

Francophone Community Profile
of **Saskatchewan**



FÉDÉRATION DES COMMUNAUTÉS
FRANCOPHONES ET ACADIENNE
du Canada



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Foreword

This profile compiles and presents updated information on the Francophone community of Saskatchewan. It is part of a collection of profiles of Francophone and Acadian communities in Canada published for the first time in 2000 by the *Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne (FCFA) du Canada* and updated in 2004 and 2009.

These provincial and territorial profiles are supplemented by a national profile, which describes the overall situation of Canada's Francophones and examines the status of French in Canada. Following a general introduction to the history and geography of each community, the profile is presented in two sections:

- A statistical portrait describing the vitality of French-speaking communities from various points of view (demography, language, diversity and economy).
- A presentation of community life organized around six themes: major organizations, communications, cultural and community life, education and training, health and social services, legislation and government services.

This updated edition adds data from the 2006 Census.

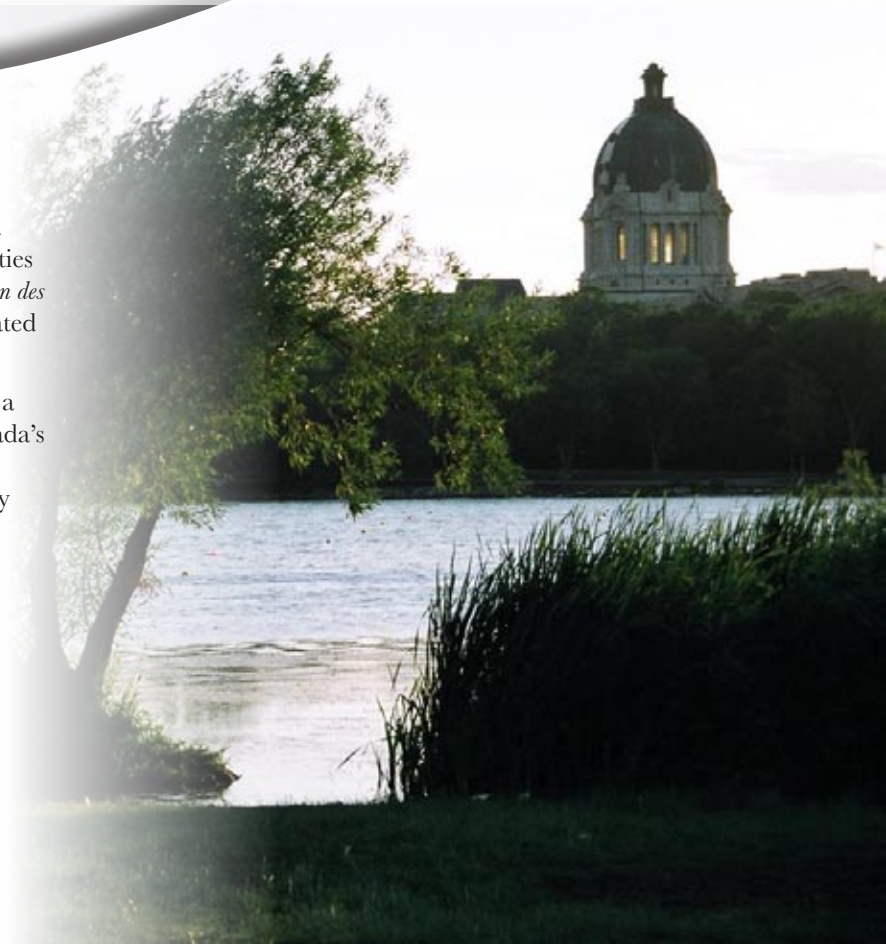


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The *Association canadienne d'éducation de langue française (ACELF)* offers a series of 24 educational activities to accompany use of the *Profiles of the Francophone and Acadian Communities of Canada* in the classroom. These activities are accessible free of charge on ACELF's Banque d'activités pédagogiques (BAP) at www.acelf.ca/bap.

History

The French presence on the territory of modern-day Saskatchewan goes back to the time when France exerted an influence on almost all of North America. Between 1752 and 1755, Louis de la Corne and his cohorts explored the Carrot Valley region, in what is now the Centre-East region of Saskatchewan. They built the Fort de la Corne on the eastern side of the fork where the North Saskatchewan River meets the South Saskatchewan River. In some periods, this site, which was also named Fort Saint-Louis and Nippeween, marked the western extremity of a line of French fortifications in the Northwest. Garrisons at the Fort de la Corne in the middle of the 18th century started growing wheat, a harvest which Saskatchewan became renowned for in the 20th century.

The arrival in 1818 of the first representatives of the Catholic Church in the Northwest heralded the beginning of a new chapter for French. Their first visits to the trading posts in the Qu'Appelle Valley in the south and at the Churchill River in the north resulted in the establishment of permanent missions to serve the Métis population. In 1846, missionaries Alexandre Taché and Louis-François Laffèche established a catholic mission at Île-à-la-Crosse, a trading post and meeting place that attracted native tribes and a large Francophone Métis population. After he became bishop of St. Boniface, Alexandre Taché as well as his successors sought to build a Catholic French-speaking community spanning the Plains from St. Boniface to the foot of the Rockies.

Starting in 1870, new Métis communities settled in regions which later became part of the province of Saskatchewan. Talle-de-Saules (Willow Bunch), Saint-Laurent-de-Grandin and Batoche were created with the arrival of Métis families seeking to preserve a semi-nomadic lifestyle. Their dream of creating a society was lost following their armed resistance against the Government of Canada in Batoche itself in 1885.

A migratory shift toward the Canadian Prairies began at the end of the 19th century and peaked around the 1920s. During this period, Francophones of various origins settled in the newly-created province of Saskatchewan. French Canadians from the St. Lawrence River valley, a good number of which had first settled in the United States, moved to the province under the direction of colonizing missionaries. They created small villages where they set up schools, parishes and businesses. An almost equivalent number of Francophones from Europe (French, Belgian and Swiss) immigrated to Saskatchewan, joining the French Canadians or establishing their own villages.

The opening of the territory with the construction of the railway brought an influx of immigrants of mostly non-Francophone settlers to Saskatchewan, which the weak influx of French-language settlers was unable to counter. The act creating Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905 retained the earlier constitutional provisions regarding the use of French in public education, public administration and justice. However, these provisions were disregarded by the authorities. During the early decades of the 20th century, the right of Francophones in Saskatchewan to use French as a language of education was severely limited. They created associations to support their struggle for survival as a community: *Le Patriote de l'Ouest*, a French-language newspaper, was established in 1910, followed by the *Association catholique franco-canadienne de la Saskatchewan* in 1912. The *Association des commissaires d'écoles franco-canadiens* was created in 1918, at the moment when the threat to French-language education was at its highest. A French-language collège classique, the Collège Mathieu, was established in Gravelbourg the same year.

In 1952, two French-language radio stations were created to serve Francophones in Gravelbourg and Saskatoon. It was only in the 1960s that the necessary amendments to the Saskatchewan school act were made in order to allow French-language education. During the 1970s, the Fransaskois community established a series of cultural centres under the *Conseil culturel fransaskois*, which was created in 1974. It was about at this time that Francophones in Saskatchewan began to refer to themselves as « Fransaskois ». A new weekly newspaper, *l'Eau Vive*, and an annual summer celebration, the *Fête Fransaskoise*, were also created.

The year 1982 saw the beginning of a judicial struggle for the full implementation of linguistic and constitutional rights. Fransaskois parents began a long process to obtain governance of their own schools, which became a reality in 1993. In June 1999, the *Association culturelle franco-canadienne* (ACFC) became the *Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise* (ACF), which today remains the chief representative of the Fransaskois community and oversees the global development of the French-language community in Saskatchewan.

Geography

According to the last census, there were 17,575 people in Saskatchewan with French as their mother tongue in 2006. However, a total of 15,225 people have French as their first spoken official language, meaning that they mostly use French in daily life whether it is their mother tongue or not. The Fransaskois community accounts for a bit less than 2 percent of the total population of Saskatchewan, which numbered 953,850 in 2006. The same census reports that close to 48,000 residents of the province are able to speak both official languages.

Francophone villages are essentially concentrated in three regions of the province. The first one developed at the end of the 19th century along the North and South Saskatchewan rivers and includes the villages of Batoche, Duck Lake, Saint-Isidore-de-Bellevue and Saint-Louis. This zone eventually came to encompass the cities of Saskatoon, North Battleford and Prince Albert. It also includes the villages of Saint-Denis, Vonda, Prud'homme as well as the more distant communities in Zenon Park, Saint-Brieux, Debden and Delmas.

The second Francophone settlement in Saskatchewan is in the southeast of the province, in a series of villages like Bellegarde, Cantal, Alida, Forget and Montmartre, created at the dawn of the 20th century by European immigrants mainly from France and Belgium.

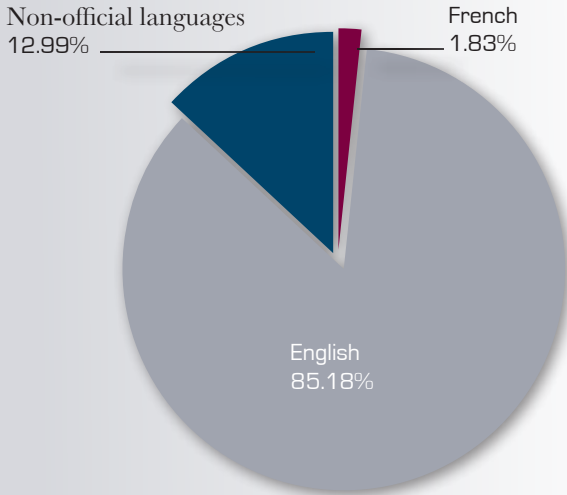
The third settlement is found in the southwest of the province, around the villages of Gravelbourg, Ponteix, Val-Marie, Saint-Victor and Willow Bunch.

The Francophone population of the main urban centres of Saskatchewan – Regina, Saskatoon and Moose Jaw – has grown considerably as a result of Francophones migrating in from the villages. New Francophone immigrants also tend to settle more in the urban areas. These cities have developed community infrastructures which allow the French language to thrive. There are also child care facilities, Fransaskois schools (elementary and secondary), school-community centres, cultural centres and parishes.



Demographic Vitality

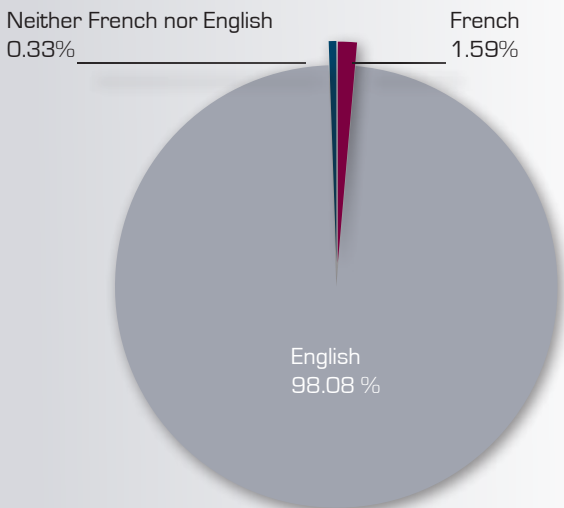
Population by Mother Tongue, 2006, Saskatchewan



Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

Note: Some people declared having more than one mother tongue. As a result, the total of the categories exceeds provincial population.

Population by First Official Language Spoken, 2006, Saskatchewan



Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

Note: Some people have more than one first official language spoken. As a result, the total of the categories exceeds provincial population.

The French language

The population of Saskatchewan is fairly homogeneous in terms of language. Of the 953,850 residents of the province, slightly less than 135,000 do not have English as a mother tongue. Francophones account for less than 2 percent of the population.

French	17,575
English.....	819,080
Non-official languages.....	124,930
Total population	953,850

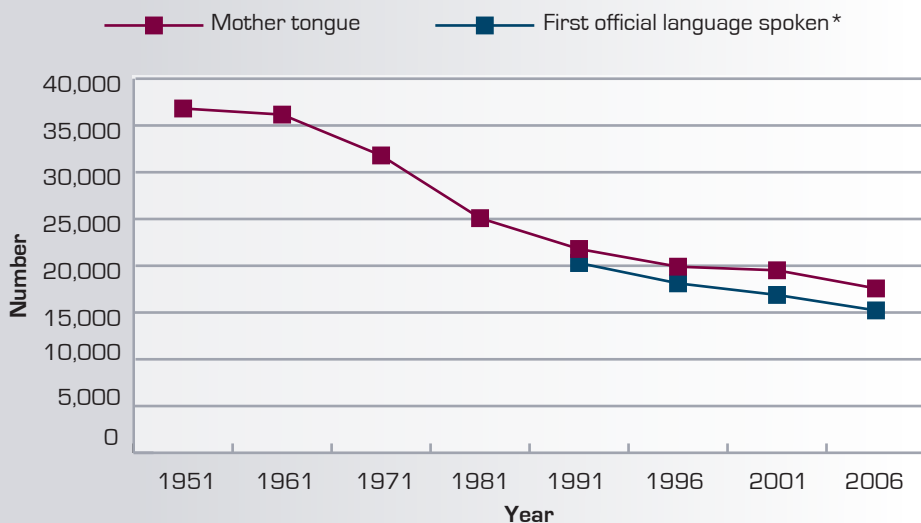
French	15,225
English.....	936,245
Neither French nor English.....	3,130

The population decline slows down...

The population with French as a mother tongue went from 36,815 in 1951 to 17,575 in 2006, with the sharpest drop occurring after 1961. This decrease, which can be attributed to declining birth rates among Francophones, has slowed down somewhat since 1991. However, during the same period the number of Francophones with French as their first spoken official language – a figure which measures the use of French in daily life – decreased from 20,290 to 15,225.

This decline in numbers must be interpreted in light of changes affecting the population of the province as a whole. Moreover, the community is only beginning to establish institutions to ensure transmission of the French language.

French as Mother Tongue and French as First Official Language Spoken, 1951-2006, Saskatchewan



Data from: Marmen and Corbeil, 2004 and Statistics Canada

... toward a stabilization of percentages?

Since 1951, the percentage of residents of Saskatchewan with French as their mother tongue has dropped from 4.4 to 1.8 percent. The largest decrease occurred between 1971 and 1981. The slower rate of decline may indicate that the demographic weight of Francophones will soon stabilize.

Francophone percentages are higher in certain rural areas of the province where the French language plays an important role in the daily life of those communities.

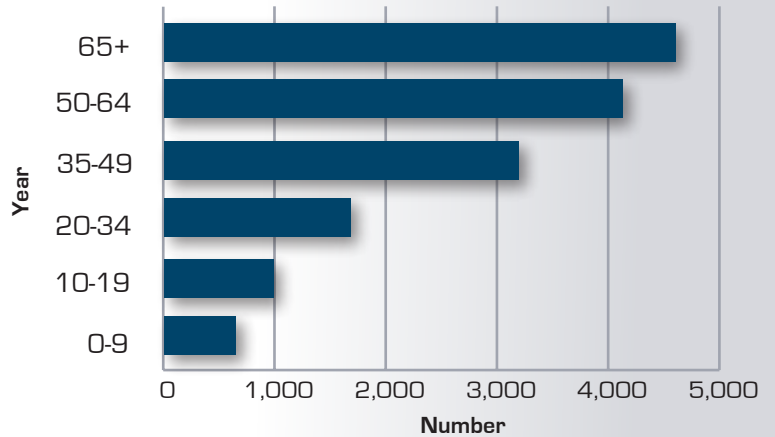
*The first official language spoken variable did not exist prior to 1991



An aging population

The Fransaskois community is largely composed of adults. The median age of this community, 53 years, is much higher than the provincial average of 38 years. Francophones over 50 account for more than 55 percent of the population; it is therefore not surprising that one of the community's greatest challenges is renewing its base.

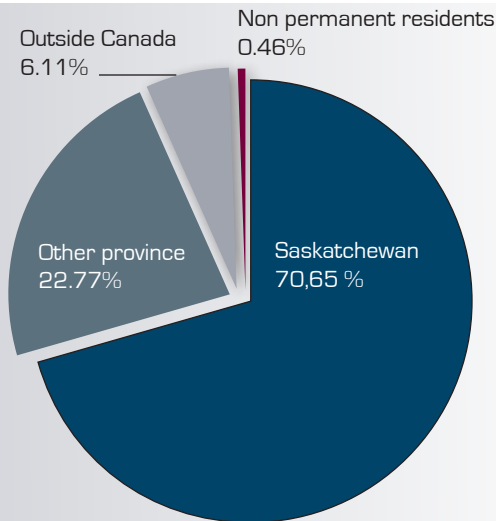
Age Distribution, 2006, Francophones, Saskatchewan



Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

Francophone Diversity

Place of Birth of Francophones, 2006, Saskatchewan



Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

A community with deep roots : born in the province

Seven out of 10 Francophones were born in Saskatchewan. People born elsewhere in Canada account for 23 percent of the population. Only about 6 percent of all Francophones were born outside the country; however, the percentage of French-speaking immigrants has doubled since the last census.

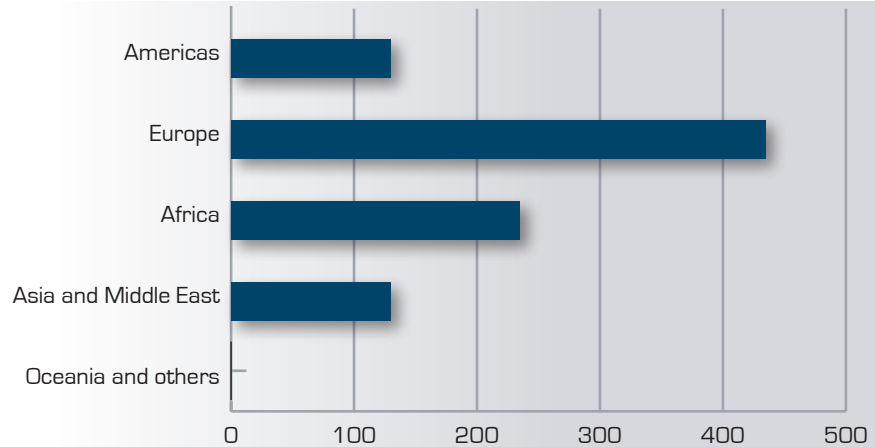
The Fransaskois community is solidly rooted in the province and this is reflected in its sense of identity and belonging.

A community that is becoming somewhat more diverse

In the past 60 years, only a bit more than 900 Francophones have settled in Saskatchewan. Almost half of them were of European origin, and 55 more came from the United States. Close to 100 came from Latin American countries.

In addition, 1,380 people with French as their first spoken official language have aboriginal roots.

Francophone Immigrants, 2006, Saskatchewan



Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

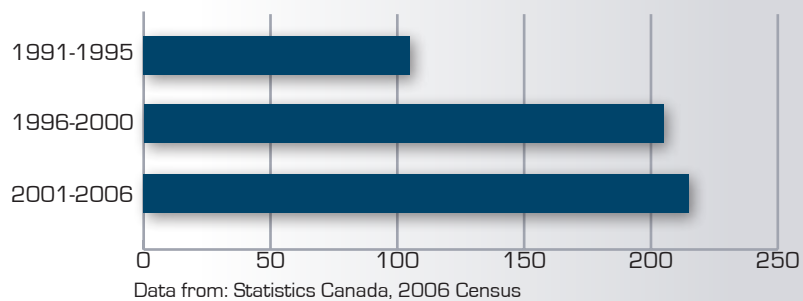
Note: These are people who have been granted immigrant status in Canada, whose first known official language is French.



Immigration is slowly increasing

Forty-five percent of all Francophone immigrants in the province settled after 1996 ; this confirms the increasing role of immigration in the vitality of French in Saskatchewan.

Francophone Immigrants by Immigration Period, Saskatchewan



The evolution of immigration

Historically, Saskatchewan was a land of settlement for Francophones from Quebec, Europe, New England, the American Midwest, Ontario and Manitoba. However, this first wave of immigration ended with the Depression in the 1930s. In the last 60 years, the demography has remained stable in terms of numbers – the regular influx of newcomers was countered by an equally important number of people leaving the province. In fact, until recently there was a decrease in the overall population of Saskatchewan.

At the very end of the 20th century, the province once again started receiving immigrants from all over the world. Since the dawn of the 21st century, more and more Francophones from Maghreb, Central Africa and other Francophone countries have chosen to settle in Saskatchewan.

Newcomers can rely on existing French-language institutions. Francophone parishes and Fransaskois schools often act as the entrance point to the local Francophone community. In order to better meet the needs of newcomers, the Francophone associative network has developed specialized services. Namely, the *Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise* has an immigration sector able to help newcomers; in Saskatoon and Regina, groups have been created to facilitate integration of newcomers by different means.

Saskatchewan receives many inter-provincial migrants; several families arrive in Saskatchewan after first settling in another province.

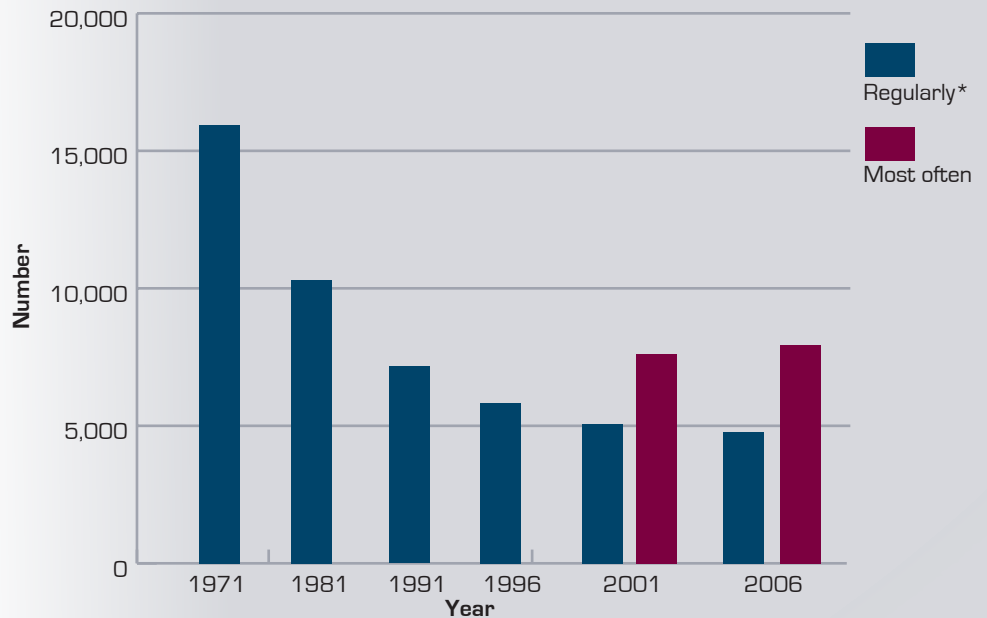
Linguistic Vitality

Slight stabilization of French spoken at home

In 2006, 4,780 persons said they spoke French most often at home. Even though this number is in constant decrease, it should be noted that this decrease has slowed significantly since 1996.

In addition, a total of 7,945 persons, including 3,870 Anglophones, said they spoke French regularly at home even though this language isn't the most commonly used. This number has increased since 2001, when Statistics Canada introduced this new variable. Thus, French is maintaining its place in Saskatchewan homes.

French Spoken at Home, 1971-2006, Saskatchewan

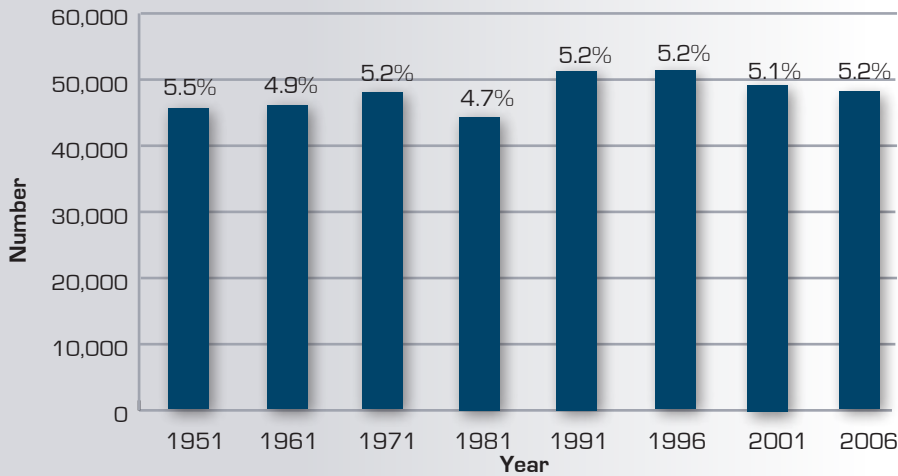


Data from: Marmen and Corbeil, 2004 and Statistic Canada

*Statistics Canada started collecting data on other languages spoken regularly at home in 2001



Knowledge of French, 1951-2006, Saskatchewan

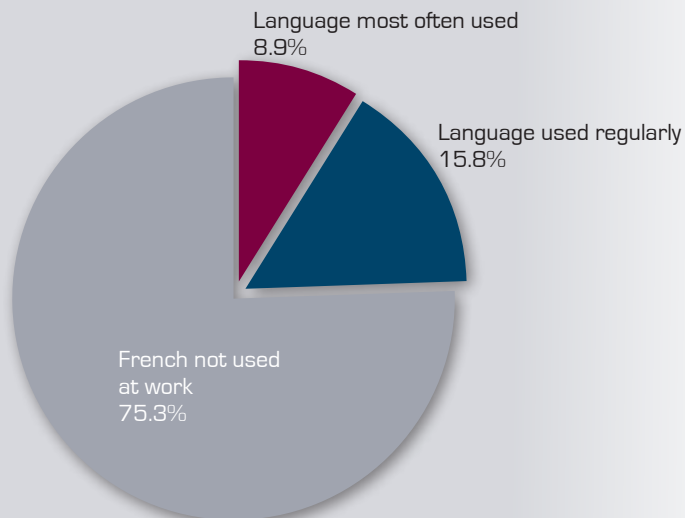


Data from: Marmen and Corbeil, 2004 and Statistics Canada

... and more people know French

In Saskatchewan, the number of people with knowledge of French (alone or with English) has decreased between 2001 and 2006. This reflects the general decrease in the population of the province, which went from 963,150 to 953,850 in the same period. The number of people with knowledge of French has remained more or less stable since 1951.

Use of French at Work, Active Population with Knowledge of French, 2006, Saskatchewan



Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

A minority of people use French at work

In 2006, some 6,975 people in Saskatchewan said they used French most often or at least regularly at work. Even though this figure accounts for 24.7 percent of workers with knowledge of French, only 1.3 percent of Saskatchewan's active population uses this language at work.

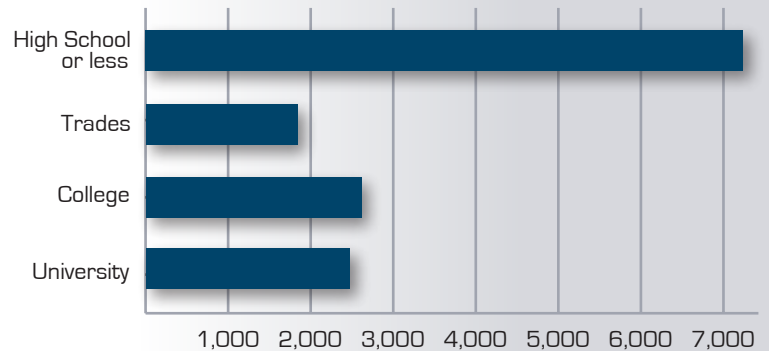
Economic Vitality

Education a challenge

A relatively high percentage of Saskatchewan's Francophone population did not complete high school (29.7 percent), but many Francophones have a trade school diploma. The percentage of Francophones who have gone to university (17 percent) is higher than the general provincial average.

This educational profile varies greatly from a region to the other. The percentage of Francophones without a high school degree is particularly high in the rural areas of Saskatchewan, reaching as much as 34 percent in the census division that includes the villages of Gravelbourg, Willow Bunch and Ponteix.

Education, 2006, Francophones 15 and older, 2006, Saskatchewan



Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

Labour Force by Sector of Activity, 2006, Francophones, Saskatchewan

Sector	Number	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	1,235	14.3%
Mining and oil and gas extraction	270	3.1%
Utilities	60	0.7%
Construction	490	5.7%
Manufacturing	310	3.6%
Wholesale Trade	265	3.1%
Retail Trade	675	7.8%
Transportation	395	4.6%
Information Industry	145	1.7%
Finance and Insurance	355	4.1%
Real Estate	125	1.5%
Professional Services	300	3.5%
Management of Companies	10	0.1%
Administrative Services	225	2.6%
Education Services	1,320	15.3%
Health Care	820	9.5%
Arts	165	1.9%
Accommodation	315	3.7%
Other services	430	5.0%
Public Administration	660	7.7%
All sectors	8,570	100.0 %

Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

Fransaskois employment sectors

Francophones in Saskatchewan work in a wide variety of sectors. They are significantly active in the production of goods, especially in agriculture (14.3 percent).

Francophones are also employed in large numbers in the public services; 32.7 percent of them work in public administration, education, health and social services. They are also active in wholesale and retail trade, as well as construction.

In Saskatchewan today, 1,720 francophones own their own business or are self-employed, representing 20 percent of the French-speaking work force. A large number of them employ other people, stimulating the provincial economy.

Occupations

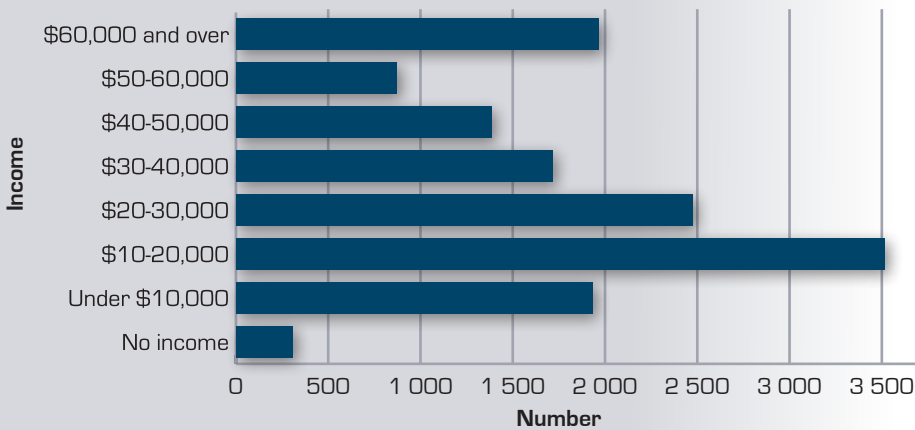
This profile of the economic vitality of Saskatchewan's Francophones would be incomplete without a review of their occupations. Four sectors clearly stand out: sales and services, which employ one out of five Francophone workers; the primary industry occupations support 14 percent of the labour force, the same percentage as the trades, transportation and equipment operation sector; finally, 1,230 Francophones are active in finance, business and administration, a sector where incomes are often high.

Labour Force by Occupation, 2006, Francophones, Saskatchewan

	Number	%
Management	740	8.6%
Finance, business and administration	1,230	14.3%
Natural and applied sciences	395	4.6%
Health	420	4.9%
Social sciences, education and government services	1,145	13.3%
Arts and culture	220	2.6%
Sales and services	1,805	21.0%
Trades, transportation and equipment operation	1,245	14.5%
Primary industry occupations	1,230	14.3%
Manufacturing industries occupations	115	1.3%
All occupations	8,545	100.0%

Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

Total Individual Income, 2006, Francophones, Saskatchewan



Data from: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

Income

The average annual income of Saskatchewan's Francophones is \$36,394, close to \$5,000 higher than the provincial average.

A bit more than half of the province's Francophones earn less than \$30,000, and one out of seven Francophones have an annual income under \$10,000. However, 14 percent of them have an income exceeding \$60,000.

The economy has grown wealthier since 2005

Saskatchewan turned a landmark page in its economic history in 2005 by becoming a wealthy province in its centennial year. The rise in the price of oil and the increase in demand for commodities has created a boom in several economic sectors. The business sector as well as the housing and services sectors all benefited from this.

In order to encourage entrepreneurship among Francophones, the *Conseil de la Coopération de la Saskatchewan* offers advising services to businesses and individuals and thus contributes to the development of the business sector. Every year, the Conseil engages in activities to familiarize Francophone youth with the business sector, and distributes awards to business people in recognition of a significant contribution within the community.

Action emplois SK is a job recruitment and placement service offered by the Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise, with offices in Ponteix, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Regina and Bellevue. It offers support to businesses looking for skilled workers and helps individuals looking for employment. Action emplois SK also helps applicants adapt to their new environment and prepare for a new job.

Social and Community Vitality

The representative organization

The *Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise*, the main representative organization of the Fransaskois community, was established in Duck Lake in 1912 to defend the rights of Francophones. Since its creation, ACF has been known under many names – in the beginning, it was called the *Association catholique franco-canadienne de la Saskatchewan*, but in 1962 it became the *Association culturelle franco-canadienne de la Saskatchewan*. In 1999, it adopted its current name: *Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise*.

ACF's mandate is to defend and ensure recognition of the rights and aspirations of the Fransaskois community. It is entirely committed to the development of Saskatchewan's Francophone community.

Assemblée communautaire francosaskoise

220-3850 Hillsdale St.
Regina, SK S4S 7J5
Phone: (306) 924-8534
Fax: (306) 781-7916
E-mail: acf@sasktel.net
Website: www.fransaskois.sk.ca

Provincial organizations

Association des parents francosaskois et le Centre de ressources éducatives à la petite enfance (CREPE)

910 East 5th St.
Saskatoon SK S7H 2C6
Phone: (306) 653 7444
Fax: (306) 653-7001
Website: www.parentsfransaskois.ca

Association des juristes d'expression française de la Saskatchewan

120-3850 Hillsdale St.
Regina SK S4S 7J5
Phone: (306) 924-8543
Fax: (306) 781-7916
E-mail: ajefs@sasktel.net
Website: www.ajefs.ca

Association jeunesse francosaskoise

102-308 North 4th Ave.
Saskatoon SK S7K 2L7
Phone: (306) 653-7447
Fax: (306) 653-7448
E-mail: direction@ajf.ca
Website: www.ajf.ca



Conseil culturel francosaskois

210-3850 Hillsdale St.
Regina SK S4S 7J5
Phone: (306) 565-8916
Fax: (306) 565-2922
E-mail: direction@culturel.sk.ca
Website: www.culturel.sk.ca/

Collège Mathieu (Le)

(Service francosaskois de formation aux adultes et le Lien)

Bag 20
Gravelbourg SK S0H 1X0
Phone: (306) 648-3129
Fax: (306) 648-2295
E-mail: secretariat@collegemathieu.sk.ca
Website: www.collegemathieu.sk.ca/

Conseil de la Coopération de la Saskatchewan

230-3850 Hillsdale St.
Regina SK S4S 7J5
Phone: (306) 566-6001
Fax: (306) 757-4322
E-mail: dg@ccs-sk.ca
Website: www.ccs-sk.ca/index.php

Conseil des écoles francsaskoises

200-3850 Hillsdale St.
Regina SK S4S 7J5
Phone: (306) 757-7541 ou
Toll free: 1 877 273-6661
Fax: (306) 757-2040
E-mail: cef.regina@atrium.ca
Website: www.cefsk.ca

Coopérative des publications francsaskoises et l'Eau Vive

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Regina SK S4N 0P6
Phone: (306) 347-0481
Fax: (306) 565-3450
E-mail: direction@leauvive.net
Website: www.leauvive.net

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Fax: (306) 585-1657
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Website: www.nouvelleplume.com

Fédération des aînés francsaskois

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Fax: (306) 664-6447
E-mail: aines@sasktel.net

Fédération provinciale des Francsaskoises

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Phone: (306) 648-2466
Toll free: 1 866 490-4373
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Réseau Santé en Français de la Saskatchewan

103-308 North 4th Ave.
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Website: www.rsfs.ca/

Société historique de la Saskatchewan

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E-mail: info@societehisto.com
Website: www.societehisto.com/

Troupe du jour

914 West 20th St.
Saskatoon SK S7K 3L3
Phone: (306) 244-1040
Fax: (306) 652-1725
E-mail: communication@latroupedujour.ca
Website: www.latroupedujour.ca/



Communications

Newspapers and magazines

- *L'Eau vive*, a weekly published by the *Coopérative des publications fransaskoises*, covers Fransaskois news and current events.
- The *Revue historique* is published every three months by the *Société historique de la Saskatchewan* and features articles about the history of the Francophone community of Saskatchewan.
- Twelve monthly community newsletters promote local activities and cover community topics.
- Ten monthly publications are issued by provincial associations to promote their activities and programs.

Radio

- Radio Canada has a regional radio station in Regina, CBKB, which broadcasts 6 hours of local programming Monday to Friday. Three programs are produced in Regina: *Point du jour*, *le Midi Plus* and *Jour de plaine*. The news service covers current event in Saskatchewan seven days a week from its newsrooms in Regina and Saskatoon. Radio Canada also holds an annual *Francothon* (a radio funding drive) benefiting the *Fondation fransaskoise* and many community projects. The station also produces special programming and contributes to the national network.
- In Gravelbourg, the community radio station CFRG broadcasts a variety of programming produced by volunteers. The station broadcasts in both official languages of Canada.

Television

- Radio Canada in Regina produces a daily local news program, *Le Téléjournal Saskatchewan* (60 minutes), and contributes to programs broadcast throughout Western Canada, including the youth program *Oniva*. The French fact in Saskatchewan is also present on Radio Canada's national network through a variety of contributions to national programming.



The Mini Francotièvre is one of the many cultural events organized by the provincial organizations / photo: Yvan Lebel

Cultural and community life

- The Fransaskois community has set up a network of 13 community associations and 16 provincial associations. There are also a number of institutions dedicated to the community's development. Regional community associations have offices and venues that are open to the public. There are three school-community centres, in Prince Alberta, Moose Jaw and Regina. The villages of Debden, Bellevue, Ponteix and Gravelbourg boast modern cultural centres housing several services to the community. Francophones also own an office building in downtown Saskatoon, which namely houses a cultural centre.
- A large number of cultural events are held each year by provincial organizations: the *Festival théâtral jeunesse*, the *Jeux fransaskois*, the *Camp voyageur*, the *Gala fransaskois de la chanson*, the *Journées du patrimoine*, *Francotièvre* and the *Mini francotièvre* are a few examples. The year 2009 marks the return of the *Fête fransaskoise*.
- There is a professional theatre group, *La Troupe du Jour*, which offers quality theatre productions every year in Saskatoon. Other Francophone theatre groups include *Théâtre Oskana* in Regina. These groups offer a wide diversity of theatre and entertainment in French.
- The Fransaskois community boasts two folk dance groups: *Les danseurs de la rivière la Vieille* (Gravelbourg) and *La Ribambelle* (Saskatoon).
- A good number of Fransaskois artists write, record and perform on stage. Folk bands like *la Raquette à claquettes* and *Cireux de semelles* are more and more well-known. Other musicians like Annette Campagne, François Tremblay, Anique Granger, Jeff Staflund or Michel Marchildon already have several records out.
- A publishing house *Les Éditions de la nouvelle plume*, publishes the works (novels, theatre, youth literature) of Western Canadian authors.
- The Fransaskois community's cultural and artistic development is supported by the *Conseil culturel Fransaskois*, which is responsible for coordinating a good part of the cultural activity across the province. *The Conseil culturel fransaskois* heads the *Réseau de diffusion de spectacle de la Saskatchewan*, which allows community centres to offer French-language shows every year. Many local artists are represented by the *Conseil culturel Fransaskois*.

Education and training

- The 1995 Education Act establishes three equal legal education entities in Saskatchewan: public school divisions, separate school divisions and a French-language school board, the *Conseil des écoles francsaskoises*. The Conseil can be reached at 1-877-273-6661 or on the web at <http://www.cefsk.ca>. The Conseil administers nine Francophone education areas and a total of 12 schools. In most regions, classes go from pre-school to 12th grade.
- In August 2004, the secondary level of the *Collège Mathieu*, a private institution, was integrated to the *Conseil des écoles francsaskoises*. This made the *École secondaire Collège Mathieu* the most recent addition to the Fransaskois component of the education system. In 2008, a secondary building was added to the *École canadienne-française de Saskatoon*. In 2009, Gravelbourg's French-language elementary school, the *École Beausoleil*, moved into the *École secondaire Collège Mathieu*. *École Monseigneur de Laval* will undergo an expansion which will create new spaces for high-school classes (8th to 12th grades).
- Preschool classes are offered in all of the *Conseil des écoles francsaskoises*' schools. In Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Ponteix the infrastructures also include a child care centre and a daycare.
- The nine education areas correspond to the geographic areas in which there is a group of parents wanting to have their children educated in French schools as guaranteed by Article 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
- The *Conseil scolaire francsaskois* manages and administers education issues related to French-language schools. The CSF is comprised of nine members, each representing one of the Francophone education areas.
- The *Conseils d'école (CÉ)* represent parents at the Conseil scolaire francsaskois. Members handle various matters affecting their own school. A school's CÉ consists of three to eight parents whose children attend the school.



Photo : Conseil des écoles francsaskoises

Post-secondary education

- The *Service francsaskois de formation aux adultes (SEFFA)* offers and coordinates French-language education for adults. Classes range from literacy to popular or accredited courses.
- At the University of Regina, the *Institut français* ensures visibility and promotion of the French language, and offers cultural programs and various types of support to Francophone and francophile students on campus. The *Institut français* is noted for its research sector, which supports the global development of the Fransaskois community. The contribution of the *Institut français* has been significant in several files, including the Commission sur l'inclusion and the establishment of closer ties between the Métis and Francophone communities.

Les soins de santé et les services sociaux

The *Réseau Santé en français de la Saskatchewan* (RSFS) is responsible for coordinating the development of health care services in French in the province. Its mandate is to promote, protect and increase access to French-language health care services in Saskatchewan. The RSFS focuses its activities in the field of primary health and relies on the broad definition adopted by the World Health Organization: “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and is not defined solely by an absence of disease or infirmity.”

The RSFS’ activities are grouped around five main themes: access to quality care, collaboration between partners in health care, emphasis on adapted solutions, respect of the missions of institutions and development of an active offer. The RSFS offers training to health care professionals and publishes a directory of practitioners in Saskatchewan who can offer services in French.



Legislation and government services

Federal Government

Federal departments and agencies offer services to the public in both languages at several offices in both big and small areas. The establishment of Service Canada and the centralization of points of service to the public have significantly increased the ability of federal institutions to offer the majority of their services in both official languages in Saskatchewan. According to the Public Service Agency, 4 percent of the 4,503 federal government positions in Saskatchewan are designated bilingual. The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages has a regional office in Saskatchewan. Several federal departments contribute to the development of the Fransaskois community by supporting key community projects or by offering programs that allow community initiatives to develop.

Provincial Government

Even though in principle, the French language was for a long time an official language of the Province of Saskatchewan, the reality is that successive governments never recognized this fact. The *Language Act* of 1988 was the first provincial act to define the place of French in Saskatchewan. The Act stated that all new laws could be adopted in English only or in English and French, and recognized the right of individuals to use French before the courts and in the Legislative Assembly. The Government of Saskatchewan and the federal government have established framework agreements on education, the administration of justice and the provision of French-language services.

The Francophone Affairs Branch (FAB) was established in 1989 and serves as a liaison between the provincial government and the province's French-speaking population. The FAB provides support to all provincial government ministries and agencies that are looking to offer and improve French-language services. The FAB is also responsible for guiding and monitoring the implementation of the *Government of Saskatchewan French-language Services Policy*, which was adopted in 2004.

Municipalities

There is currently no legislation requiring municipalities to offer French-language services in Saskatchewan. However, many Francophone organizations seek to work with municipalities in areas of common interest, like cultural and economic development, tourism, promotion, etc.

Legal services

It is possible to obtain a trial in French in Saskatchewan. To facilitate access to the courts in French, Saskatchewan's Francophone jurists came together to create the *Association des juristes d'expression française de la Saskatchewan* (l'AJEFS). Among the association's members are judges, lawyers and French-speaking employees of the judicial system. The AJEFS plays an important role in raising awareness and offers judicial and legal information aimed at the public at large.

In many ways, the judicial system has played a key role for Francophones as it has allowed them to gain recognition of their most fundamental rights, including their right to governance of their own schools. It is also through the courts that Francophones were able to promote the legitimacy of French in Saskatchewan. A number of famous cases served as a springboard for the Fransaskois community, allowing it to assert its presence and advocate for services.

The Caron case, which is still before the courts in Alberta in 2009, is the most recent example of the role played by the judicial system in the recognition of the rights of Francophones in Western Canada. Based on historical proof, the Caron case seeks to demonstrate that the French language is protected by the constitution and has an official status in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

The Last 30 Years

1979 : A youth rally called “*On s’garoche à Batoche*” is held in Batoche and Saint-Laurent-de-Grandin and marks the creation of the *Fête francaskoise*, a French-language cultural festival that becomes an essential meeting place for the Fransaskois community.

1980 : The *Bureau de la minorité de la langue officielle* (BMLO), which had long been requested by the *Association culturelle franco-canadienne de la Saskatchewan* (ACFC), is set up by the Department of Education. Its role is to develop and perfect French-language education programs. A number of immersion schools gain an enriched French program, and a network of French-language schools is created across the province. The BMLO is now the French Education Branch (FEB).

1982 : The *Association des parents francaskois* (formerly known as the *Commission des écoles francaskoises*) is created. Following the adoption of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, parents undertake a long effort to secure governance of French-language schools in the province. Their efforts result in an amendment to the School Act in 1993 and the establishment of a provincial school board (the *Conseil des écoles francaskoises*) in January 1995.

1982 : Radio Canada’s local television station begins broadcasting in Saskatchewan. It produces a daily local newscast and various local programs, while also offering Radio Canada’s national French-language programming and contributing to local radio programming.

1988 : The Supreme Court of Canada renders its decision in the *Mercure* case (Father André Mercure had refused to pay a traffic ticket written in English only). The Court decides in favor of André Mercure; this forces the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta to adopt language acts.

The first Canada/community Agreements are signed between the Fransaskois community and the Government of Canada. These funding agreements aimed at the network of community organizations increases the community’s financial means and allows provincial and regional associations to secure the resources to undertake long-term projects.

1989 : The Language Institute building is inaugurated on the University of Regina Campus. This multi-purpose building houses a residence, a cultural centre, classrooms, a theatre and administrative offices. Today, the building houses the *Institut français*, the Education Bachelor’s degree as well as the French Department. The *Institut français* is a rallying point for all Francophones on campus.

1999 : The members of the *Association culturelle franco-canadienne de la Saskatchewan* decide to create a new structure to represent the community. The *Assemblée communautaire francaskoise* is established with a structure reflecting that of a government – the province is divided in 12 electoral districts in which French speakers democratically elect their representatives.

2008 : The *Assemblée communautaire francaskoise* joins the *Association canadienne française de l’Alberta* and Gilles Caron in the Caron case, which challenges the legality of current language laws in Saskatchewan and Alberta. This case relies on historic proof which suggests that linguistic rights granted to Francophones in the West in the 19th century were constitutional rights and are still valid today. This historic proof has never been used before the courts until now.

Sources

For the first and second editions of this document, published respectively in 2000 and 2004, the brief historical notes on the Francophone and Acadian communities of Canada are mostly taken from historical recollections on the Francophone experience in the provinces and territories compiled by the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development. Philippe Falardeau's review, entitled *Hier la francophonie* and published by FCFA as part of its *Dessain 2000* project, and Yves Frenette's *La brève histoire des Canadiens français* published by Éditions Boréal, were also sources of inspiration. Finally, several texts compiled by Joseph Yvon Thériault in *Francophonies minoritaires au Canada – L'état des lieux*, published by Éditions de l'Acadie, were also useful, as was the study by René Guindon and Pierre Poulin, entitled *Les liens dans la francophonie canadienne*.

For the third edition, the texts featured in the sections on history and geography were updated by FCFA and its members to take into account significant developments in the past few years and new data from the 2006 Census.

All of the statistics used in the preparation of this national profile are those of Statistics Canada. The following sources were used:

1. The national, provincial and territorial data on mother tongue, first official language spoken, language spoken at home, knowledge of French, use of French at work, median age, labour force by sector of activity and by occupation, as well as income, were provided to FCFA in preformatted tables by the statistical research team at the Official Languages Support Program (Department of Canadian Heritage).
2. All regional data on the first official language spoken and the age distribution of Francophones were compiled using the table *First Official Language Spoken (7), Mother Tongue (10), Age Groups (17A) and Sex (3) for the Population*, Cat. No. 97-555-X2006030 at Statistics Canada.
3. Data on the number of residents of Saskatchewan with English as a mother tongue speaking French regularly at home were compiled using the table *Detailed Language Spoken Most Often at Home (186), Other Language Spoken Regularly at Home (9), Mother Tongue (8), Age Groups (17A) and Sex (3) for the Population*, Cat. No. 97-555-X2006045 at Statistics Canada.
4. Data on French-speaking immigrants by period of immigration, on the place of birth of Francophones and on the place of origin of French-speaking newcomers were compiled using the table *Selected Demographic, Cultural, Educational, Labour Force and Income Characteristics (780), First Official Language Spoken (4), Age Groups (8A) and Sex (3) for Population*, Cat. No. 97-555-X2006054 at Statistics Canada.
5. Data on the evolution of Saskatchewan's linguistic composition from 1951 to 2001 (mother tongue, language spoken at home, first official language spoken, etc.) were taken from *New Canadian Perspectives: Languages in Canada, 2001 Census*, by Louise Marmen and Jean-Pierre Corbeil.

It should be noted that when calculating data on mother tongue, language spoken at home or first official language spoken, whether one includes multiple answers (for example, Francophones who have also indicated English as their mother tongue) can account for a variation in numbers. Marmen and Corbeil apportion multiple answers among the declared languages. However, the data presented by FCFA for 2006 include everyone with French as mother tongue/first official language spoken/language spoken at home, even if other languages are mentioned.

Information on community life, on structures that exist to facilitate Francophone immigration and on economic vitality were compiled by FCFA with the help of the *Assemblée communautaire francaskoise (ACF)* and its members.