of linguistic insecurity as an English-speaking Quebecer. Knowing both languages was deemed important because it helps youth develop a 'sense of belonging' and reduces barriers between the English-speaking minority and French-speaking majority of Quebec.

Youth were concerned with the visibility of the English language in Quebec society and feared that it would become devalued unless proper measures were set in place. A call for proper media infrastructure, including television, print, and social media targeted to English-speaking youth, was mentioned, with more than two-thirds of the 53 youth surveyed (68%) believing that having said media infrastructure associated with their linguistic community is important for their sense of belonging and self-identification.

Youth also desired representation in government and widespread acceptance of the English language and culture in Quebec. They were also very concerned with their level of proficiency in French and access to free French courses. Others were worried about access to medical services in their language of choice and of the limited number of job opportunities available to English speakers.

When asked to rank the five key issues affecting the English-speaking community in Quebec, as identified by consultations done by Canadian Heritage, youth prioritized access to quality public and federal services along with the opportunity to live, learn, and access quality work in the language of their choice (in English).

APPENDIX

Table 1. Socioeconomic Indicators for French- and English-speaking Populations in Quebec

		English-Speaking Community (ESC)			French-Speaking Community (FSC)		ity (FSC)
4)	Unemployment	Count	LF Pop.	Rate	Count	LF Pop.	Rate
Labour Force	15+ years	53,550	571,850	9.4%	247,495	3,601,845	6.9%
	Youth (15 to 29 years)	18,850	137,140	13.7%	86,780	872,975	9.9%
	Out of Labour Force	Count	LF Pop.	Rate	Count	LF Pop.	Rate
	15+ years	316,000	887,855	35.6%	1,941,635	5,543,480	35.0%
	Youth (15 to 29 years)	85,090	222,225	38.3%	365,785	1,238,760	29.5%
	Living Below LICO	Count	Total Pop.	Rate	Count	Total Pop.	Rate
	15+ years	225,520	1,046,495	21.6%	1,015,815	6,618,1 <i>7</i> 0	15.3%
	Youth (15 to 29 years)	61,640	222,225	27.7%	223,235	1,238,760	18.0%
ခ	Low Income	Count	Total Pop.	Rate	Count	Total Pop.	Rate
Income	15+ years	557,345	1,046,495	53.3%	3,249,920	6,618,1 <i>7</i> 0	49.1%
ڪ	Youth (15 to 29 years)	163,515	222,225	73.6%	818,085	1,238,760	66.0%
	High Income	Count	Total Pop.	Rate	Count	Total Pop.	Rate
	15+ years	189,015	1,046,495	18.1%	1,216,680	6,618,1 <i>7</i> 0	18.4%
	Youth (15 to 29 years)	10,060	222,225	4.5%	70,235	1,238,760	5.7%
	Low Educational Attainment	Count	Pop. 15+	Rate	Count	Pop. 15+	Rate
드	15+ years	370,470	887,855	41.7%	2,433,830	5,543,480	43.9%
di	Youth (15 to 29 years)	11 <i>5</i> ,330	222,225	51.9%	642,825	1,238,760	51.9%
Education	High Educational Attainment	Count	Pop. 15+	Rate	Count	Pop. 15+	Rate
й	15+ years	243,215	887,855	27.4%	957,265	5,543,480	17.3%
	Youth (15 to 29 years)	44,815	222,225	20.2%	1 <i>57,</i> 655	1,238,760	12.7%
S	Visible Minorities	Count	Total Pop.	Rate	Count	Total Pop.	Rate
Demographics	Total Population	292,485	1,046,495	27.9%	516 , 545	6,618,1 <i>7</i> 0	7.8%
	Youth (15 to 29 years)	<i>7</i> 3,1 <i>5</i> 0	222,225	32.9%	121,910	1,238,760	9.8%
	Lone Parent Families	Count	Total Pop.	Rate	Count	Total Pop.	Rate
	Total Population	127,535	1,046,495	12.2%	<i>7</i> 61 , 870	6,618,1 <i>7</i> 0	11.5%
	Youth (15 to 29 years)	38,595	222,225	17.4%	218,805	1,238,760	17.7%

Sources: (Community Health and Social Services Network 2016; Statistics Canada 2011 Census of the Population.)

Definitions: Low Educational Attainment is defined as the percent of the population age 15 and higher with a high school diploma or lower. High Educational Attainment is defined as the percent of the population age 15 and higher with a university degree or higher. LICO is defined as the % of the population living below LICO. Low Income is defined as the % of the population earning less than \$20,000. High Income is defined as the % of the population earning more than \$50,000.

Table 2. Regions and Partners Participating in Y4Y Youth Consultations

Region	Partners	Surveys Collected
Gatineau	Connexions Resource Centre	62
	 Cégep Heritage College and Heritage Student Association 	
Gaspésie	 Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA) 	6
	 The ANCHOR Adult & Vocational Education Center 	
	 Family Ties (Carrefour Famille New Carlisle) 	
	 Skills Link group (in Cascapedia-St. Jules) 	
Lower North Shore	 La Tabatiere Annual Hockey Tournament 	16
	Saint Paul's River	
Lennoxville	 Bishop's University 	12
	 Townshippers' Association 	
Magdalen Islands	 Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders (CAMI) 	7

Table 3: Canadian Heritage Priority Areas, Ranked

N=103 (1 = most important and 5 = least important)	Ranked	Ranked	Ranked	Ranked	Ranked
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Ensure access to quality public and federal services in the official language of your choice	41	27	19	6	10
	39.8 %	26.2 %	18.4 %	5.8 %	9.7 %
Ensure the opportunity to live, learn, and access to quality work in the official language of your choice	27	35	1 <i>7</i>	13	11
	26.2 %	34.0 %	16.5 %	12.6 %	10.7 %
Encourage transmission of the English language to future generations	12	6	29	31	25
	11.7 %	5.8 %	28.2 %	30.1 %	24.3 %
Recognition of the English-speaking community by all levels of government	1 <i>4</i>	24	26	33	6
	13.6 %	23.3 %	25.2 %	32.0 %	5.8 %
Ability of the English-speaking community to organize and lobby for its needs and rights	9	11	12	20	51
	8.7 %	10.7 %	11.7 %	19.4 %	49.5 %

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