

THE POPULATION OF MONTREAL

The territory of Montreal covers 496 km² (approximately 190 miles²). In 2001, it had a population of 1 782 830, representing 25% of Quebec's population. Montreal differs from the rest of the province in that its population is extremely diverse.

	Montreal	Rest of Quebec
Total population ¹	100%	100%
Ethnic origin other than French, British Isles and Canadian	38%	7%
Immigrants	28%	4%
Mother tongue other than French or English	28%	4%
Unable to hold a conversation in French or English	2.3%	0.3%

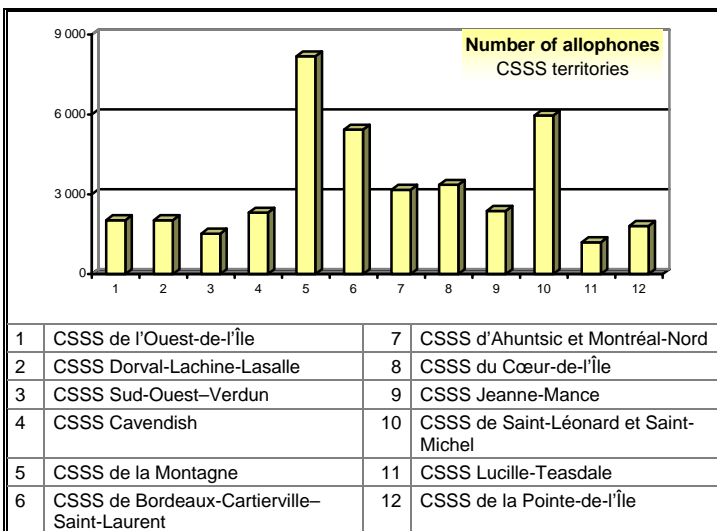
More specifically:

- 101 000 new immigrants arrived between 1996 and 2001;
- 32 000 non-permanent residents live in Montreal;
- 42 000 Montrealers are unable to hold a conversation in French or English.

Ten languages make up 60% of the interpretation needs of the 42 000 Montrealers who are unable to hold a conversation in English or French. However, only two of those languages are spoken by a group of more than 5 000 people. Most of the time, there are no more than 1 000 people in each remaining language group requiring the services of an interpreter.

This diversity constitutes a major challenge when it comes to organizing interpretation services.

Here is the territorial breakdown of allophones in Montreal.



CONTEXT

The Act Respecting Health Services and Social Services (R.S.Q. c. S-4.2) provides rules for adapting services to the linguistic and ethnocultural characteristics of communities (art. 2.5 and 2.7). It defines users' rights (art. 4 to 16) and the organizational responsibilities of institutions in accommodating the diversity of the population they serve (art. 171).

In 1993, at the request of the Government of Quebec, the Agence de santé et de services sociaux de Montréal created the Inter-regional Interpreters Bank (hereafter the "Bank") to facilitate equal access to interpretation services for immigrants with insufficient knowledge of the language or culture of their host society.

Since then, the Bank has extended its coverage to serve the regions of Laval in the north and the Montérégie area in the south, where approximately 8,000 inhabitants are unable to hold a conversation in French or English.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Agence de Montréal has made accessibility to ethnocultural communities an integral part of all of its recent endeavours.

Four major orientations guide the Agency, one of which is to break down communication barriers and improve access to interpretation services by supporting the intercultural training of managers and workers, offering information, and providing interpretation through the Inter-regional Interpreters Bank.

COMMUNITY INTERPRETERS

Community interpreters are qualified professionals who transmit all of the information expressed in verbal and nonverbal communication in the strictest confidence.

They strive, from a neutral position and using appropriate language, to assist clients and professionals in understanding each other's cultural values, concepts and practices.

Indeed, the greatest assets interpreters possess are their vast knowledge and their ability to act as a bridge between two cultures.

A NEW TOOL FOR INTERPRETERS

The *Guide des services de santé et des services sociaux pour les interprètes* (Health and Social Service Handbook for Interpreters) came out in the fall of 2004. Many interpreters and service providers within the network helped Ms. Renée Bourque prepare this handbook.

The Bank's 2004-2005 figures

SERVICE RECIPIENTS

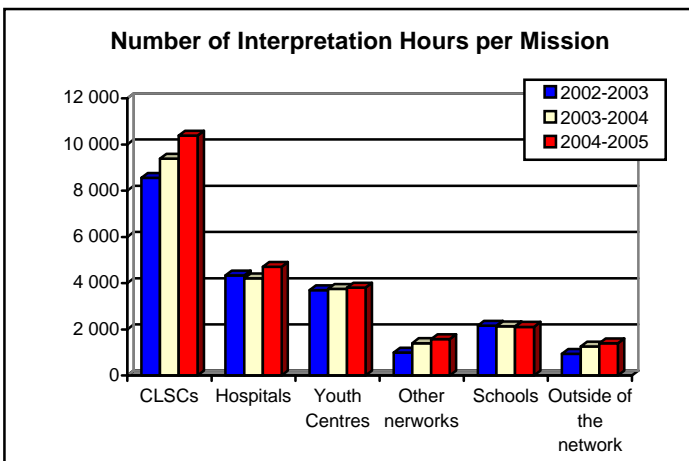
- Over 14 700 allophone clients received interpretation services.
- Approximately 2 000 practitioners requested interpreter assistance to provide service to allophones.
- 302 institutions and schools used interpretation and translation services.

OUR SERVICES

- 18 708 services rendered, an increase of 8.4% in one year,
- 23 977 hours of interpretation, an increase of 8%,
- 110 471 words translated and revised.
- The equivalent of 16.25 full-time interpreters and translators (FTE).

OUR MAIN USER: THE MONTREAL NETWORK

- 96% of services were requested by institutions in Montreal, 3.6% by those in suburbs to the north and south of Montreal's, and 10% by schools.
- 43% of interpretation hours were provided in CLSCs, 17% in hospitals and 17% in youth centres.
- 20 of the 21 general and specialized hospitals, and 27 of the 29 CLSCs in Montreal called on the services of interpreters.
- 45% of the requests for interpretation in Montreal hospitals came from paediatric hospitals.
- 13 community organizations working with mental health clients or victims of family violence requested interpreters.

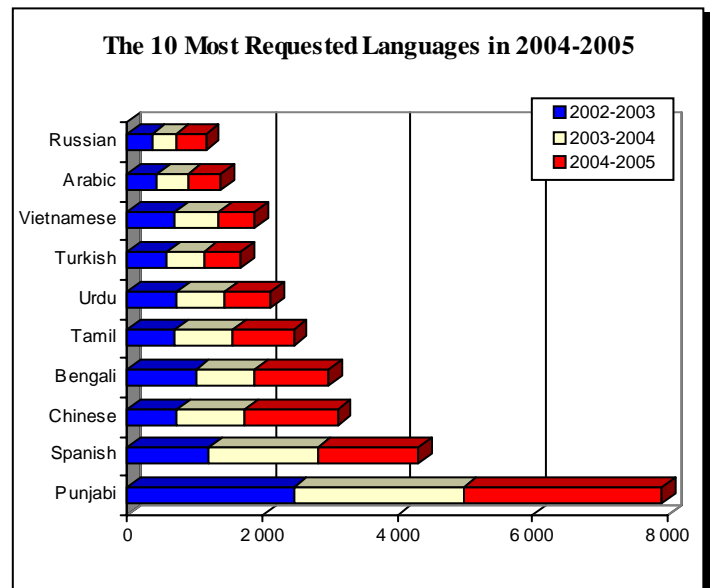


INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS

- 100 interpreters and translators were paid a total of \$651,025 in fees.²
- Four interpreters earned over \$30,000 in fees, five between 20 and \$30,000.
- Average income was \$6,503, and median income was \$2,889.

THE EBB AND FLOW OF REQUESTED LANGUAGES

- 54 service languages requested; ten languages represented 76% of requests.
- Punjabi, the language that is currently in highest demand, represented 22% of requests.
- 33 infrequently requested languages accounted for 5% of requests.



MANAGING INTERPRETATION SERVICES

- An average of 104 calls a day, or 25 670 calls a year.
- A team in charge of:
 - taking calls and assigning interpreters,
 - overseeing translations,
 - paying fees,
 - invoicing institutions,
 - managing the database,
 - generating reports and statistics, and
 - working to develop interpretation services in the community.
- Consultants: psychologist, trainer, etc.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS AND OUTREACH

- A. Kapoor-Kohli, interpreter, published, with G. Roy « *Intervenir avec un interprète : rencontre malgré les interférences* » (Providing Services with an Interpreter, Encounters despite Interference) in *Intervention*. N° 120: 35-46.
- Ms. Bourque, Ms. Clarke and Ms. Hemlin presented *Cultural Developers and Community Interpreter as Translator* at the 4th International Conference *The Critical Link: Interpreters in the Community*.
- Presentation of a workshop at the *Centre Jeunesse de Montréal's* career days.

¹ According to the 2001 Census.

² Canadian dollars.