Community Profile

RCM of Coaticook

2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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We would like to express a special thanks to our collaborators:

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- Jean-Francois Allaire, Institut Universitaire de Première Ligne en Santé et Services Sociaux (IUPLSSS)

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- Maison des Jeunes de Waterville
- Carrefour Coaticook (CJE)
- Le Centre d'Action Bénévole de Coaticook

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The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the CHSSN nor of Health Canada.

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INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the needs of the English-speaking population living in the RCM of Coaticook. Through the use of the regional portrait, local organizations will be able to better serve the English-speaking population in their area by better understanding their needs.

Methodology

For the purpose of this report, two different surveys were created. Firstly, a survey for the organizations (partners). Secondly, a survey for the needs of the English-speaking community.

To gather the necessary information for creating the partners survey and the community survey, a partner consultation was held on July 10, 2024, with **6 partners**.

The Partners Survey had a **total of 6 responses** and was distributed to community partners via email.

The Community Survey (Appendix A) was available in both paper and digital copies. Included a raffle for community members who participated to increase engagement.

A **total of 63** responses were received from the community. Out of those 63, 2 participants lived outside of the RCM of Coaticook: Sherbrooke and Hatley. For the purpose of this report, we removed the responses received from the participant living in Sherbrooke but kept the participant living in Hatley due to its proximity to Coaticook.

Three (3) focus groups were held to discuss barriers and needs.

Teens & Young Adults

July 25, 2024

Parents

August 14, 2024

Seniors

August 16, 2024

The target population was the English speakers of the RCM of Coaticook:

This included the following subdivisions; Barnston-West, Compton, Coaticook, Dixville, East Hereford, Martinville, Sainte-Edwidge-de-Clifton, Saint-Herménégilde, Saint-Malo, Saint-Venant de Paquette, Stanstead-East, and Waterville.

The Partners Survey was available for a period of **30 days**.

The Community Survey was available for a period of **6 weeks (42 days).**

Disclaimer:
- This is NOT a study. It is a Needs Assessment for the English–speaking community of the RCM of Coaticook.
- Existing statistics were drawn from Statistics Canada (census 2016 & 2021) and Baseline Data Report series 2022–2023 by Dr. Pocock.

OVERVIEW OF THE
REGION

The region under focus includes Barnston-West, Coaticook, Compton, Dixville, East Hereford, Martinville, Sainte-Edwidge-de-Clifton, Saint-Herménégilde, Saint-Malo, Saint-Venant-de-Paquette, Stanstead-East, and Waterville. They are located in the Eastern Townships region of Quebec, Canada.

All subdivisions are part of the Estrie administrative region, also known as Region 5.   The area of focus falls within the Regional County Municipality (RCM) of Coaticook, which covers a total area of 1,354.70 km² and is home to a population of approximately 18, 906 residents.

The RCM of Coaticook is known for its rich agricultural heritage and picturesque landscapes, characterized by the rolling hills of the Northern Appalachian Mountains and the Coaticook River Valley flowing through some of its municipalities. The region's natural beauty is complemented by notable landmarks such as Mount Pinacle, Lake Lyster, and the Gorge.   This pedestrian suspension bridge is among the longest in North America.   It shares a U.S. border with the state of Vermont.

Estrie - Wikipedia

tourismecoaticook.ca
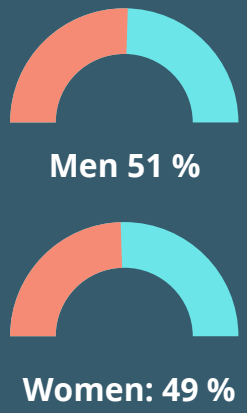
Existing Community Statistics

Demographic Size

According to the Baseline Data Report series 2022-2023 produced by Dr. Joanne Pocock, the English-speaking population in the Estrie is 40, 915, and 2,110 in the RCM of Coaticook. Each represents 8.4% and 11.2% of their respective population.
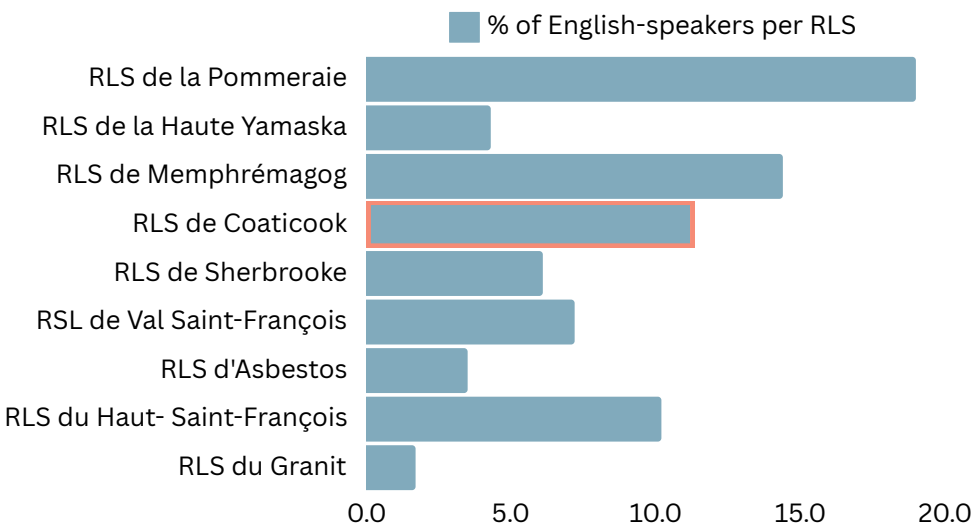
The English-speaking population represents **11.2 %** of the total population of the region.

The RLS of Coaticook is the **3rd** largest RLS across the Estrie with English speakers.

Estrie

- French speakers
- English Speakers

8.4 %

91.3 %

RCM of Coaticook

- French speakers
- English Speakers

11.2%

88.6 %
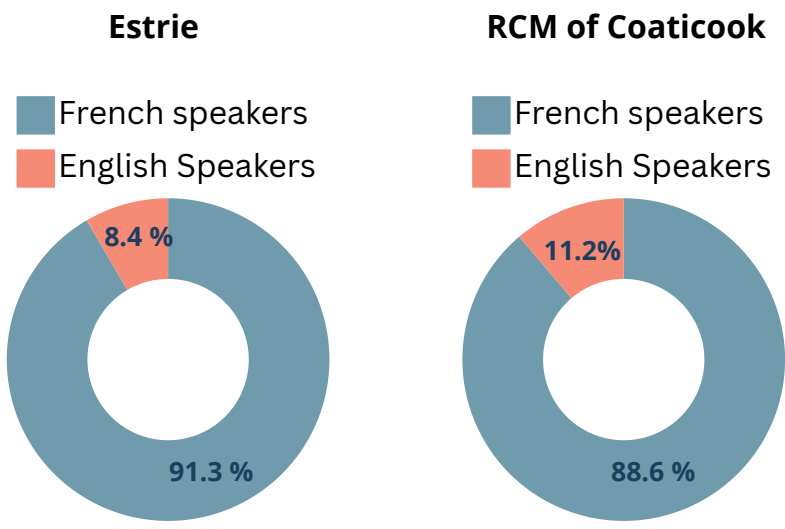
Demographics by Gender

Men 51 %

Women: 49 %
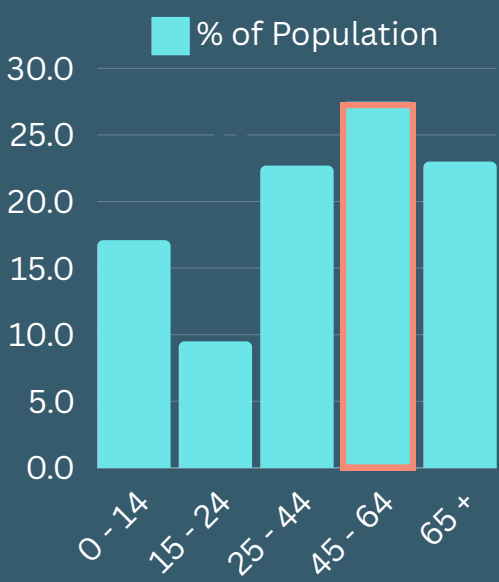
According to the percentage of English speakers represented by each RLS, the RLS of Coaticook is the third largest region with a higher ratio of English speakers across the region.

% of English-speakers per RLS

- RLS de la Pommeraie
- RLS de la Haute Yamaska
- RLS de Memphrémagog
- RLS de Coaticook
- RLS de Sherbrooke
- RSL de Val Saint-François
- RLS d'Asbestos
- RLS du Haut- Saint-François
- RLS du Granit

0.0 5.0 10.0 15.0 20.0

Demographics by Age

% of Population

30.0
25.0
20.0
15.0
10.0
5.0
0.0

0 - 14   15 - 24   25 - 44   45 - 64   65 +

There is a higher proportion of English speakers aged 45 - 64.

When it comes to children's education (under 18 years old), only **20 %** of children are eligible for education in English.

⭐ It's important to note that there are no ETSB English schools within the RCM of Coaticook. Students must travel to other RCMs for their education.

For the 2024-2025 school year, a total of 298 students from the RCM of Coaticook are enrolled in English schools under the Eastern Townships School Board (ETSB). Out of these 298 students, 250 attend one of the three specific schools listed. That is equivalent to **84 %**

76 % of the students who attend schools under the ETSB come from these three (3) municipalities.

1 Coaticook (28%)

2 Compton (20%)

3 Waterville (28%)

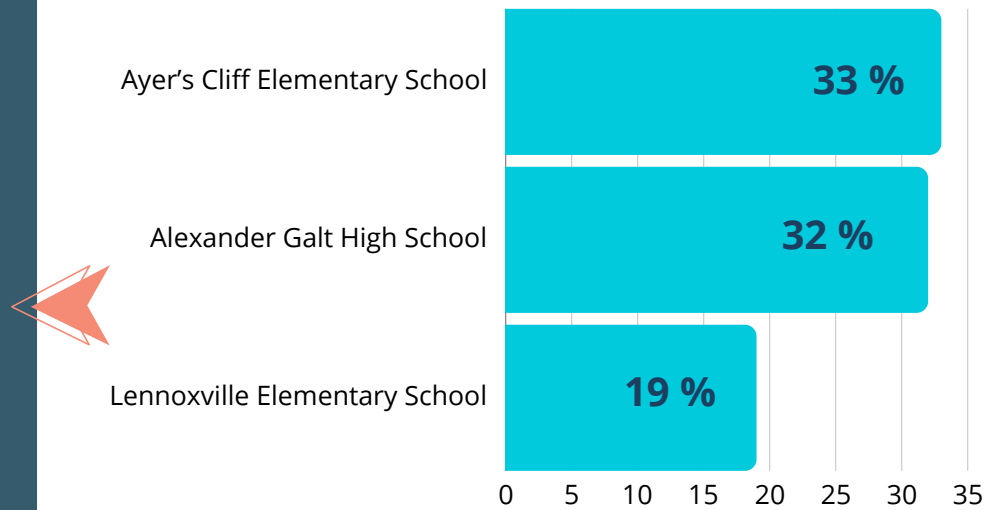# Existing Community Statistics

Education

The school-aged population represents 4,185 children currently residing on the territory. Out of those, 845 are eligible to receive their education in English. This represents the school-aged population under 18 years of age.

ETSB Top three (3) most attended English schools

Ayer's Cliff Elementary School — **33 %**
Alexander Galt High School — **32 %**
Lennoxville Elementary School — **19 %**

(axis: 0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35)

According to the ETSB statistics for the 2024-2025 school year, these are the top three (3) most attended English schools by the English-speaking youth of the RCM of Coaticook.

Travel Times

Here are the travel times from Coaticook to Ayer's Cliff Elementary, which **84%** of Coaticook students attend.

- 20 Minutes

Here are the travel times to Alexander Galt High School, which **49%** of Compton and Waterville students attend.

- Waterville (47%) 16 Minutes
- Compton (25%) 20 Minutes

Here are the travel times to Lennoxville Elementary, which **31%** of Compton and Waterville students attend.
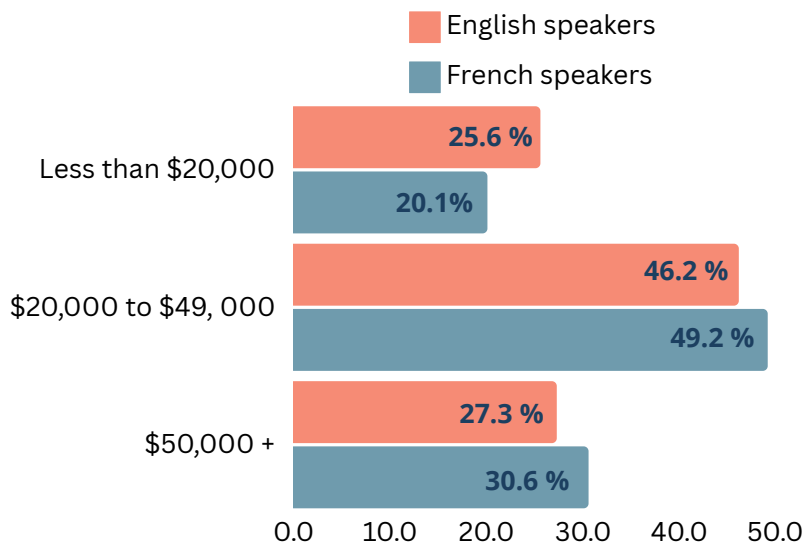
- Waterville (41%) 16 Minutes
- Compton (38%) 18 Minutes
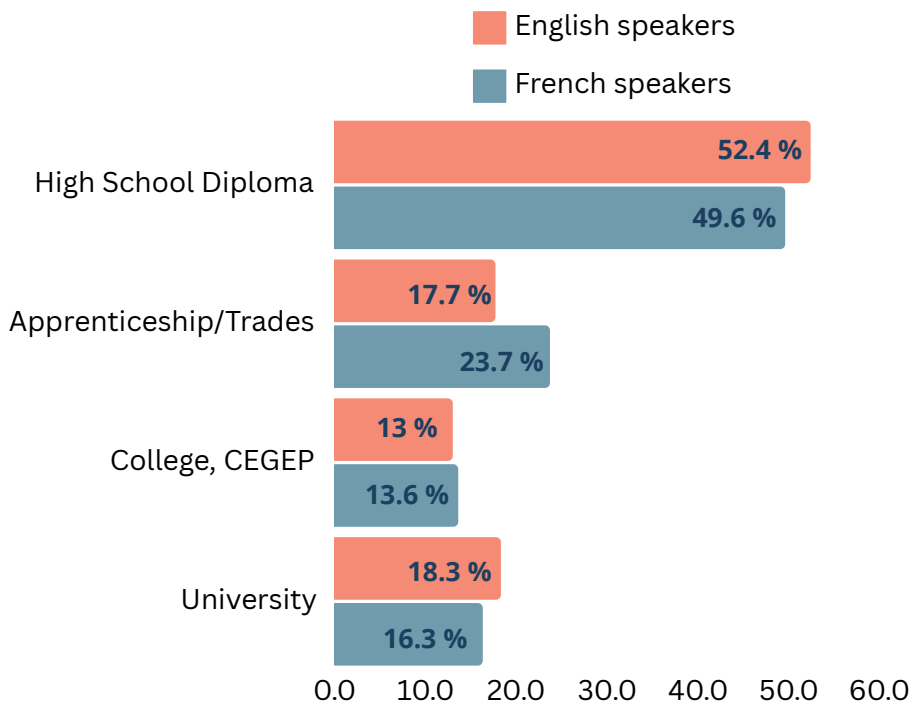
Existing Community Statistics

Income & Education

Although the needs assessment focused on accessing services, existing data on income provides an essential understanding of the vulnerability experienced by the English-speaking population. Here are the existing statistics on this subject.

Income

Legend:
- English speakers
- French speakers

Income bracket	English speakers	French speakers
Less than $20,000	25.6 %	20.1%
$20,000 to $49, 000	46.2 %	49.2 %
$50,000 +	27.3 %	30.6 %

Education

Legend:
- English speakers
- French speakers

Education level	English speakers	French speakers
High School Diploma	52.4 %	49.6 %
Apprenticeship/Trades	17.7 %	23.7 %
College, CEGEP	13 %	13.6 %
University	18.3 %	16.3 %

*** The level of education was calculated from a population between 25-64 years of age.

Did you know?

77% of the population uses **French** in the workplace.

18% of the population uses both **English and French** in the workplace.

5% of the population uses **English** in the workplace.

*The above-noted statistics represent the entire population of the RCM of Coaticook, not explicit to the English-speaking population.

Based on the income brackets and the level of education, it appears that although the English-speaking population has received a higher level of education than the French-speaking population, the income remains lower than the French-speaking population.

A total of **62** responses were collected, which counts for **3 %** of the English-speaking population.
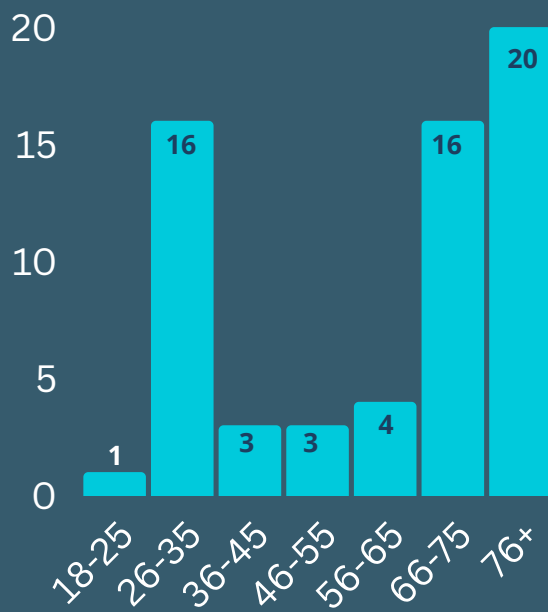
Survey Responses by Gender

50 Women (81%)

10 Men (16%)

2 prefer not to say (3 %)

Number of Responses by Age

|						
18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	76+
1	16	3	3	4	16	20

Survey Results

Official Languages & Mother Tongue

** Mother Tongue is the first language a person learns from birth, usually spoken at home and by family. An Official Language is the language designated by a country for government, legal, and administrative purposes.

Giving the nature of the needs assessment, the participants were asked to provide their mother tongue and the official language used at home. This data is useful in determining the validity of the responses regarding the needs in accessing English services in the area. Here are the responses:
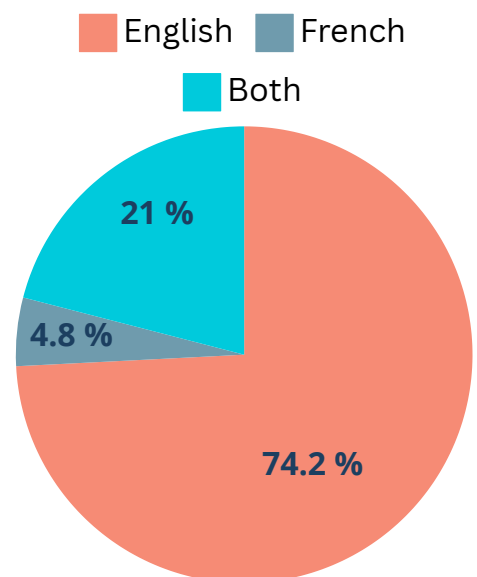
While 9.7% of the respondents (total of 6 responses) claim French as a mother tongue, we assume that the responses regarding accessing services in English remain valid. As such, they have not been removed from the overall assessment.

6.5% responded other as their mother tongue. Dutch and German were entered.

Mother Tongue

English   French   Other

6.5%
9.7 %
83.9 %
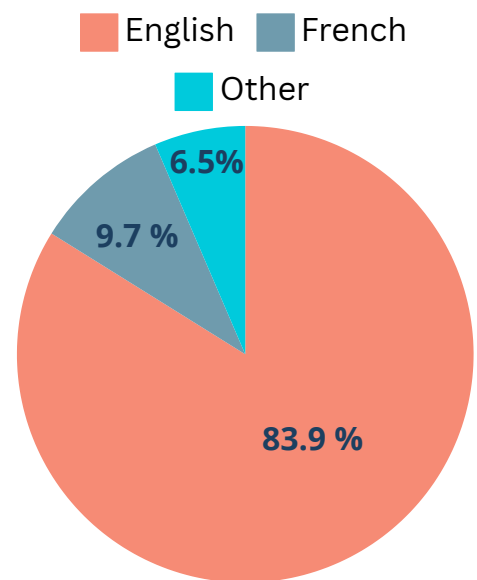
A total of 95.2% of participants indicated that they speak English or both official languages at home. Specifically, 74.2% speak only English, 21% use both English and French, while 4.8% speak only French.
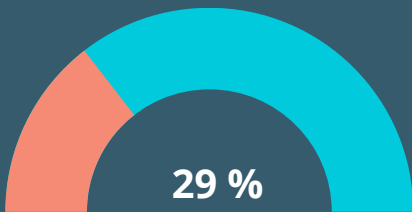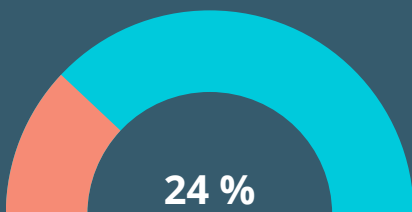
Official Language

English   French   Both

21 %
4.8 %
74.2 %

Survey Results

The top 3 municipalities with the most responses

29 %
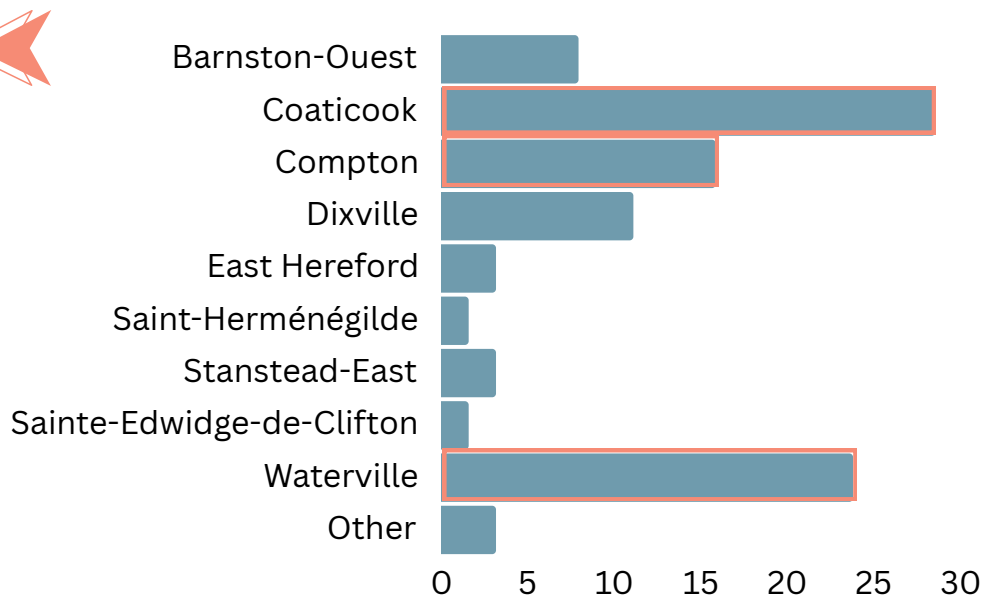Coaticook

24 %
Waterville
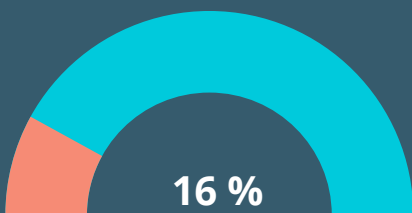
16 %
Compton

Mapping the Responses

The RCM of Coaticook is comprised of 12 towns. Responses were received from most of the towns with the exception of Martinville, Saint-Malo, and Saint-Venant de Paquette. It comes as no surprises, however, as these towns have a population of 10, 15, and 10, respectively.

The following table represents the percentage of responses received per municipality:

We received two responses from participants from Hatley and Sherbrooke (other). Given that Hatley's biggest town is Coaticook, we felt it was important to keep the respondents' responses in the survey. As for the results received from the respondent coming from Sherbrooke, the results would have no impact as most of the questions were skipped by the respondent.

Survey Responses

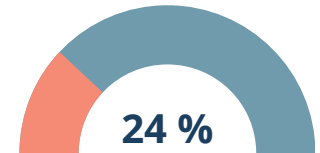## Accessing Services & Activities in English

** A service was referred to as a service offered by a professional, such as healthcare, mental health, and legal services, whereas an activity was referred to as an event, workshop, or program typically organized and hosted by a community organization.

The respondents were asked to give us information regarding accessing English services and activities within the RCM of Coaticook. Here were their responses:

32 % of respondents claimed to travel outside the region to access an activity and/or a service.

76 %
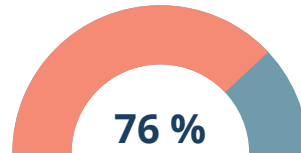
Claim they **do not** attend a service or activity offered in English.

24 %

Claim they **do** attend a service or activity offered in English.

Of those who responded to accessing an English service or activity within the RCM of Coaticook, we asked them to specify which service or activity they were obtaining. Here are their responses:

- Health & Social Services (CLSC)
- Ladies Group of Baldwin Mills
- Unofficial seniors gatherings
- A quilting group
- Play groups & CJE.

When respondents were asked if there are existing services and activities currently offered in French but would like to see available in English, here were their responses:

Here are the French services/activities respondents mentioned that they would like to see offered in English:

Activities:

- Prenatal Classes
- Parenting classes for teens
- Book clubs and library activities
- English movies at the theatre
- Sports: soccer, swim classes
- Yoga classes
- Craft classes
- Seniors activities
- Children's activities: playgroups, summer camps
- Concerts and outdoor events
- English communications in a local newspaper (Le Progrès)

Services:

- Legal services and information
- Governmental services (SAAQ)
- Mental health services
- Healthcare services
- English schools

Yes **No**

46 % **54 %**

54% of the respondents claim to want to have existing French services offered in English.

Survey Statistics

Obstacles & Communication

94 % of respondents indicated that they prefer attending activities in person, while only **4 %** opted for an online format.

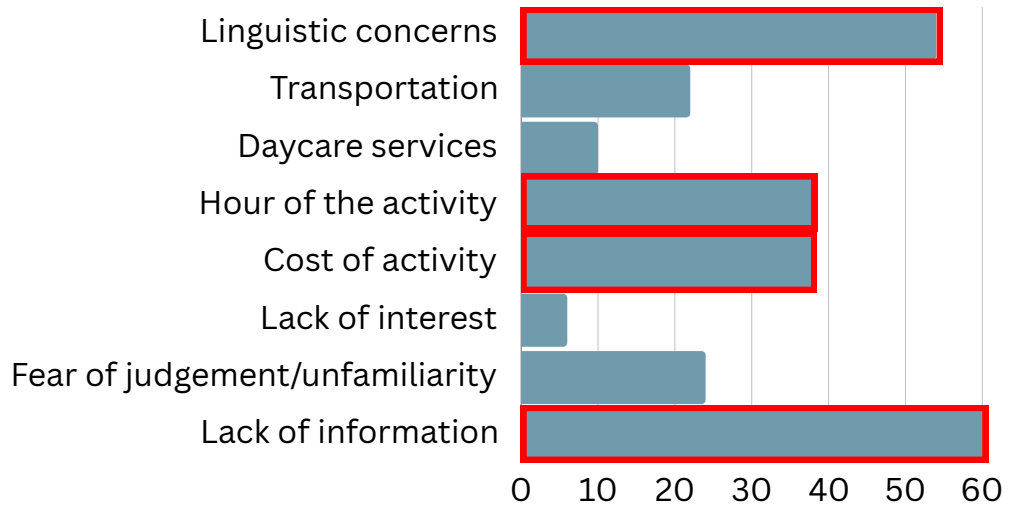If you were to attend an English service or activity, what would be the best format for you to attend?

Online
4%

In-Person
94%
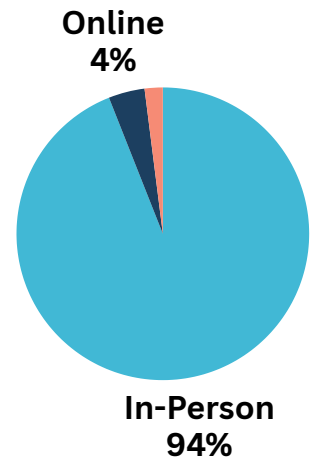
The top 3 Obstacles to Participation are:

- **Lack of information:** 60 %
- **Linguistic concerns:** 54 %
- **Hours of the activity:** 38 %
- **Cost of the activity:** 38 %

Hours of the activity and cost of the activity tied for 3rd place.

Obstacles to Participation

Linguistic concerns
Transportation
Daycare services
Hour of the activity
Cost of activity
Lack of interest
Fear of judgement/unfamiliarity
Lack of information

0 10 20 30 40 50 60

The top 3 Best Ways to Communicate are:

- **Facebook:** 78 %
- **Email:** 58 %
- **The Record:** 40 %
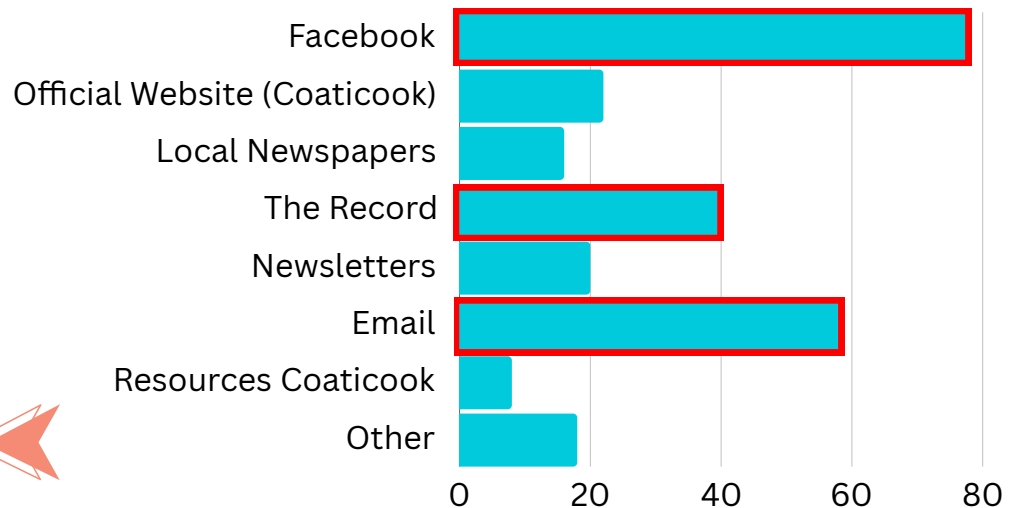
Other ways to communicate include: Calling list, Radio station. Must be advertised in English.

Best Ways to Communicate

Facebook
Official Website (Coaticook)
Local Newspapers
The Record
Newsletters
Email
Resources Coaticook
Other

0 20 40 60 80

Teens & Young Adults

Focus Group Responses

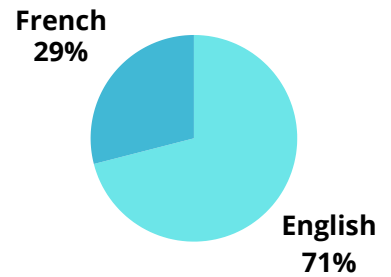## Responses by Gender

57% Female (4)

43% Male (3)

Responses by Mother Tongue

French
29%

English
71%

Key Obstacles

Language Barriers
- Difficulty accessing English-language services and entertainment options, as most are offered in French.
- Challenges in employment, social interactions, and accessing health services due to limited French proficiency.
- Feeling judged or excluded for not speaking perfect French, especially among younger participants in school or on teams.

Limited English-Language Activities
- A desire for more English-specific entertainment, such as movies and sports teams.
- Limited accessibility of English activities, with many participants unaware of available resources.

Social Isolation
- Lack of English-speaking community groups or spaces where participants can form meaningful bonds with adults or peers.
- Difficulties in making friends and integrating socially due to language barriers.

Key Themes

Home-Based and Online Activities
- Many participants spend time at home, engaging in online activities such as gaming.
- Limited engagement with community centres like Maison des Jeunes, with participants noting the lack of English activities.

Need for English-Specific Resources
- There was a significant demand for English-speaking staff in local organizations and bilingual support in everyday services.

Social and Professional Challenges
- Participants face difficulties forming connections with French-speaking peers and navigating paperwork and services predominantly offered in French.
- Employment and health services were cited as particularly challenging due to language barriers, with participants feeling they may not receive the same care or opportunities as French speakers.

Parents
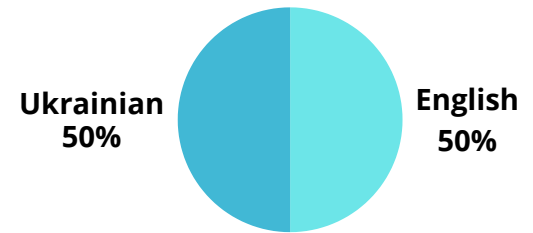
Focus Group Responses

Responses by Gender
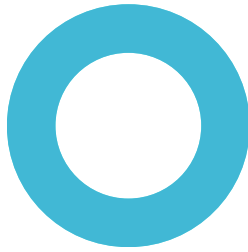
100% Female (4)

0% Male (0)

Responses by Mother Tongue

Ukrainian 50%

English 50%

Key Obstacles

Language Barriers in Services

- Parents face difficulties accessing services such as health care, education, and community resources in English. This often includes challenges in understanding paperwork, service availability, and communication with professionals (e.g. teachers, doctors).

Limited English-Speaking Support Networks

- There is a lack of community groups or social networks for English-speaking parents, leaving them feeling isolated and unsupported, especially when it comes to parenting advice, child development, or educational guidance.

Access to Information in English

- English-speaking parents often struggle to stay informed about events, programs, or services that can benefit them or their children because most information is communicated in French.

Key Themes & Recommendations

Address Gaps for Parents

- Hold informational sessions that focus on navigating health care, education systems, and community resources. Providing valuable insights, practical guidance, and opportunities for parents to connect with each other, fostering a sense of community and support.

Enhance English-Speaking Support Networks

- Establish community groups and support networks for English-speaking parents. These could focus on providing parenting advice, educational guidance, and social connections, helping to reduce feelings of isolation and create a stronger sense of community.

Increase Access to English-Language Information

- Ensure that information about local events, programs, and services is readily available in English through multiple channels, such as social media, newsletters, and dedicated English-language resources. This will help parents stay informed and engaged with the community.

Focus Group Responses
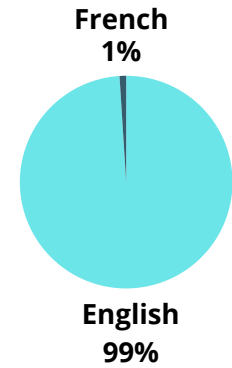
Seniors

Responses by Gender
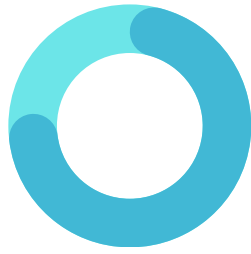
77% Female (23)

23% Male (7)

Responses by Mother Tongue

French 1%

English 99%

Key Obstacles

Language Barriers
- Difficulty accessing services due to French-language paperwork, lack of English-speaking staff, and inconsistent availability of English-language public services.
- A sense of isolation stemming from limited English-language interactions and support within the community.

Lack of Information
- English-speaking seniors feel poorly informed about available services and activities. Most French media is inaccessible without translation, including Coaticook's website.
- The Sherbrooke Record provides valuable news, but its limited delivery schedule reduces consistent access.

Transportation Issues
- Limited transportation options, including English-speaking drivers, concerns about affordability, and location of pick up/drop offs being far for seniors to walk.

Key Themes

Activities
- Seniors spend a lot of time at home participating in activities such as gardening, crafting, and cooking, while some continue to work.
- Most socialize through informal networks such as church and unofficial gatherings.

Social Isolation
- There is a need for more community engagement, support groups, and social opportunities in English to address mental health and combat isolation.

Preferred Communication Methods
- Seniors prefer paper-based communication and verbal interactions, but there is also a need for more English-language online groups (Facebook) and resources.
- A call for more English-speaking or bilingual staff in public services, with emphasis on one-on-one support in care settings.

Desire for Community Connection
- Interest in creating informal groups to share resources, guest speakers, and promote community engagement.

Recommendations

The historical presence of English-speaking settlers has created a bilingual and bicultural identity in the region, affecting its character. This portrait emphasizes the need for tailored activities/services and communications to cater to the needs of the English-speaking minority.

Accessibility

Time
- Host activities at varied times, such as evenings and weekends, to accommodate various lifestyles. Consider hosting the same event at multiple times to provide more opportunities for participation.

Cost
- Additionally, affordable pricing options should be implemented, ensuring they are accessible to all income levels, as cost and time were identified as the third most significant barrier to participation.

Childcare
- For parents, offering daycare during events can help overcome scheduling and participation challenges.

Linguistic Concerns

Increase Availability of Bilingual and English-Language Services
- Across all demographics, there is a clear need for more English-speaking or bilingual staff in key service areas, including healthcare, education, and public services.

Official Website of Coaticook
- The official website of Coaticook is currently only available in French. It should also be available in English.

Create a Dedicated English-Language Information Platform
- A recurring theme and the top obstacle to participation is the difficulty in receiving important information in English, leading to isolation and disengagement. Utilize platforms such as Facebook, emails, and local newspapers (The Record), as it was identified as the third best way of communicating. Recommendation of creating an English Facebook page and/or an email list.

Transportation

Improve Transportation Access
- Transportation is a barrier for both seniors and young adults when it comes to accessing services, programs, and events. Recommendation of organizing transportation to activities.

English-Speaking Transport Services
- Collaborate with local transportation providers to ensure that bilingual drivers or support staff are available. Explore affordable and accessible transportation solutions to facilitate participation in events, health services, and community activities, while considering the distance involved in walking to and from pick-up/drop-off points, especially in the winter months.

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Townshipper's Association Needs Assessment_July 24 2024

Ville de Coaticook. https://www.coaticook.ca/

APPENDIX

Appendix A : English-Speaking Community Survey of the RCM of Coaticook.

English-Speaking Community Survey of the RCM of Coaticook

The Goal of the Survey:

The reason why we are conducting this survey is to evaluate the needs of the English-speaking community living in the RCM of Coaticook. The responses received in this survey will allow local organisations to better understand the needs of the community and in turn, better serve its community.

Who will be conducting this survey?

This survey is conducted by Townshippers' Association, in collaboration with the Centre de Développement Communautaire (CDC) de la MRC de Coaticook (including its members) and assisted by Bishop's University and the Institut Universitaire de Première Ligne en Santé et Services Sociaux (IUPLSSS).

The responses you provide will be kept **confidential** and **anonymous**. We will not disclose any of your personal information with our partners.

Do you give consent?

Do you authorize us to:

1) use your answers to create a report outlining the needs of the English-Speaking community with regards to accessing services and activities in English within the RCM of Coaticook?

2) share survey information with our partners (not your name or other personal information)?
   □ Yes □ No

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

To be entered into the draw for numerous prizes, including ice cream and pizza vouchers and Ayer's Cliff Fair tickets, please leave your name, phone number, and postal code:

Name: _____

Phone Number:_____

Postal Code: _____

*Note: this page will be detached from your survey so that your answers can remain anonymous

General Information

Please answer the following questions as accurately and honestly as possible.

1. Which of the following municipality do you live in?

☐ Coaticook   ☐ Barnston-Ouest   ☐ Compton   ☐ Dixville
☐ East Hereford   ☐ Martinville   ☐ Saint-Herménégile   ☐ Saint-Malo
☐ Stanstead-East   ☐ Waterville   ☐ Sainte-Edwidge-de-Clifton
☐ Saint-Venant de Paquette

☐ Other : _____

2. What is your postal code? _____

3. How long have you been living in this RCM of Coaticook?

☐ Less than 1 year   ☐ 1 to 5 years   ☐ 6 to 10 years
☐ More than 10 years   ☐ I do not live in the MRC of Coaticook
☐ I prefer not to answer

4. What is your age category?

☐ 15-18   ☐ 18-25   ☐ 26-35   ☐ 36-45   ☐ 46-55   ☐ 56-65   ☐ 66-75   ☐ 76+

5. What is your gender?

☐ Female   ☐ Male   ☐ Other   ☐ Prefer not to say

6. What is your mother tongue?

☐ French ☐ English ☐ Other, please specify: _____

7. Which official language do you primarily use?

☐ French   ☐ English   ☐ Both

Let's get to know your needs ….

*** A **service** is referred to a service offered by a professional such as healthcare, mental health, governmental, and other professional services.*

*** An **activity** is referred to an event, workshop, or program typically organised and hosted by a community organisation.*

8. Are you currently attending a service, or an activity offered in English within the RCM of Coaticook?
☐ Yes, please specify: _____
☐ No

9. Are there any services or activities currently offered in French that you would like to see available in English within the RCM of Coaticook?
☐ Yes, please specify:_____
☐ No

10. Are there any services and or activities that are currently not offered within the RCM of Coaticook that you would like to have access to?
□ Yes   □ No

Please explain: _____

11. Where do you go, when accessing services or activities in English?

□ Outside of the RCM of Coaticook, please specify: _____

□ In my town/village

□ In Coaticook

Please explain which service or activity: _____

12. If you were to attend an English service or activity, what would be the best format for you to attend?
□ In-Person
□ Online
□ None of the above

13. What would be the main obstacles to access a service or to participate in an activity offered by a community organization? (Check all that apply)
□ Linguistic concerns   □ Transportation   □ Daycare services

□ Hours of the activity   □ Costs of activities □ Lack of interest

□ Fear of judgement / unfamiliarity □ Lack of information about events

□ Other, please specify: _____

14. What are the best ways to communicate about activities and services offered in

English? (Check all that apply)
□ Facebook   □ The Record   □ Newsletters
□ Email   □ Resources Coaticook   □ Official Websites
□ Local Newspapers (French newspaper from Coaticook)
□ Other, please specify:_____

15. Do you have any suggestions on how community organizations can connect you

to existing or new services and activities offered within the RCM?

_____
_____
_____

Thank you!