# MOBILITY AND MIGRATION THE CHALLENGE TO COMMUNITY VITALITY IN THE EASTERN TOWNSHIPS OF QUEBEC 

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#### Abstract

Upon noting that the English-speaking population of the Eastern Townships of Quebec is rapidly decreasing and that the Anglophone community is an ageing one, it has become necessary to conduct a study focusing on the destinations and age characteristics of the English-speaking population leaving or migrating out of the 8 counties of the Eastern Townships. The analysis of custom migration tables from Statistics Canada indicates that the Anglophone population of the Eastern Townships, counting 38,213 people in 2001, has decreased by 1,140 , losing $2.9 \%$ of its members, from 1991 to 2001. Meanwhile, the number of English-speakers across Quebec has increased by $1,62 \%$ in the same period. Part of the decrease witnessed by the Eastern Townships is due to the migration of 7,945 English-speakers. Of these, 4,495 migrants chose a destination in another Canadian province. The breakdown of destination and age structure gives further insight into the pattern of movement by the Anglophone population. The presentation of the results of this study is followed by a discussion of the different ways that this on-going out-migration affects the vitality and identity of this geographically dispersed linguistic community.


## Résumé

Cette étude portera sur la description des destinations et des caractéristiques de la structure par âge de la population anglophone migrante ayant quitté huit comtés des Cantons-de-l'Est, au Québec, au cours de la période comprise entre 1996 et 2001. La population de la communauté anglophone des Cantons-de-l'Est, dans le Sud du Québec, est vieillissante et décroissante. L'analyse de tableaux de migration personnalisés de Statistique Canada démontre que la population anglophone de la région, qui comptait 38213 personnes en 2001, a diminué d'environ 1140 personnes, soit 2,9 \%, depuis 1991, alors que la population anglophone de l'ensemble du Québec augmentait de 1,62 \% au cours de cette même période. La migration de


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7945 anglophones explique en partie cette décroissance. Parmi ceux-ci, 4495 se sont établis dans une autre province canadienne. L'analyse des destinations et de la structure par âge nous permet d'en apprendre davantage sur les tendances des mouvements de la population anglophone. La présentation des résultats est suivie d'une discussion sur les problèmes qu'entraîne cette décroissance pour la vitalité et l'identité de cette communauté linguistique dispersée sur le plan géographique.


The English-speaking community in the Eastern Townships is faced with a serious challenge: a decreasing population due to ageing and out-migration. Like numerous English-speaking communities outside large urban areas in Quebec, the Anglophone population in the Eastern Townships is rapidly changing in size as well as age (Warnke, 2002). The English-speaking community has initiated numerous local research projects in an effort to understand the factors that may be contributing to the diminishing Anglophone population in the Eastern Townships. Previous research has already identified some of the tendencies for out-migration. Perhaps the most notable initial study was made in the 1970s (Caldwell, 1974). Other basic descriptive studies followed ([Jan Warnke 2002]; Caldwell, 1974).

The lack of overall knowledge about the current demographic dynamics of the Anglophone population in the Eastern Townships as well as across Quebec indicates the need for establishing a better understanding of the factors that may be contributing to population change in the Eastern Township's English-speaking community. Part of the change in this community may be explained by natural ageing and non-replacement of the local population by new-arrivals. However, a significant proportion of the change may also be due to out-migration (see Floch, 2005, this issue). This decrease in population is a serious challenge to the English-speaking community's vitality and identity.

This study describes the destinations and age structure characteristics of the Official Language Minority population that is leaving or migrating out of the Eastern Townships in the period between May 1996 and the date of the 2001 Census. The context for the review of the salient characteristics of this exodus will be provided by a general description of population change between 1991 and 2001 and of the general mobility characteristics of the population in the study area. The analysis of the Anglophone out-migration will be followed by a discussion of how this mobility pattern may affect
the vitality of the Eastern Townships' English-speaking population. These objectives are consistent with the knowledge-based approach for furthering the understanding of community vitality and community development.

## The Study Area

The study area in the Eastern Townships was limited to 8 counties or MRCs ${ }^{1}$ approximately 100 kilometres south of Montreal, Quebec. These 8 counties are part of a greater region identified as the Historic Eastern Townships by the Townshippers' Association, a communitybased organization promoting a knowledge-based approach for the development of the English-speaking community in the Eastern Townships.

## The Study Population

The study population being taken into consideration here is the Eng-lish-speaking population in the Eastern Townships. Today, this Eng-lish-speaking population is considered a minority language population. However, it was at one time a majority here and across Quebec. According to the Townshippers' Association website (http://www.townshippers.qc.ca/E-history.aspx), this English-speaking population represented $59 \%$ of the total provincial population in 1861.

For the purposes of this study we will be using a linguistic definition of the English-speaking population. A linguistic population is a single community of interest. The English-speaking population may also be treated as a cultural group by looking at the ethnic origin of the English-speakers in the study area. Since the Englishspeaking population in Quebec is culturally more heterogeneous than the French-speaking population (Warnke, 2002), a cultural definition would break down the community into segments of similar cultural or ethnic origins. However, the linguistic community concept is more pertinent for issues concerning education, employment and access to health and social services. Consequently, the analysis of migration from the Eastern Townships study area will focus on the Anglophone minority language population in the Eastern Townships as well as its mobility and its out-migration.

What then is an English-speaker? There are many ways of defining this term. Statistics Canada provides several commonly used measures derived from questions during the census. This study will use a derived measure, the First Official Language Spoken (FOLS) for
estimating the Anglophone minority language population in the Eastern Townships. This well-established measure is derived from the answers to three census questions concerning the respondent's knowledge of official languages (in Canada there are two official languages, English and French), mother tongue and language spoken at home. The measure has been further adjusted to take into account respondents who speak both official languages, unless otherwise specified.

## General population characteristics

The Eastern Townships study area overlaps three different administrative regions out of the 18 administrative regions in Quebec ${ }^{2}$. For the most part, the study area is found in the Estrie Administrative Region. According to the 2001 Census (Statistics Canada), the total population of these 8 counties was 452,465 . The FOLS-English population was 38,213 or $8.5 \%$ of the total population in 2001. At the same time, the total English-speaking population in Quebec stood at 918,958 , or $13 \%$ of the total population.

The challenge to the vitality of the English-speaking community in the Eastern Townships is closely associated with the changes in its population size, distribution and age structure. The total First


Official Language Spoken - English (FOLS - English) population of the Eastern Townships region decreased by approximately 1,140 or $3 \%$ in the ten year period from 1991 to 2001 (Statistics Canada, 1991, 2001). Over the same period of time the FOLS - English population in Quebec increased by 14,660 or $1.6 \%$ (Statistics Canada, 1991, 2001). The FOLS-French population in the Eastern Townships increased by $8 \%$ which is higher than the $5 \%$ FOLS-French population increase in Quebec (Statistics Canada, 1991, 2001). We can observe that the English population in the Eastern Townships is diminishing in size and in proportion to the total population, whereas the majority language population is increasing in size at a much greater rate than the FOLS-French population in the rest of Quebec (see figures 1 and 2).

| Table 1: Change in FOLS-English population proportion |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| in the Eastern Townships study area |  |  |  |  |  |  |


| Table 2: Change in FOLS-French population 1991-2001 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| in the Eastern Townships study area |  |  |  |  |  |  |

In general the population is ageing, although the proportion of the English-speaking population 65 years and older decreased slightly from $19 \%$ of the total FOLS-English population in 1991 to $18 \%$ in 2001. These proportions are almost twice the FOLS-French proportion of $10 \%$ in 1991 and $12 \%$ in 2001. In contrast, the FOLS-English population aged 0-14 decreased from $18 \%$ to $17 \%$, a lesser decrease than the FOLS-French population, which went from $22 \%$ to $19 \%$, respectively.

The English-speaking population is also changing in its demographic structure. It was already noted in 1996 that the FOLS-English population (single response) in the Estrie Administrative Region (a major component of the Eastern Townships study area) had a median age of 38.2 years, the highest median age of all the Englishspeaking communities in Quebec (Warnke, 1997). On the other hand the median age of the FOLS-French population (singleresponse) was 34.3 years of age in the Eastern Townships.

| Table 3: Change in FOLS 0-14 year population 1991-2001 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| in the Eastern Townships study area |  |


| Table 4: Change in FOLS 65+ year population 1991-2001 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| in the Eastern Townships study area |  |  |  |  |  |  |


| Table 5: FOLS-English/French median age by Administrative Region (1996 Census) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Total Population | Total French | Total English | Percent French | Percent English | Median Age French | Median Age English |
| Nord-du-Québec 10 | 36265 | 21575 | 8760 | 59.49\% | 24.16\% | 26.83 | 24.89 |
| Côte-Nord-duQuébec 09 | 102540 | 95215 | 5800 | 92.86\% | 5.66\% | 30.8 | 30.88 |
| Laval 13 | 311170 | 254580 | 39595 | 81.81\% | 12.72\% | 33.62 | 32.55 |
| Outaouais 07 | 281735 | 230670 | 46585 | 81.87\% | 16.54\% | 31.63 | 32.88 |
| Abitibi- <br> Témiscamingue 08 | 150625 | 143715 | 6190 | 95.41\% | 4.11\% | 30.65 | 33.98 |
| Montréal 06 | 1749335 | $\begin{gathered} 1098 \\ 495 \end{gathered}$ | 502145 | 62.80\% | 28.70\% | 35.74 | 34.19 |
| Montérégie 16 | 1187340 | 1040315 | 129730 | 87.62\% | 10.93\% | 32.47 | 34.51 |
| Lanaudière 14 | 331235 | 321510 | 8070 | 97.06\% | 2.44\% | 32.1 | 35.07 |
| Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine 11 | 105070 | 94200 | 10595 | 89.65\% | 10.08\% | 33.63 | 35.33 |
| $\begin{array}{\|c\|} \hline \text { Saguenay - } \\ \text { Lac-Saint-Jean } 02 \end{array}$ | 283205 | 280755 | 2135 | 99.13\% | 0.75\% | 31.57 | 36.08 |
| Québec 03 | 607295 | 592885 | 11985 | 97.63\% | 1.97\% | 34.27 | 37.36 |
| ChaudièreAppalaches 12 | 362855 | 359185 | 3285 | 98.99\% | 0.91\% | 32.48 | 37.4 |
| Laurentides 15 | 377320 | 346680 | 28045 | 91.88\% | 7.43\% | 32.39 | 37.46 |
| Mauricie -Bois-Francs 04 | 458590 | 452435 | 5100 | 98.66\% | 1.11\% | 34.28 | 38.69 |
| Bas-Saint-Laurent 01 | 202115 | 201105 | 920 | 99.50\% | 0.46\% | 33.93 | 38.88 |
| Estrie 05 | 263585 | 238865 | 23100 | 90.62\% | 8.76\% | 32.75 | 39.75 |
| Québec | 6810300 | 5772180 | 832045 | 84.76\% | 12.22\% | 33.32 | 34.25 |

Note: Please note that single-response values for English and French were used in this table since it is impossible to determine with certainty the median age of the Official Language Minority and Majority in the multiple-response population.

Source: http://www.veq.qc.ca/qds/, July 22, 2005.

## Movement, mobility and migration

The concepts of movement, mobility and migration further the understanding of the changes in the English-speaking population in the study area given its specific demographic structure. Population mobility is the process of movement from one place to another over time. When the movement also represents a significant change in social networks and requires a readjustment in "community affiliation", it is often referred to as migration (Jones, 1981). Statistics Canada (2001) defines people who move within the same municipality as "movers". On the other hand "migrants" are movers who have moved to a different municipality.

The migrants referred to in this study have been identified only at the census division or MRC level. Consequently, the data generated by Statistics Canada indicates the mobility status by FOLS for the population that has moved between May 15, 1996 and the date of the 2001 Census (Statistics Canada, 2001).

One indicator of movement and migration is the mobility concept from Statistics Canada. The concept reflects the population that has moved in the five years preceding Census Day. If in 1991 a person did not live at the same address during the last five years, the previous address was used to indicate the place from which the person or family had migrated. The information on the place where the person lived previously is compiled and categorised to identify the different places of origin. The categorised information on the origin of the people that have migrated into the region is then used to make inferences about the movement characteristics of the population. The entire population is broken down into two major categories, movers and non-movers, which are then broken down into several sub-categories. The definitions of several different dimensions of the mobility concept are listed in Table 4 . For the purpose of this study, the migrants from other provinces have been added to the external migrants to create the category "migrants from outside of Quebec". This broad definition provides a means of assessing the extent to which the Quebec population is being influenced by an influx of people from outside Quebec. Furthermore, it provides a basis for the comparison of all the regions.

The population balance in the Eastern Townships region is dependent on the inflow and outflow of population. There are two forms of adding population to the region. The movement into the region may be by natural increase (birth rate minus death rate) or it may be by movement into the region from other areas (in-migration). There are also two forms of leaving the region, mortality and out-migration.

There are clear indications that the sources of movement into the Eastern Townships study area from outside of Canada is diminishing. For example, $38 \%$ of the English-speaking immigrants into the Eastern Townships study area, sometimes referred to as the Historical Eastern Townships (or HET) arrived in the period before 1961 whereas $24.1 \%$ of all English-speaking immigrants arrived in that same period in all of Québec. However, during the period between 1991 and 1996 the Eastern Townships study area was the target for $11 \%$ of the total English-speaking immigrants in the area whereas $19 \%$ of all the Anglophone immigrants in the whole of Quebec arrived during the same period. Clearly, the Eastern Townships study area is no longer a prime destination for English immigrants from outside of Canada. It also means that it has to rely on internal-migration (migration from other regions within Canada) to maintain a stable population and off-set migration out of the study area (see Floch 2005, this issue)


Figure 1: The FOLS-English Immigrants in the HET and in Quebec as of the 1996 Census (Warnke, 2002)

## Sources of out-migration

There is considerable variation in out-migration among individual Eastern Townships MRCs. The main source of out-migrants is the Sherbrooke MRC, which accounts for $39 \%$ of the people leaving the Eastern Townships. The Sherbrooke MRC also saw a drop of 23\% of its population from $1996(8,490)$ to $2001(7,872)$. The BromeMissisquoi MRC was the second-highest source of out-migrants ( $22 \%$ ) and its population also dropped by $24 \%$ from 1996 to 2001. Finally, the Memphrémagog MRC is the third-highest source of
migrants out of the Eastern Townships at 18\% of all Anglophone out-migrants. It is the only MRC that had a net gain in population since 1996, with 203 people representing an $8 \%$ increase. It is clearly a target for in-migrants who are more than compensating for the net outflow of English population.

|  | FOLS-English Migrants |  | Change in Population <br> 1996 to 2001 |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Region | \% inside <br> the ET | \% outside <br> the ET | ET_\% pop | ET_pop |
| ET_mobility | $100,00 \%$ | $100,00 \%$ | $-100,0 \%$ | -2655 |
| MRC Le Haut-Saint- <br> François (2441) | $6,16 \%$ | $2,56 \%$ | $-13,2 \%$ | -350 |
| MRC Le Val-Saint- <br> François (2442) | $8,45 \%$ | $6,01 \%$ | $-13,7 \%$ | -363 |
| MRC La Région- <br> Sherbrookoise (2443) | $22,71 \%$ | $39,38 \%$ | $-23,3 \%$ | -618 |
| MRC Coaticook <br> (2444) | $3,44 \%$ | $0,22 \%$ | $-11,1 \%$ | -295 |
| Memphrémagog <br> (2445) | $19,20 \%$ | $17,69 \%$ | $7,6 \%$ | 203 |
| MRC Brome- <br> Missisquoi (2446) | $28,58 \%$ | $21,47 \%$ | $-23,6 \%$ | -628 |
| MRC La Haute- <br> Yamaska (2447) | $8,60 \%$ | $7,90 \%$ | $-10,5 \%$ | -278 |
| Drummond (2449) | $2,87 \%$ | $4,78 \%$ | $-12,3 \%$ | -328 |

## Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the major demographic patterns of mobility among English-speaking Quebecers generally and within the region of the Eastern Townships. It is obvious that the FOLS-English population is decreasing due to a number of factors, including increasing out-migration and decreasing in-migration between Quebec and other parts of Canada, as well as internationally. These patterns vary within the Eastern Townships region, with most of the out-migration of English-speakers coming from the Sherbrooke area. In addition to the decrease of in-migrants and the increase in outmigrants, these flows are not sufficiently offset by birth rates. The result is a natural decrease, rather than a natural increase that is more typical in regional demographics.

Public policy responses to these patterns should keep a number of factors in mind. For one, most of the out-migrants among the FOLSEnglish population in the Eastern Townships have moved to other
parts of Quebec (typically Montreal), Ontario and Alberta (see Kishchuk 2005, this issue). It is therefore of utmost importance to consider the attractions of these other areas (the pull factors) as well as the local circumstances of their decisions to leave the Eastern Townships (the push factors). This information is critical to finding practical solutions to encourage inflow and retention of the Englishspeaking population.

## GLOSSARY

## Mobility and immigration terms

Period of Immigration: Refers to groupings of years derived from the year of immigration question. Year of immigration refers to the year landed immigrant status was first obtained.

First Official Language Spoken (FOLS): "This variable was derived within the framework of the application of the Official Languages Act. This derivation method is described in the regulations concerning the use of official languages for the provision of public services. It takes into account first the knowledge of the two official languages, second the mother tongue and third the home language.

People who can conduct a conversation in French only are assigned French as their first official language spoken.

People who can carry on a conversation in English only are assigned English as their first official language spoken.

The responses to questions on mother tongue and home language are subsequently used to establish the first official language spoken by people who speak both English and French, or who cannot speak either of the two official languages. The French category includes people who have French only or French and at least one non-official language as their mother tongue. People who have English only or English and at least one non-official language as their mother tongue are included in the English category. For cases that have not yet been classified, people are assigned to the French category when they speak French only or French and at least one non-official language as their home language. The procedure is the same for English. Thus, the population is classified into two principal categories: English or French.

It is necessary to add two residual categories for people who cannot be classified in accordance with the information available: English and French and neither English nor French." (Statistics Canada, 2001)

Mobility Status: "Refers to the relationship between a person's usual place of residence on Census Day and his or her usual place of residence five years earlier. A person is classified as a non-mover if no difference exists. Otherwise, a person is classed as a mover and this categorization is called Mobility Status (5 Years Ago). Within the category movers, a further distinction is made between non-migrants and migrants; this difference is called migration status.

Non-movers are persons who, on Census Day, were living at the same address which they occupied five years earlier.

Movers are persons who, on Census Day, were living at a different address than the one at which they resided five years earlier.

Non-migrants are movers who, on Census Day, were living at a different address but in the same census subdivision (CSD) that they occupied five years earlier.

Migrants are movers who, on Census Day, were residing in a different CSD five years earlier (internal migrants) or who were living outside Canada five years earlier (external migrants)". (Statistics Canada, 2001)

## Indices

Relative Geographic Index (RGI): The relative geographic index is the ratio of a population proportion in a geographic region to the proportion of the same type of population in a larger geographic region. It provides a measure of the intensity of a specific variable as the scale of the geography changes. For example a municipality with an RGI of 1.5 on the variable FOLS-English population 65+ years in the province of Quebec would indicate that the municipality has a higher proportion ( $50 \%$ points more) of people aged 65 years and over than the province.

Minority-Majority Index (MMI): The ratio of the minority language population proportion to the majority language proportion. It provides a measure of the difference between the English (minority language group in Quebec) and the French (majority language group in Quebec). For example an MMI of 1.65 in any one given area for the population aged 65 years and over would indicate that the English population in that area has a higher proportion ( $65 \%$ points more) of aged people than the French population in the same area.

## NOTES

1 An MRC, or Municipalité Regionale de Comté, is an administrative unit in Quebec that is the equivalent of a county or the Statistics Canada census geographic unit called the Census Division.
2 Administrative regions are the equivalent of economic regions used for the purpose of aggregating information by Statistics Canada as well as for administrative purposes by federal and provincial governments. There are a total of 77 economic regions across Canada of which 18 are found in Quebec.

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