



Taking Aim: French-Speaking Migration Targets for Thunder Bay, 2016 to 2026

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By: Mercedes Labelle



**RÉSEAU
du NORD**

Soutien à l'immigration
FRANCOPHONE

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Our main offices:

- Thunder Bay is on Robinson-Superior Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg and Fort William First Nation.
- Sudbury is on the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of the Atikameksheng Anishnaabeg as well as Wahnapiatae First Nation.
- Kirkland Lake is on the Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land is the traditional territory of Cree, Ojibway, and Algonquin Peoples.
- All are home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

We recognize and appreciate the historic connection that Indigenous people have to these territories. We recognize the contributions that they have made in shaping and strengthening these communities, the province and the country as a whole.

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The Northern Analyst Cooperative, a project of Northern Policy Institute, will allow members to “time share” a professional policy analyst. By merging our collective resources we can ensure that the smallest municipality or local charity can access high-end skills at an affordable price.

About Northern Policy Institute:

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, and Kirkland Lake. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

Project Partner:

Réseau du Nord

Réseau du Nord creates links between organizations from all regions of Northern Ontario, such as: Sudbury, Timmins, North Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and Thunder Bay, to put in place a system to facilitate the reception and integration of newcomers.

Réseau du Nord follows the objectives of the strategic plan developed by the Steering Committee:

- Increase the number of French-speaking immigrants so as to increase the demographic weight of the Francophone communities in a minority situation.
- Improve the capacity of French-speaking communities in a minority situation and strengthen welcoming and settlement structures for French-speaking newcomers.
- Ensure the economic integration of French-speaking immigrants within Canadian society and Francophone communities in minority situations in particular.
- Ensure the social and cultural integration of French-speaking immigrants within Canadian society and Francophone communities in minority situations.
- Foster regionalization of Francophone immigration outside of Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver.

About the Author

Mercedes Labelle

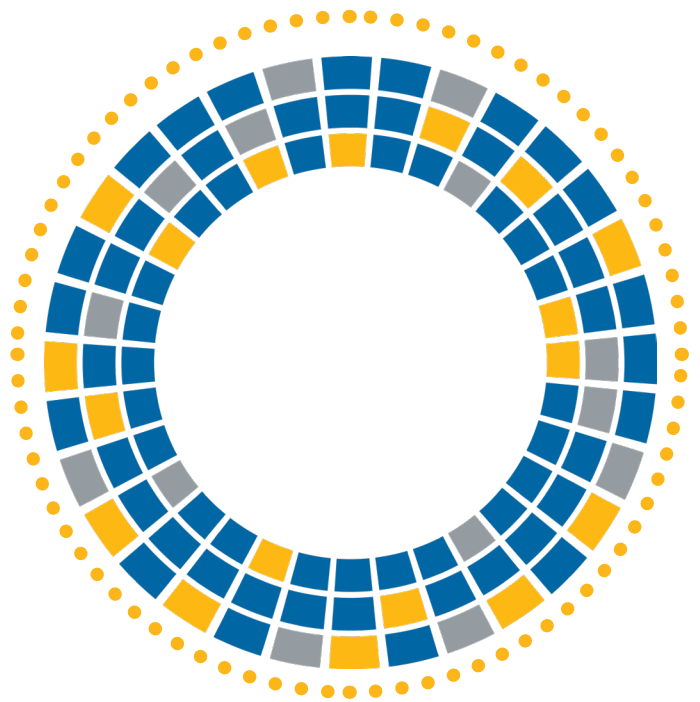
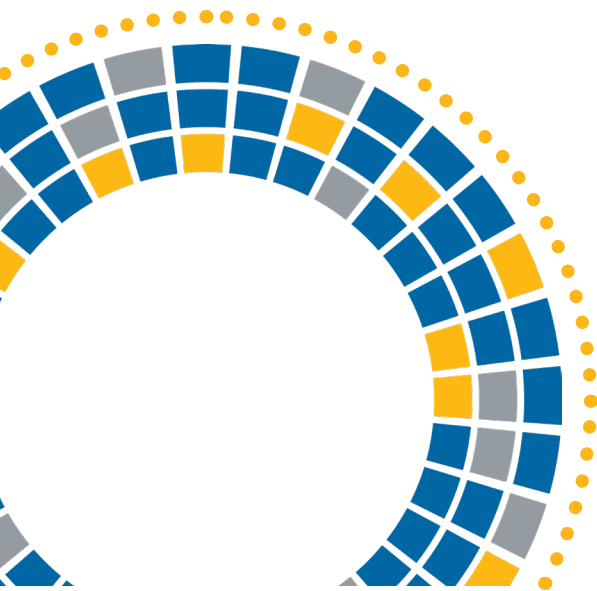


Mercedes Labelle graduated from McGill University in 2020 with an Honours Bachelor of Political Science and Urban Systems. During her studies, she focused on Canadian politics and public policy processes, specifically researching the uneven distribution of benefits and services between urban and rural communities. At McGill, Mercedes provided analysis on Canadian Politics for the McGill Journal of Political Studies (MJPS). Through her involvement with MJPS, Mercedes developed a deeper understanding of the diverse interests and needs of the Canadian population. Having grown up in Canada, the United States, and Spain, Mercedes is eager to return to Northern Ontario, where her family now resides. In her free time, Mercedes enjoys listening to podcasts, cooking, and reading.

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Executive Summary

In the coming years, many districts in Ontario's northern, western, and central regions will be experiencing an increase in the number of seniors at a higher proportion than provincial levels. This will mean future labour market shortages, and a greater need for youth retention and migration to the regions. When looking at more migration in general, the demographic composition of future migrants should also be considered to prevent a faster decline of specific subgroups of the population, which are also following the overall aging trend.

This paper estimates how many future French-speaking and Francophone migrants should be targeted for the Thunder Bay District, as a proportion of total future migrants, in order to maintain the current proportions of French speakers and Francophones in the core working-age population in Thunder Bay. Establishing a baseline target for French-speaking and Francophone migration allows the labour force to maintain its current equilibrium, meaning the ratio of working-age French speakers and Francophones will remain consistent as a share of the total population.

When analyzing the core working-age population, this paper estimates that to maintain the 2016 proportion of French speakers in Thunder Bay, **4.7 to 5.1** per cent of future in-migrants would need to be French speakers, a range of **933 to 1,116**. On the other hand, **6.2 to 6.5** per cent of future in-migrants would need to be Francophones to maintain their current proportion of the core working-age population, which represents **1,302 to 1,355** required in-migrants. Thus, following the targets, occupations that currently require or benefit from French language skills will have a sufficient pool of linguistically qualified people to employ into 2026.

To support the targeted attraction and retention efforts, communities can work within existing programs, like the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, and develop new initiatives, to encourage French-speaking and Francophone migration. Once French speakers and Francophones are in the community, adequate services must also be in place, and easily identifiable, to support their needs. Finally, at the organizational and individual levels, the district must continue working towards creating welcoming communities for French-speaking and Francophone migrants, and fully employ those already in the community.



Summary Target Tables for 5 Communities and 11 Districts

This series of papers estimates how many future French-speaking and Francophone migrants should be targeted in the five largest cities and 11 districts in Northern Ontario, as a proportion of all migrants from 2016 to 2026. The purpose of the targets is to maintain the **current** proportions of French speakers and Francophones in a given location's core working-age population.

While each paper focuses on a specific city or district, below are two summary tables for comparison purposes.

Targets for Cities: Needed French-Speaking or Francophone In-Migrants, 2016-2026

City	% - French-speaking	# of people - French-speaking	% - Francophones	# of people - Francophones
Greater Sudbury	37.8 - 38.0	10,544 - 12,391	32.6 - 33.7	9,405 - 10,616
North Bay	21.2 - 21.3	3,442 - 3,598	16.4 - 16.6	2,690 - 2,773
Sault Ste. Marie	5.8 - 6.3	851 - 1,039	5.2 - 5.5	812 - 865
Timmins	47.8 - 48.9	3,716 - 4,712	41.1 - 41.5	3,231 - 3,961
Thunder Bay	3.3 - 3.5	774 - 863	3.6 - 3.7	875 - 901

Targets for Districts: Needed French-Speaking or Francophone In-Migrants, 2016-2026

City	% - French-speaking	# of people - French-speaking	% - Francophones	# of people - Francophones
Algoma	9.3 - 9.7	1,412 - 1,658	10.0 - 10.5	1,592 - 1,706
Cochrane	57.6 - 57.8	5,589 - 5,766	54.5 - 54.7	5,284 - 5,454
Greater Sudbury	37.3 - 37.7	7,431 - 9,695	33.4 - 35.7	7,119 - 8,595
Sudbury	34.0 - 34.1	1,577 - 1,643	28.2 - 28.5	1,320 - 1,363
Manitoulin	7.2 - 7.6	198 - 227	3.8 - 4.1	107 - 120
Nipissing	33.2 - 33.3	5,135 - 5,175	29.2 - 29.4	4,546 - 4,534
Parry Sound	6.3 - 6.5	705 - 815	3.9 - 4.0	447 - 489
Timiskaming	34.0 - 34.1	1,552 - 1,988	27.8 - 29.3	1,339 - 1,619
Kenora	4.0 - 4.1	412 - 442	3.5 - 3.6	376 - 383
Rainy River	3.0 - 3.1	83 - 97	2.9 - 3.2	88 - 89
Thunder Bay	4.7 - 5.1	933 - 1,116	6.2 - 6.5	1,302 - 1,355

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to estimate the number of future French-speaking in-migrants that would be required in the next ten years, for the Thunder Bay District to maintain the 2016 proportion of the French-speaking core working-age population at 8.0 per cent. The analysis was also applied to the Francophone population, which currently comprises 4.2 per cent of the core working-age population. French-speaking and Francophone migrants are crucial to the longevity of both the language and culture associated with these demographic groups.

Contributing to these numbers is the differing age distribution of the French-speaking and Francophone populations. The French-speaking population in the district is younger than the non-French-speaking population, while the Francophone population is older than the non-Francophone population. These findings indicate that the French-speaking population is better poised to maintain its share of the core working-age population in the next ten years. Thus, despite Francophones currently comprising a lesser share of the core working-age population in the Thunder Bay District, their required in-migration estimates are higher than those for French speakers.

'French speakers' is derived from the 2016 Census variable, "Knowledge of Official Languages", and "refers to whether [a] person can conduct a conversation in English only, French only, in both, or in neither [official] language. For a child who has not yet learned to speak, this includes languages that the child is learning to speak at home" (Statistics Canada, 2017). Therefore, those who reported to have knowledge of French only, or knowledge of English and French, were counted as French speakers. The 'Francophone' definition used is available below.

This paper aims to build upon a previously published paper by Alex Ross and Fenfang Li, titled "French-Speaking Migrants to Greater Sudbury: 2017-2026" (November 2019). The purpose of this series is to expand upon the estimates of needed French-speaking and Francophone migrants to all districts as well as the five largest cities in Northern Ontario; specifically, this paper looks at migration to the Thunder Bay District. In addition, the methodology has also been updated to better reflect and estimate 10- year mobility, account for death rates in the core working-age population, and estimate age-specific mobility rates to control for the differences in demographic groups.

As regions in Northern Ontario will be experiencing an increase in the number of seniors in the coming years, at a proportion higher than provincial levels, future labour market shortages will emerge. With that, there will come a greater need for youth retention and migration to Ontario's northern, western, and central regions. With new government immigration programs, such as the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot, the Welcoming Francophone Communities Initiative, and multiple matchmaker programs, targets for Francophone and French-speaking migrants must be identified and prioritized to help fill these future shortages.

Definitions:

- 1. Core working-age population:** those who are 25 years to 64 years old.
- 2. French-speaking core working-age population:** those who speak French, as per the above criteria, in the core working-age population.
- 3. Non-French-speaking core working-age population:** those who only speak English or non-official languages, in the core working-age population.
- 4. 2026 base population:** The 2016 population, having aged 10 years (those 15 to 54 in 2016), while also accounting for deaths in each age group. The base population does not account for migration, which is what the paper aims to identify.
- 5. 2026 Ministry of Finance population projections¹:** This variable uses the Ministry of Finance population projections in order to determine the core working-age population in 2026. The numbers for the French-speaking and Francophone populations in 2026 are derived using 2016 percentages of each group's proportion of population in the core working-age, and then applied to the Ministry of Finance projections for 2026 to establish the targets.
- 6. Geography:** This analysis was conducted for the following districts: Nipissing, Parry Sound, Manitoulin, Sudbury, Greater Sudbury, Timiskaming, Cochrane, Algoma, Thunder Bay, Rainy River, and Kenora. In addition, the analysis was done for the following cities: North Bay, Greater Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Timmins, and Thunder Bay.
- 7. Time frame:** 2016 to 2026.
- 8. French-speaking population:** Northern Policy Institute (NPI) uses the Statistics Canada's Census variable, "Knowledge of Official Languages," as explained in the introduction above. Those who know "French" or "French and English" comprise the French-speaking group.
- 9. Francophone population:** This definition is derived from the Community Data Program's definition of "Francophone," which considers an individual's "First Official Language Spoken," "Language Spoken Most Often at Home," and "Mother Tongue" (all as defined and gathered by Statistics Canada).

¹The Ministry of Finance conducts population projections for Ontario and its census divisions by age and gender, annually. The projections used in this paper were produced in the summer of 2020 and include the most recent trends in fertility, mortality, and migration (Ministry of Finance, 2020c). This cohort-component method is typically used by statistical agencies and is considered a reliable method (Dion 2015).

Estimates for French-Speaking Migrants

Establishing targets for the core working-age population in 2026

To begin, since the goal of this paper is to project numbers needed to maintain a constant percentage of French speakers in the core working-age population, the percentage of French speakers in the core working-age population in 2016 sets the benchmark for 2026. The 2016 percentage can be applied to the 2026 Ministry of Finance's total projections to produce the targeted number of French speakers in the core working-age population in 2026. As defined above, the Ministry of Finance's projections account for births, deaths, and migration.

The Thunder Bay District has a total population of 143,085, with 12,520 French speakers and 5,580 Francophones. In 2016, it had a core working-age population of 77,495 people, of which 6,170 were French speakers. Thus, the percentage of French speakers in the core working-age population in 2016 was **8.0** per cent, which will act as the target for 2026.

The Ministry of Finance population projections for 2026 estimate there will be 75,078 people in the Thunder Bay District within the core working-age group. The 2016 per cent share of 8.0 is applied to the total working-age estimate to produce a target of **5,978** French speakers in the core working-age population in 2026.

Calculating net migration required from 2016 to 2026

Once the target for 2026 has been established, the route to meet that target must be identified. This can be done by looking at the 2016 population, and calculating who, and how many people from that population will comprise the core working-age group in 2026.

As stated, the core working-age population in 2016 was 77,495 people, with 6,170 being French speakers. From here, we can look at the people aged 15 to 54 in 2016, who will be 25 to 64 in 2026 (the core working-age). In addition to measuring those aging into, and out of, the core working-age, deaths within each age group during the 10-year period must also be accounted for.

Using the last ten years of data available for the Thunder Bay District, an analysis of 10-year death rates was done for each five-year age group to produce an age-specific mortality rate. Accounting for both the aging process and mortality rates, the core working-age population in 2026 can be estimated, referred to throughout this paper as the "base population." The base population does not account for migration, which is calculated in later sections.

What results is a total base population in 2026 of 69,515 people, with 6,499 being French speakers. Since the base population does not account for migration, but the Ministry of Finance population projection does, the difference between both 2026 estimates represents **net migrants**.

Thus, using both Ministry of Finance population projections and the base population estimates, the difference between the French-speaking populations in 2026 is 521 people. In fact, contrary to other districts (save for Rainy River), the **521** net migrant number is **negative**. The negative number of net migrants indicates the Ministry of Finance is projecting a French-speaking core working-age population in 2026 that is lower than the base population for that year, indicating greater numbers of out-migration than in-migration in this age demographic.

As such, in order to maintain the 8.0 per cent proportion of the French-speaking core working-age population, **521 net migrants**, at minimum, are expected to out-migrate from the Thunder Bay District between 2016 and 2026.



Table 1 below summarizes the 2016 population, the projected 2026 population, and the needed net migrants for the Thunder Bay District.

Table 1: Current and Future Population Projections of the Core Working-Age Population in the Thunder Bay District

	2016 Census	2026 Base Population (incl. deaths)	Net Migrants 2017-26	2026 Ministry of Finance Projection
Core working-age population	77,495	69,515	5,563	75,078
French-speaking, core working-age population	6,170	6,499	-521	5,978*
Non-French-speaking, core working-age population	71,325	63,016	6,084	69,100

*This is the number required to maintain the French-speaking proportion of the core working-age population at 8.0 per cent.

(Note: Required net migrants is the difference between the 2026 base population, which includes deaths, and the 2026 Ministry of Finance projections).

Determining net migration only tells a portion of the population story. To determine the proportion of new migrants that should be targeted in Thunder Bay, the rate at which the French-speaking core working-age population out-migrates must be established. Two methods are used to estimate this rate using both Census and Taxfiler mobility data, which will then provide a range of immigration targets based on possible out-migration trends.

Calculating the number of needed in-migrants - Census Mobility

When calculating mobility, it is important to note the differences between age groups. The younger demographic tends to be more mobile, as they are earlier in their careers and often without established families. As the later analysis will get into, there are notable differences in age composition between the French-speaking and non-French-speaking populations; the same is true for Francophones. Thus, both Census and Taxfiler mobility rates were calculated for the 25- to 44-year-old demographic as well as the 45- to 64-year-old demographic to capture the effect of age on mobility.

To begin, Census mobility rate was calculated using the number of all movers, minus those who moved but remained inside of the district², as a percentage of the total population. As mentioned, these calculations were done for two age groups: 25 to 44 and 45 to 64, together comprising the core working-age population. The mobility rate for both groups was adjusted to represent a 10-year period; the 10-year mobility rate represents those from the 2016 population who will out-migrate between 2016 and 2026, meaning it is necessary to replace these out-migrants with in-migrants to meet the 2026 targets established above.

Using Census mobility data, it is estimated that approximately 34.0 per cent of 25- to 44-year-olds from 2016 will move out of the Thunder Bay District by 2026. For 45- to 64-year-olds, this number decreases to 12.9 per cent. Applying both percentages to their respective demographic, the calculations show that 11,626 people from the younger age group, and 4,549 from the older, will out-migrate by 2026, for a total of **16,176** out-migrants in ten years. The total number of French speakers that are estimated to out-migrate in the same period totals **1,637** from the core working-age

²Movers are defined as "persons who have moved from one residence to another." To further tailor the analysis, non-migrants, defined as "persons who did move, but remained in the same census subdivision" were not included in NPI's mobility rate calculations for the purpose of this paper. Thus, the working definition of "mover" includes only migrants, both internal (stayed within Canada) and external (moved outside of Canada) migrants.

population.³ Therefore, to maintain the current percentage of French speakers in the core working-age population, Census mobility numbers show that 1,637 French-speaking in-migrants are needed by 2026.

Further, subtracting the 521 net out-migrants calculated above to the 1,637 out-migrants that must be replaced, a total of **1,116** French-speaking core working age in-migrants are needed, or **5.1 per cent** of all in-migrants to the Thunder Bay District between 2016 and 2026.

Calculating the number of needed in-migrants - Taxfiler Mobility

The second method used to calculate mobility is similar to that used above, whereas mobility was calculated for two age groups: those ages 25 to 44 and those 45 to 64. Taxfiler Migration Estimates that compare individuals' addresses from tax returns each year, only include those who move to another Census division or metropolitan area as out-migrants. Thus, similar to the Census mobility calculations, those who move but remain within the Thunder Bay District are not counted in determining the mobility rate. A limitation to be noted for the mobility estimates, both the Census and Taxfiler calculations, is the inability to distinguish between movers who relocate outside of the Thunder Bay District but continue to work within the Thunder Bay District, thus contributing to its core working-age population, though being identified as an out-migrant.

One-year mobility rates were calculated for each age group using a 10-year average, then adjusted to represent 10-year mobility. Using Taxfiler mobility data, it is estimated that approximately 30.2 per cent of 25- to 44-year-olds from 2016 will move out of the Thunder Bay District by 2026. For 45- to 64-year-olds, this number decreases to 11.4 per cent. Again applying both percentages to their respective age demographics, the mobility calculations show that 10,340 people from the younger age group, and 4,032 from the older, will out-migrate by 2026, for a total of **14,371** out-migrants in ten years. The total number of French speakers that are estimated to out-migrate in the same period totals **1,454** from the core working-age population. Therefore, the Taxfiler Migration Estimates show that, to maintain the current percentage of French speakers in the core working-age population, 1,454 French-speaking in-migrants are needed by 2026.

To further account for net migration calculated above, the 521 net out-migrants can be subtracted from the 1,454 needed in-migrants to establish the need for **933** total French-speaking migrants in the core working-age population, or **4.7 per cent** of all in-migrants between 2016 and 2026.

Using both the Census and Taxfiler mobility calculations, it is estimated between 4.7 and 5.1 per cent of all core working-age in-migrants between 2016 and 2026 must be French speakers, representing a range of 933 and 1,116. This range will allow the Thunder Bay District to maintain its current proportion of French speakers at 8.0 per cent of the core working-age population through 2026.

Table 2 demonstrates the estimated number of in-migrants required to maintain the same proportion of 2016 French speakers in the core working-age population.

Table 2: Estimated Number and Proportion of Required French-Speaking In-Migrants in the Thunder Bay District

	Estimated required in-migrants, over 10-year period (range)	% of total in-migrants
Total core working-age population	19,934 to 21,739	--
French-speaking, core working-age population	933 to 1,116	4.7% to 5.1%
Non-French-speaking, core working-age population	19,001 to 20,623	94.9% to 95.3%

**This is the range of required in-migrants, as a share of total migrants, needed to maintain the current share of the French-speaking core working-age population at 8.0 per cent.*

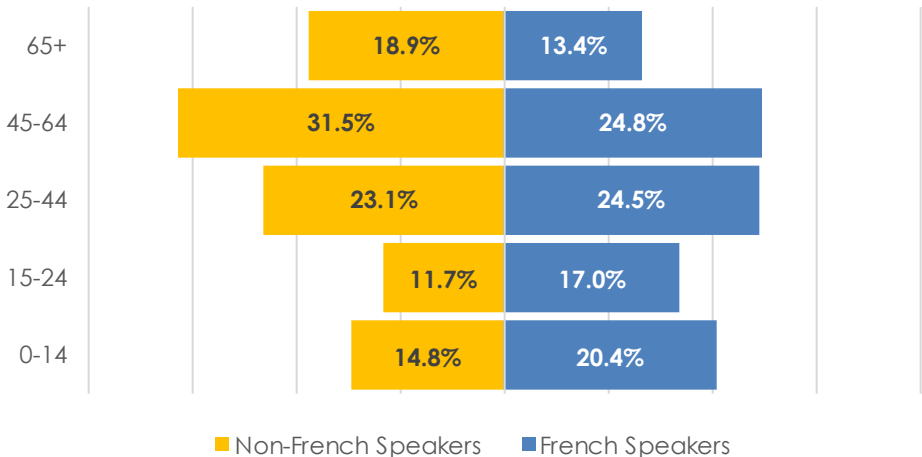
³These numbers were calculated by applying the mobility rates (34.0 and 12.9 per cent) to their respective age groups, both in the total population, and the French-speaking population.

Further, this analysis suggests that overall, the French-speaking population in the Thunder Bay District is younger than the total population. Demographic factors, alongside migration trends, and the initial overall proportion of French speakers in the core working-age population in 2016, all contribute to the percentage range needed to maintain the current share of French speakers.

When looking at the age distribution of the population from the 2016 Census, the French-speaking population has a lower share of its demographic nearing retirement age compared to non-French speakers. About 24.8 per cent of the French-speaking population is in the 45 to 64 age group, compared to 31.5 per cent of non-French speakers. Thus, a higher proportion of the non-French-speaking population will be aging out of the labour market in the next ten years. On the other hand, when looking at the demographic that will be entering the core working-age labour market in the coming years (ages 0 to 24), 37.4 per cent of the French-speaking population is in that age group, while non-French speakers have 26.5 per cent of their population between those ages.

Moreover, 41.5 per cent of Thunder Bay’s French-speaking population is in the young workforce (15 to 44 years old) compared to 34.9 per cent of the non-French-speaking population. However, non-French speakers have a larger share of their population in the core working-age demographic at 54.6 per cent, while French speakers in this demographic total 49.3 per cent. When looking at future scenarios, the French-speaking population in Thunder Bay is better poised to maintain its current proportion of the core working-age population while also making up a larger current percentage of the young labour force.

Figure 1: Age Distribution of French Speakers and Non-French Speakers in the Thunder Bay District



Source: Author’s calculations. Statistics Canada, 2016. Target Group Profile of the Population by Knowledge of Official Languages. Custom Tabulation. Community Data Program (CDP).



Analysis of the Francophone Population

The same methodology and approach as outlined above was applied to the Thunder Bay District's Francophone population. The results estimate that between 6.2 and 6.5 per cent of all new in-migrants must be Francophones for the district to maintain its 2016 proportion of Francophones in the core working-age population at 4.2 per cent.

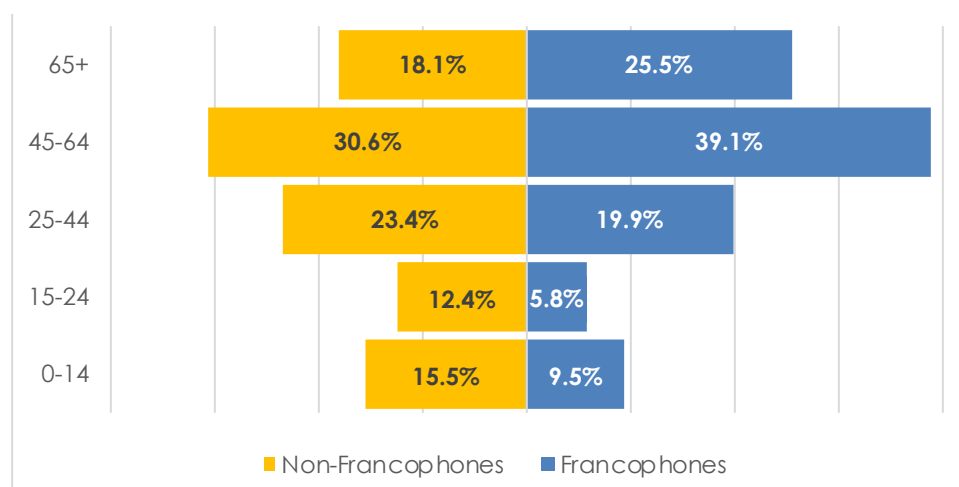
Table 3: Estimated Number and Proportion of Required Francophone In-Migrants in the Thunder Bay District

	Estimated required in-migrants, over 10-year period (range)	% of total in-migrants
Total core working-age population	19,934 to 21,739	--
Francophones in the core working-age population	1,302 to 1,355	6.2% to 6.5%
Non-Francophones in the core working-age population	18,632 to 20,384	93.5% to 93.8%

A contributing factor to the percentage disparity is the differences in age breakdown between the Francophone and non-Francophone populations. Francophones in the Thunder Bay District are, on average, older than the non-Francophone population. In fact, 25.5 per cent of the Francophone population is over 65, while only 18.1 per cent of the non-Francophone population is in that age group. Also, a higher percentage, 39.1 per cent, of all Francophones are approaching retirement age (45 to 64), compared to 30.6 per cent of non-Francophones. Finally, only 5.8 per cent of the Francophone population will be entering the core working-age population in the next ten years (those currently ages 15 to 24), while 12.4 per cent in the non-Francophone population will become core working-age in the same period.

These findings indicate that, compared to non-Francophones, the Francophone population will be aging out of the labour force at a higher rate, while also having a lower proportion of its population about to enter the core working-age population.

Figure 2: Age Distribution of Francophones and Non-Francophones in the Thunder Bay District



Source: Author's calculations. Statistics Canada, 2016. Target Group Profile of the Francophone Population. Custom Tabulation. Community Data Program (CDP).

Conclusion



The above analysis provides an estimated range of required in-migrants to the Thunder Bay District in order to maintain a constant proportion of French speakers to the total core working-age population. The analysis demonstrates that to maintain this percentage at 8.0 per cent, it is estimated that the Thunder Bay District would require between **933** and **1,116** French-speaking in-migrants between 2017 and 2026. This amounts to between **4.7** and **5.1 per cent** of all in-migrants to Thunder Bay during that period. The estimated required proportion of in-migrants is lower than the current proportion of French speakers in the core working-age population because the French-speaking population is younger than the non-French-speaking population.

When looking at the Francophone population, an estimated range of **1,302** to **1,355** Francophone in-migrants in the core working-age population are needed between 2016 and 2026 to maintain its share in the core working-age population at 4.2 per cent. This range represents **6.2** to **6.5** per cent of all in-migrants to Thunder Bay during that period. The estimated required proportion of in-migrants is higher than the current proportion of Francophones in the core working-age population because the Francophone population is older than the non-Francophone population.

Policy Recommendations

Though this paper focused largely on the needed number of in-migrants to the Thunder Bay District, attraction is just one part of the solution. Retention and full integration of the existing population is also necessary. With many districts in Northern Ontario poised to experience an increase of seniors in the coming years, the districts must not only attract French-speaking and Francophone youth migrants, but also retain those already in the population, and ensure their full participation in the labour market.

To aid in the attraction and retention of the French-speaking and Francophone populations in order to maintain the current proportion of the core working-age population, the following can be done:

1. As discussed in detail in Northern Policy Institute's *Northern Attraction* series (2019), an attraction and retention strategy⁴ can be created, specifically for each district, with an emphasis on meeting French-speaking and Francophone targets and providing a welcoming community for these demographic groups;
2. Assess what assets are available to French speakers and Francophones in each district: are they well-identified and easy to access? The districts are encouraged to undertake a mapping exercise to identify organizations and associations that serve French speakers and Francophones. Ideally, this would be done within the existing welcoming portals available for northeastern and northwestern Ontario, maintained by the Timmins and Thunder Bay Multicultural Associations, respectively;
3. Focus attraction efforts beyond international in-migrants to also include domestic and secondary migrants;
4. Pursue community and employer outreach to communicate the benefit and need for French-speaking and Francophone migrants in the community and in the labour force; and,
5. The Thunder Bay District houses the RNIP community of Thunder Bay. With specific points allotted to potential candidates decided by the Community Selection Committee, communities are encouraged to assess the weight given to language skills, specifically pertaining to the official languages.

French-speaking and Francophone migrants are crucial to the longevity of both the language and culture associated with these demographic groups. Using the above estimates as a baseline, the Thunder Bay District has the targets needed to maintain a constant percentage of French speakers and Francophones in the core working-age population.

⁴Part 4: Thinking Local: Best Practices and Solutions for Northern Ontario Communities discusses attraction, growth, and retention strategies by Christina Zefi.

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About Northern Policy Institute

Northern Policy Institute is Northern Ontario's independent think tank. We perform research, collect and disseminate evidence, and identify policy opportunities to support the growth of sustainable Northern Communities. Our operations are located in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, and Kirkland Lake. We seek to enhance Northern Ontario's capacity to take the lead position on socio-economic policy that impacts Northern Ontario, Ontario, and Canada as a whole.

Related Research

French Speaking Migrants to Greater Sudbury: 2017-2026

Fenfang Li & Alex Ross

Come North – Population Growth in Ontario's Northern Regions - Conference Report, Proceedings and Action Items

Charles Cirtwill, Hilary Hagar, & Rachel Rizzuto

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