Réseau d'intervenantes et d'intervenants en petite enfance

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Demographic analysis and shortage of French-language early learning and childcare services

Profile of French-language ELCC services for children aged 0 to 4 eligible for French-language education in the

National Capital

cnpf

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Summary

Several communities in the National Capital are left with a shortage of full-time spaces in French-language early learning and childcare services for young children. As part of the federal program aiming to reduce childcare costs, it is essential that this cost saving initiative be associated with an increase in the number of available spaces. This analysis, produced by the Commission nationale des parents francophones [National Commission of Francophone Parents] (CNPF), presents a situation assessment in the National Capital as of September 1, 2025, and suggests communities to target to optimize the impact of these new spaces.

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Note: The terms "French-language early learning and childcare (ELCC) service" and "French-language ELCC service" include the diverse terminology used in the provinces and territories, such as daycares, educational centres, early childhood centres (ECC), etc.

1- Background

In 2021, the Government of Canada aimed, in its budget, to implement an accessible and affordable early learning and childcare system for the Canadian population[1]. With the aim of helping Canadians return to work after the COVID-19 pandemic, the government identified the cost of childcare services as a barrier preventing some parents from returning to work. Budget 2021 therefore provided $30 billion over five years for this initiative, with the main goal of reducing childcare fees for preschool-aged children.

However, while the focus was placed on reducing childcare fees, this was not accompanied by an equivalent creation of spaces in French-language early learning and childcare (ELCC) services, making the shortage of spaces even more important. Five years later, accessibility remains a major challenge: many parents struggle to find a full-time space for their child in a French-language ELCC service. Fee reduction is an important incentive for parents. On the other hand, it does not necessarily make up for the shortage of available spaces. This sharp increase in demand for services by parents has not been offset by a corresponding supply of new spaces.

In a Francophone minority setting, this problem is made worse by the spread of Francophones across the territory. Early childhood stakeholders see this program as an opportunity to start new services, knowing that, obviously, many families could benefit from such a service.

[1] https://www.budget.canada.ca/2021/home-accueil-en.html

This study fits into this context by identifying geographic areas where children aged 0 to 4 are present (according to the 2021 *Census of Population*), but where there are not enough childcare services. In other words, we seek to identify, for Francophone parents looking for a space in a French-language ELCC service, the chances that they will be able to find such a space for their child. We must be aware that parents unable to find a French-language ELCC service will face two choices: delay their return to the labour market or send their child to a centre in another language, usually English.

It is important to specify that the areas identified in this document may be childcare deserts for Francophones, while overall there are enough spaces for parents of the English-speaking majority. The CNPF believes it is essential to identify areas that are Francophone deserts so that the Government of Canada's program achieves its objectives, meaning that access to childcare for Canadian women and men is equal for parents of both official languages.

Launched in 2025, the project *Creation and Support of the Network of Early Childhood Stakeholders in Minority Communities* aims, by 2028, to improve access to high-quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and childcare (ELCC) spaces, services, and programs in Francophone minority communities (FMCs). To achieve this, the CNPF was able to conduct studies and data analyses.

This present study aims to identify service deserts in the National Capital, based on census subdivisions and the number of rights-holders aged 0 to 4, to determine the number of spaces in French-language ELCC services to be created to meet the needs of Francophone communities in the province.

2- Methodology

This study identifies French-language ELCC service deserts by identifying a ratio of full-time spaces per child. To conduct this analysis, we use the number of children aged 0 to 4 identified as eligible for French-language education, pursuant to section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*[2], as measured by Statistics Canada's 2021 *Census of Population*. The term "child" used in the rest of this document refers to this definition.

To obtain the number of spaces in French-language ELCC services, this study uses data from the Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (AFÉSEO) [Francophone Association for Early Childhood Services Education of Ontario], and direct calls to various French-language ELCC services. The identified spaces are accurate as of September 1, 2025. We have thus identified 5,155 full-time spaces in the National Capital[3,4].

From these datasets, we were able to identify a parameter indicating, for each preschool-aged child, how many spaces are available.

To accurately represent the situation in the National Capital, we used datasets that allowed us to pinpoint eligible children as precisely as possible. While in some cases it was possible to specify a municipality directly, in others we had to fall back on census divisions or areas. The city of Ottawa was divided into sectors when using this dataset. These sectors (shown in Appendix 2) were identified by postal service areas (the first three characters of the postal code).

[2] Table n° 98100541 from Statistics Canada's former CANSIM database.
[3] The complete list of identified French-language ELCC services is found in Appendix 1.
[4] Please note that full-day kindergarten is available to eligible 4-year-old children in French-language schools in Ontario and this program is not included in this study.

To determine the French-language ELCC service deserts, we will use three simplified thresholds:

1. **First threshold: ratio between 0 and 0.40 (in white)**

   It corresponds to **high-need** sectors, meaning there are more than 2.5 children per available space. On average, this means a parent waits 2.5 years before getting a space in a French-language ELCC service. Considering that a parent registers their child on a service waitlist from birth, the child will be over two and a half years old when a space is offered. By this point, the parent will likely have chosen another childcare option for their child.

2. **Second threshold: ratio between 0.40 and 0.70 (in yellow)**

   It corresponds to **medium-need** communities, where there are between 1.5 and 2.5 children per space in French-language ELCC services. As explained previously, this means the child will, on average, get a space around the age of 2. In this case, we find ourselves in a situation where the parent might use a temporary option while waiting to get a space in a French-language ELCC service.

3. **Third threshold: ratio superior to 0.70 (in green)**

   It corresponds to **well-served** communities. In these areas, there are enough French-language ELCC spaces, and parents can trust they will get a space for their child relatively quickly (before 18 months of age)[5]. Given that the parental leave permitted by law is 18 months, it can be assumed that children in these communities will secure a French-language ELCC space on their very first day.

Thus, only communities with a ratio of more than 0.70 spaces per child aged 0 to 4 (meaning at least 7 spaces for every 10 children) are considered properly served, while all others are classified as areas in need.

[5] According to the *Québec Study on the Accessibility and Use of Childcare Services 2021* by the Québec Institute of Statistics, 70% of children use childcare services. As Québec is a model in childcare, a threshold of 0.70 spaces per child (where 70% of children have a space) is considered sufficient.

3- Foundations of the analysis

A few elements deserve to be presented from the outset to lay the groundwork for this analysis.

Data as of September 1, 2025

Current data represent the best available information as of September 1, 2025. Given how quickly an ELCC service can close and current efforts to develop new spaces, we must be aware that a geographic area can rapidly shift from a high-need community to a well-served area, and vice versa.

Pre-kindergarten and school-age childcare services excluded

Since the purpose of this study is to present an inventory of available full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services, all preschool services offering part-time spaces were excluded from the ratio calculations. The same applies to all support services for school-age childcare programs that serve school-aged children.

Proximity to home: the primary reason for choosing an ELCC service

A study by Learn Square Inc.[6] revealed that the primary reason parents choose an ELCC service is its proximity to their home or workplace. The 2025 *Canadian Early Learning and Child Care Survey* by Statistics Canada[7] arrives at a similar conclusion: two thirds of parents mention location as a determining factor in choosing childcare services for their child.

Although censuses provide an overview of the average distance a parent travels to work, they do not indicate the destination of that commute. This means that home location data is the only usable data. Despite this limitation in the data, the proximity of the home remains an important factor in the parent's choice.

[6] Learn Square Inc., *Rapport d'évaluation des services de garde privés francophones et bilingues dans les régions d'Edmonton et Calgary*, [*Evaluation Report on French-Language and Bilingual Private Childcare Services in the Edmonton and Calgary Regions*], presented to the CDÉA, February 2021.
[7] Statistics Canada, *Table 42-10-0006-01 Parent and guardian reasons for using main childcare arrangement, children aged 0 to 5 years*, 2025.

4- Presentation of results

The National Capital Region consists of the triangle formed by the census divisions of Renfrew, Prescott and Russell, and Lennox and Addington (see Appendix 3). It is home to 25,760 children aged 0 to 4 who are eligible for French-language education, representing just under 20% of all eligible children in Canada. The Ottawa census metropolitan area (CMA) alone accounts for 16,040 of all eligible children in the country (12.3%).

With 5,155 full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services, the average ratio for the National Capital stands at **0.20 spaces per child**, or 1 space for every 5 children. This means that for the National Capital to be well served by French-language ELCC services, the number of full-time spaces would need to be multiplied by three and a half.

To accurately present the situation in the National Capital, it has been divided into five sectors: the Ottawa CMA, Far Eastern Ontario, the Frontenac-Lanark corridor, the Hastings-Prince Edward corridor, and the Renfrew division. Table 1 presents the distribution of children and spaces in the National Capital by sector.

Table 1: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the National Capital*

Sector	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Ottawa CMA	3,445	16,040	**0.21**
Eastern Ontario	1,248	6,035	**0.21**
Frontenac-Lanark Corridor	252	1,945	**0.13**
Hastings-Prince Edward Corridor	135	755	**0.18**
Renfrew Division	75	985	**0.08**
TOTAL – NATIONAL CAPITAL	**5,155**	**25,760**	**0.20**

To maximize the reach of these potential new spaces, their location is paramount. This is why a more detailed analysis by geographic area is necessary to identify the municipalities where the needs are greatest.

Ottawa

The Ottawa region has 16,040 Francophone children aged 0 to 4 who are eligible for French-language education and offers 3,445 full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services, representing a **ratio of 0.21 spaces** per child (approximately 1 space for every 5 children). Detailed data are presented in Table 2.

Given its size, the city of Ottawa was divided into 4 areas: downtown, east, west, and south. These areas are shown on a map in Appendix 2, and Table 2 provides a summary of the situation in the city.

Table 2: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Ottawa CMA*

Area	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Downtown	2,057	7,445	**0.28**
Ottawa East	965	4,305	**0.22**
Ottawa West	423	1,725	**0.25**
Ottawa South	0	2,565	**0.00**
TOTAL – OTTAWA CMA	**3,445**	**16,040**	**0.21**

A closer analysis of the data reveals that the situation varies considerably from one area to another, although all are high-need areas. The Downtown area has 7,445 children for 2,057 spaces in French-language ELCC services, representing a ratio of 0.28. This makes it the best-served area in the CMA. The Ottawa West area presents a similar situation, with 423 spaces for 1,725 children (a ratio of 0.25).

The Ottawa East area, meanwhile, has 965 spaces for 4,305 children, representing a ratio of approximately 0.22. Although this result is slightly lower than that of the Downtown and Ottawa West areas, it remains close to the city average.

The situation is much more concerning in the Ottawa South area. Despite the presence of 2,565 children, there are no spaces in French-language ELCC services. Francophone families in this area must, therefore, necessarily turn to services located in other areas of the CMA or to the Anglophone network.

Thus, the overall portrait of the city of Ottawa reveals significant territorial inequalities. While the Downtown, Ottawa West, and Ottawa East areas offer a similar level of service, the complete absence of spaces in Ottawa South represents a territorial equity issue. This situation limits opportunities for Francophone families to access French-language ELCC services in their community.

To achieve satisfactory coverage in French-language educational services, the Ottawa CMA would need to significantly increase its supply of spaces. Specifically, 7,783 spaces would need to be added to reach the threshold of 7 spaces for every 10 children.

The following sections analyze the situation in each area of the city.

Downtown

The Downtown neighbourhood is where most of Ottawa's French-language ELCC service spaces are located. Overall, this neighbourhood has a **ratio of 0.28 spaces** per child. To better locate the children, we divided the neighbourhood into six sectors. Table 3 presents the situation in this neighbourhood.

Table 3: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Downtown neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA*

Sector	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Nepean	615	3,130	**0.20**
Centre	830	2,075	**0.40**
Vanier	340	1,080	**0.31**
Westboro-Carlington	31	415	**0.07**
Barrhaven-Manotick	174	405	**0.43**
Hintonburg	67	340	**0.20**
TOTAL – DOWNTOWN	**2,057**	**7,445**	**0.28**

The Nepean sector is where the highest number of children is found. With 3,130 children (42% of the neighbourhood's children) and 615 French-language ELCC spaces, it is a high-need area (ratio of 0.20).

The Central sector has slightly fewer children than the Nepean sector (2,075), but has more spaces (830), resulting in a ratio of 0.40, which makes it a medium-need area.

The Barrhaven-Manotick sector is also a medium-need area. Indeed, there are 405 children and 174 spaces (ratio of 0.43). The Vanier sector (1,080 children, 340 spaces, and a ratio of 0.31) also has a ratio above the neighbourhood average.

The Westboro-Carlington and Hintonburg sectors have the lowest ratios. With respective ratios of 0.07 and 0.20, they also represent high-need areas.

Overall, this neighbourhood has a shortage of 3,156 spaces. Creating more than 50 French-language ELCC services would be necessary to meet the needs.

Table 4: *Ideal distribution of new French-language ELCC childcare spaces in the Downtown neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA*

Sector	N° of spaces to create	N° of required centres (average of 60 places per centre)
Nepean	1 576	26 centres
Centre	623	10 centres
Vanier	416	7 centres
Westboro-Carlington	260	4 centres
Barrhaven-Manotick	110	2 centres
Hintonburg	171	3 centres
TOTAL - DOWNTOWN	**3 156**	**52 centres**

The Nepean sector (shortage of 1,576 spaces) accounts for half of the spaces that need to be created. To create these spaces, it will be necessary to consider adding approximately 25 French-language ELCC services of about 60 spaces each.

The shortage in the other sectors of the city is, proportionally, less significant than in Nepean. Nevertheless, the Central (shortage of 623 spaces) and Vanier (shortage of 416 spaces) sectors would require a significant number of new French-language ELCC services.

Ottawa East

The Ottawa East neighbourhood encompasses the urban part of Ottawa, stretching along the Ottawa River, on the eastern side of the capital. It has 4,305 children and 965 French-language ELCC spaces. This corresponds to a **ratio of 0.22 spaces** per child, or slightly more than 1 space per 5 children. The neighbourhood was divided into three sectors. Table 5 presents this distribution.

Table 5: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Ottawa East neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA*

Sector	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Gloucester	214	2,315	**0.09**
Orléans	649	1,790	**0.36**
Cumberland	102	200	**0.51**
TOTAL – OTTAWA EAST	**965**	**4,305**	**0.22**

The Cumberland sector has the highest ratio. At 0.51 spaces per child, it is a medium-need area. The Orléans sector (649 spaces for 1,790 children) has a ratio of 0.36, just below the threshold for a medium-need area. The Gloucester sector is where demand is least well served. With only 214 spaces for 2,315 children, the observed ratio is 0.09, or 1 space per 11 children. It is therefore a high-need area.

To address the shortage of spaces in the Ottawa East neighbourhood, 2,048 spaces would need to be added. To properly target the location of these new spaces, it is important to clearly understand the needs by sector. Table 6 presents the ideal distribution of these new spaces.

Table 6: *Ideal distribution of new French-language ELCC childcare spaces in the Ottawa East neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA*

Sector	N° of places to create	N° of required centres (average of 60 places per centre)
Gloucester	1 406	24 centres
Orléans	604	10 centres
Cumberland	38	1 centre
TOTAL - OTTAWA-EAST	**2 048**	**35 centres**

More than two thirds of these spaces should be in the Gloucester sector (shortage of 1,406 spaces), though the Orléans sector (shortage of 604 spaces) also has a significant shortage. In the Cumberland sector, one 38-space French-language ELCC service would be sufficient to meet the needs of families.

Ottawa West

The Ottawa West neighbourhood encompasses the urban part of the Ottawa CMA, stretching along the Ottawa River, on the western side of the capital. It has 1,725 children and 423 French-language ELCC spaces. This corresponds to a **ratio of 0.25 spaces** per child, or 1 space per 4 children. The neighbourhood was divided into three sectors. Table 7 presents this distribution.

Table 7: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Ottawa West neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA*

Sector	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Kanata	368	1,145	**0.32**
Stittsville	55	465	**0.12**
West Carleton	0	115	**0.00**
TOTAL – OTTAWA WEST	**423**	**1,725**	**0.25**

As the table shows, individually, all sectors correspond to high-need areas.

The Kanata sector (1,145 children and 368 spaces) has the highest coverage. Indeed, almost all the French-language ELCC services in this neighbourhood of the CMA are located there. However, with a ratio of 0.32, only 1 in 3 children has access to a French-language ELCC space.

In the Stittsville sector (ratio of 0.12), there are two French-language ELCC services and 55 spaces. However, this number is insufficient to serve the 465 children in the sector. The West Carleton sector has no spaces, despite the presence of 115 children.

The shortage of spaces is therefore just as glaring in this neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA as in the previous one. It would be necessary to add 786 spaces to adequately serve it. To properly target where to create these new spaces, we have broken down the needs by sector. Table 8 presents the ideal distribution of these new spaces.

Table 8: *Ideal distribution of new French-language ELCC childcare spaces in the Ottawa West neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA*

Sector	N° of places to create	N° of required centres (average of 60 places per centre)
Kanata	434	7 centres
Stittsville	271	5 centres
West Carleton	81	2 centres
TOTAL - OTTAWA WEST	**786**	**14 centres**

The Kanata sector is where the number of spaces needed is highest. The 434 spaces to be created would likely require adding 7 French-language ELCC services of about 60 spaces each. In the Stittsville sector, 271 spaces would need to be created. Finally, in the West Carleton sector, adding 81 French-language ELCC spaces should be considered.

Ottawa South

The Ottawa South neighbourhood encompasses the part of the Ottawa CMA south of downtown. It consists mainly of rural areas. It has 2,565 children, but no French-language ELCC services. Across the entire Ottawa CMA, it is the area most lacking in spaces.

The neighbourhood was divided between the rural municipality of Osgoode and the rest of the rural ring. Table 9 presents this distribution of children and spaces in this neighbourhood.

Table 9: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Ottawa South neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA*

Sector	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Rural ring	0	2,475	**0.00**
Osgoode	0	90	**0.00**
TOTAL – OTTAWA SOUTH	**0**	**2,565**	**0.00**

The Ottawa rural ring sector is undoubtedly the area where particular attention must be paid. Although a significant number of children live there, they are nevertheless spread out over a relatively large territory. The shortage of 1,733 spaces in this sector means that approximately 30 French-language ELCC services could be added to reach the well-served area threshold. In the rural municipality of Osgoode, the shortage is 63 spaces to reach this threshold.

Table 10 presents the distribution of these spaces to be created in the Ottawa South neighbourhood.

Table 10: *Ideal distribution of new French-language ELCC childcare spaces in the Ottawa South neighbourhood of the Ottawa CMA*

Sector	N° of places to create	N° of required centres (average of 60 places per centre)
Couronne rurale	1733	29 centres
Osgoode	63	1 centre
TOTAL - OTTAWA SOUTH	**1 796**	**30 centres**

Rest of the National Capital

Although the National Capital accounts for a significant share of Eastern Ontario's Francophone population, several sectors located outside the capital also have significant needs in terms of French-language ELCC services. Specifically, outside of Ottawa, there are 1,710 spaces for 9,720 children, representing a ratio of 0.18 spaces per child. This equates to roughly 1 space per 6 children.

To analyze the situation in the rest of the National Capital, we divided it into four sectors:

- Eastern Ontario;
- the Frontenac-Lanark corridor;
- the Hastings-Prince Edward corridor; and
- the Renfrew division.

Table 11 presents the distribution of children and French-language ELCC spaces in these sectors in the rest of the National Capital.

Table 11: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the rest of the National Capital*

Sector	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Eastern Ontario	1,248	6,035	**0.21**
Frontenac-Lanark Corridor	252	1,945	**0.13**
Hastings-Prince Edward Corridor	135	755	**0.18**
Renfrew Division	75	985	**0.08**
TOTAL – REST OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL	**1,710**	**9,720**	**0.18**

This distribution better reflects the geographic, demographic, and linguistic realities of the various sectors of the National Capital. The census divisions used in this analysis are presented in Appendix 3.

Eastern Ontario

The Eastern Ontario sector covers the area between the province of Quebec and the city of Ottawa. It is an area with a strong Francophone presence, with 6,035 children and 1,248 French-language ELCC spaces. With a **ratio of 0.21 spaces** per child, the number of spaces remains insufficient to meet the needs of the sector, characterizing it as a high-need area. Table 12 presents the situation in this sector.

Table 12: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Eastern Ontario*

Census divisions	N° of places	N° of children	Ratio
Prescott and Russell	910	3 730	**0,24**
Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	338	2 305	**0,15**
TOTAL – EASTERN ONTARIO	**1 248**	**6 035**	**0,21**

The two census divisions included in this sector have several French-language ELCC services. In the Prescott and Russell division, there are 21 French-language ELCC services and 910 spaces (ratio of 0.24), while the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry division has 8 French-language ELCC services and 338 spaces (ratio of 0.15). Both divisions are therefore high-need areas.

The shortage of French-language ELCC spaces in the Eastern Ontario sector is thus 2,977 spaces.

Prescott and Russell Division

It has 3,730 children and 910 French-language ELCC spaces. With a ratio of 0.24, this means that 1 in 4 children has access to a French-language ELCC space. It is a high-need area. Table 13 presents the distribution of spaces and children in this census division.

Table 13: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Prescott and Russell division*

Municipality	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Clarence-Rockland	325	1,025	**0.32**
Russell	81	720	**0.11**
La Nation	128	680	**0.19**
Alfred and Plantagenet	115	495	**0.23**
Hawkesbury	112	270	**0.41**
Champlain	74	260	**0.28**
Casselman	75	150	**0.50**
East Hawkesbury	0	130	**0.00**
TOTAL – PRESCOTT AND RUSSELL DIVISION	**910**	**3,730**	**0.24**

This census division has two municipalities where the medium-need area threshold is met. Indeed, in Casselman (ratio of 0.50) and Hawkesbury (ratio of 0.41), the need for spaces is significantly lower than in the other municipalities. Nevertheless, 30 and 77 spaces, respectively, would need to be added to these municipalities to adequately serve them.

The municipality of Clarence-Rockland has the highest number of children. With 1,025 children and 325 French-language ELCC spaces, the observed ratio is 0.32, or 1 space per 3 children. The number of spaces would thus need to be more than doubled (shortage of 393 spaces) to reach a satisfactory level of coverage.

In the rural municipality of Russell, there are 720 children and 81 French-language ELCC spaces. This should justify creating 423 spaces for it to be well served.

The municipality of La Nation has a similar number of children (680 children) and has 128 spaces (ratio of 0.19). There is thus a shortage of 348 spaces.

In Alfred and Plantagenet, the ratio (0.23) is slightly higher than in the two previous municipalities. However, with only 115 spaces for 495 children, it would be necessary to triple the number of spaces to reach the well-served area threshold.

In the municipality of Champlain, the ratio of 0.28 spaces per child is also too low to meet the needs of families, and 108 spaces would need to be added in this community.

Finally, in East Hawkesbury, there are no French-language ELCC services, despite the presence of 130 children, representing a shortage of 89 spaces.

Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Division

In the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry census division, there are 2,305 children and 338 French-language ELCC spaces. This corresponds to a ratio of 0.15, or slightly more than 1 space per 7 children. It is thus a high-need area. Table 14 presents the distribution of spaces and children in this division.

Table 14: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry division*

Municipality	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Cornwall	244	900	**0.27**
South Glengarry	0	370	**0.00**
North Stormont	39	285	**0.14**
South Stormont	39	270	**0.14**
North Glengarry	16	250	**0.06**
North Dundas	0	160	**0.00**
South Dundas	0	70	**0.00**
TOTAL - STORMONT, DUNDAS AND GLENGARRY DIVISION	**338**	**2,305**	**0.15**

Aside from the city of Cornwall, this census division is divided into six rural municipalities.

In Cornwall (900 children and 244 spaces), there are 5 French-language ELCC services. The ratio of 0.27 means that slightly more than 1 in 4 children has access to a space. There is thus a shortage of 386 spaces, the equivalent of approximately 6 services of about 60 spaces each.

In the rural municipalities of South Glengarry (370 children, 0 spaces) and North Glengarry (250 children, 16 spaces), the shortage of spaces is significant, at 259 and 159 spaces, respectively.

This situation is similar in the rural municipalities of South Stormont (270 children, 39 spaces) and North Stormont (285 children, 39 spaces). With ratios of 0.14, the number of spaces would need to be multiplied by 5 to reach the well-served area threshold.

Finally, in the rural municipalities of South Dundas (160 children) and North Dundas (70 children), there are no French-language ELCC services. Given the number of children in these communities, this corresponds to a shortage of 112 spaces and 49 spaces, respectively.

Frontenac-Lanark Corridor

The Frontenac-Lanark corridor follows the Ontario–United States border, south and west of Ottawa. It encompasses the census divisions of Frontenac, Lanark, and Leeds and Grenville. It has 1,945 children and 252 French-language ELCC spaces, or 1 space per 8 children (**ratio of 0.13 spaces**), making it a high-need area. Table 15 presents the situation for this corridor.

Table 15: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Frontenac-Lanark corridor*

Census division	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Frontenac	148	860	**0.17**
Lanark	39	550	**0.07**
Leeds and Grenville	65	535	**0.12**
TOTAL – FRONTENAC-LANARK CORRIDOR	**252**	**1,945**	**0.13**

As can be seen, all three census divisions covered in this corridor have a ratio associated with a high-need area. Although the Frontenac division offers 148 spaces for 860 children (ratio of 0.17), fewer than 1 in 6 children has access to a French-language ELCC space. The situation in the Lanark (ratio of 0.07) and Leeds and Grenville (ratio of 0.12) divisions is even more critical.

The shortage of spaces in this corridor is therefore evident, and more than 1,100 spaces would need to be added to meet the needs of children.

The following sections present a more detailed analysis by census divisions.

Frontenac Division

In the Frontenac division, there are 860 children and 148 French-language ELCC spaces, or 1 space per 6 children (ratio of 0.17), making it a high-need area. Table 16 presents the situation for this division.

Table 16: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Frontenac division*

Municipality	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Kingston	148	785	**0.19**
South Frontenac	0	70	**0.00**
Rest of the division	*0*	*5*	***0.00***
TOTAL – FRONTENAC DIVISION	**148**	**860**	**0.17**

The main city in this census division is Kingston. It accounts for almost all the children, namely 785 of the 860 children in the division. It also has 4 French-language ELCC services and 148 spaces. This means the ratio is 0.19 spaces per child, or slightly less than 1 space per 5 children. It would be necessary to add 402 spaces in Kingston to make it a well-served area.

Outside of Kingston, there are no French-language ELCC services, despite the presence of 75 children. The regional municipality of South Frontenac would thus need a 42-space centre to be well served.

Lanark Division

The Lanark division encompasses 550 children but has only one French-language ELCC service. The 39 spaces are far from sufficient to meet the needs of this division. Table 17 presents the situation for this division.

Table 17: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Lanark division*

Municipality	N° of places	N° of children	Ratio
Carleton Place	39	140	**0.28**
Mississippi Mills	0	100	**0.00**
Beckwith	0	95	**0.00**
Smiths Falls	0	50	**0.00**
Drummond/North Elmsley	0	45	**0.00**
Lanark Highlands	0	45	**0.00**
Montague	0	35	**0.00**
Perth	0	15	**0.00**
Tay Valley	0	15	**0.00**
Rest of the division	*0*	*10*	***0.00***
TOTAL – LANARK DIVISION	**39**	**550**	**0.07**

This division has several communities with at least 10 children. The only French-language ELCC service is in the community with the highest number of children, namely Carleton Place. With 140 children and 39 spaces, this community has a ratio of 0.28, which is too low to reach the well-served area threshold. It would be necessary to add 59 spaces in this municipality to reach this threshold.

The municipalities of Mississippi Mills (shortage of 70 spaces) and Beckwith (shortage of 67 spaces) are the main population centres where no French-language ELCC service is present.

The communities of Smiths Falls (shortage of 35 spaces), Drummond/North Elmsley and Lanark Highlands (shortage of 33 spaces each), and Montague (shortage of 25 spaces) could see the addition of a centre-based ELCC service.

However, there is a shortage of 11 spaces in the municipalities of Perth and Tay Valley. This shortage could likely be more easily addressed through home-based ELCC services.

Leeds and Grenville Division

The Leeds and Grenville division has 535 children and 2 French-language ELCC services. The 65 spaces are insufficient to meet the needs of this area. Table 18 presents the situation for this division.

Table 18: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Leeds and Grenville division*

Municipality	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
North Grenville	65	180	**0.36**
Brockville	0	100	**0.00**
Edwardsburgh/Cardinal	0	60	**0.00**
Augusta	0	40	**0.00**
Elizabethtown-Kitley	0	35	**0.00**
Rideau Lakes	0	30	**0.00**
Leeds and Grenville	0	30	**0.00**
Gananoque	0	20	**0.00**
Merrickville-Wolford	0	20	**0.00**
Athens	0	10	**0.00**
Rest of the division	*0*	*10*	***0.00***
TOTAL – LEEDS AND GRENVILLE DIVISION	**65**	**535**	**0.12**

Both French-language ELCC services are in the community of North Grenville. With 180 children, the resulting ratio is 0.36, just below the medium-need threshold. The number of spaces in this municipality would need to be doubled to reach the well-served area level.

In the communities of Brockville (shortage of 70 spaces) and Edwardsburgh/Cardinal (shortage of 42 spaces), the number of children justifies larger services.

In the communities of Augusta (shortage of 28 spaces), Elizabethtown-Kitley (shortage

of 24 spaces), Rideau Lakes, and Leeds and Grenville (shortage of 21 spaces each), the needs are lower in absolute terms.

Finally, in the communities of Gananoque, Merrickville-Wolford, and Athens, home-based French-language ELCC services would likely be more appropriate to meet the needs.

Hastings-Prince Edward Corridor

The Hastings-Prince Edward corridor follows the Ontario–United States border, west of the Frontenac-Lanark corridor. It encompasses the census divisions of Hastings, Lennox and Addington, and Prince Edward. It has 755 children and 135 French-language ELCC spaces. This corresponds to a **ratio of 0.18 spaces**, or slightly less than 1 space per 5 children, making it a high-need area. Table 19 presents the situation for this corridor.

Table 19: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Hastings-Prince Edward corridor*

Census divisions	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Hastings	135	570	**0.24**
Lennox and Addington	0	185	**0.00**
Prince Edward	0	0	**0.00**
TOTAL – HASTINGS-PRINCE EDWARD CORRIDOR	**135**	**755**	**0.18**

Table 19 clearly shows that all three census divisions covered in this corridor have a ratio associated with a high-need area. The Hastings division (135 spaces for 570 children) has the highest ratio (0.24). Thus, only 1 in 4 children has access to French-language ELCC spaces. In the Lennox and Addington division, there are no spaces, despite the presence of 185 children. The Prince Edward division has no children.

To meet the needs of this corridor, 394 French-language ELCC spaces would need to be added.

The following sections present a more detailed analysis of the two census divisions where children live.

Hastings Division

It has 570 children and 135 French-language ELCC spaces. Overall, this division constitutes a high-need area. Table 20 presents the distribution of spaces and children by municipality in this division.

Table 20: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Hastings division*

Municipality	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Quinte West	0	315	**0.00**
Belleville	135	175	**0.77**
Faraday	0	15	**0.00**
Tweed	0	10	**0.00**
Rest of the division	*0*	*10*	***0.00***
TOTAL – Hastings Division	**135**	**570**	**0.24**

Although half of the children live in the municipality of Quinte West, French-language ELCC spaces are concentrated in the city of Belleville. The city of Belleville (135 spaces for 175 children, ratio of 0.77) thus constitutes a well-served area.

In the regional municipality of Quinte West, 220 spaces would need to be added to adequately serve it.

In the municipalities of Faraday and Tweed, the low number of children could hardly justify a French-language ELCC service larger than a home-based service.

Lennox and Addington Division

The Lennox and Addington division encompasses 185 children but has no French-language ELCC services. This division is therefore a high-need area. Table 21 presents the distribution of spaces and children in this census division.

Table 21: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Lennox and Addington division*

Municipality	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Loyalist	0	110	**0.00**
Greater Napanee	0	55	**0.00**
Stone Mills	0	15	**0.00**
Rest of the division	*0*	*5*	***0.00***
TOTAL – LENNOX AND ADDINGTON DIVISION	**0**	**185**	**0.18**

An analysis of the table shows that there are only three municipalities with at least 10 children in this census division and that each has very different needs.

Indeed, in Loyalist, there is a shortage of 77 spaces, the equivalent of one large French-language ELCC service. In Greater Napanee, the shortage is 38 spaces, or a smaller-sized service. Finally, in Stone Mills (shortage of 11 spaces), home-based French-language ELCC services would be more appropriate to meet the needs of the community.

Renfrew Division

The Renfrew division stretches west of the city of Ottawa, along the Ottawa River, east of Algonquin Provincial Park. It has 985 children and 75 French-language ELCC spaces, representing a **ratio of 0.17 spaces** per child, or 1 space per 6 children. Table 22 presents the situation in this census division.

Table 22: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Renfrew division*

Municipality	N° of spaces	N° of children	Ratio
Petawawa	0	420	**0.00**
Pembroke	30	150	**0.20**
Laurentian Valley	0	105	**0.00**
Arnprior	45	70	**0.64**
Whitewater Region	0	45	**0.00**
Laurentian Hills	0	40	**0.00**
McNab/Braeside	0	40	**0.00**
Renfrew	0	30	**0.00**
Deep River	0	25	**0.00**
Madawaska Valley	0	20	**0.00**
North Algona Wilberforce	0	20	**0.00**
Bonnechere Valley	0	10	**0.00**
Horton	0	10	**0.00**
TOTAL – RENFREW DIVISION	**75**	**985**	**0.08**

The municipality of Arnprior (70 children and 45 spaces) has a ratio of 0.64, placing it in a medium-need area for French-language ELCC services. Only 4 spaces would, therefore, be needed to make the municipality well served. All other municipalities in the Renfrew area are high-need sectors.

The city of Petawawa offers no spaces for its 420 children. It would be necessary to create 294 spaces there for this municipality to be well served.

The municipality of Pembroke offers 30 spaces for 150 children (or 1 space per 5 children). It would be necessary to add 75 spaces in this community to reach the 0.70 ratio threshold.

In the municipalities of Whitewater Region (45 children), Laurentian Hills (4 children), and McNab/Braeside (40 children), there are no French-language ELCC services, representing shortages of 28 to 32 spaces in these communities.

In the municipalities of Renfrew (30 children) and Deep River (25 children), the shortage of spaces is 21 and 18 spaces, respectively.

The other communities (Madawaska Valley, North Algona Wilberforce, Bonnechere Valley, and Horton) could instead benefit from home-based French-language services to address the shortage of spaces, ranging from 7 to 14 spaces depending on the municipality.

5- Conclusion

This study aimed to identify the areas (CMA, census divisions and municipalities) in the National Capital region that experience a shortage of French-language early learning and childcare (ELCC) services. These are areas where the number of available spaces is very insufficient compared to the needs of eligible children aged 0 to 4. Without proposing an ideal model, the study mainly provides a database and descriptive analysis for individuals who plan to start a project of French-language ELCC services in the National Capital.

Overall, Francophone families in the National Capital do not have access to enough full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services. With a **ratio of 0.20 spaces per eligible child** aged 0 to 4, coverage is 1 space per 5 children. This represents a **shortage of 12,877 spaces** for the entire National Capital Region.

Although 60% of the missing spaces are in the Ottawa CMA (shortage of 7,783 spaces), several other areas could benefit from the opening of French-language ELCC services. The cities of Russell (shortage of 423 spaces), Cornwall (shortage of 423 spaces) and Kingston (shortage of 402 spaces) top this list.

Obviously, it is unrealistic to assume that every municipality can support viable French-language ELCC services, given the number of children eligible for French education. Therefore, it is important to use the values presented in this analysis to properly size the French-language ELCC service. In some municipalities, family-based French-language ELCC services may be the best option. These home-based services offer flexibility in how care is provided and help ensure financial stability.

Appendix 1

French-language ELCC services in the National Capital offering full-time spaces as of September 1, 2025

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	N° of available spaces
Alfred and Plantagenet	Centre éducatif Les Petits Trésors – Pavillon Alfred	26
Alfred and Plantagenet	Centre éducatif Les Petits Trésors – Pavillon Plantagenet	42
Alfred and Plantagenet	Centre éducatif Les Petits Trésors	47
Arnprior	Arnprior Heritage Child Care Centre	45
Barrhaven-Manotick	Le Manège – Pierre-Elliott-Trudeau	26
Barrhaven-Manotick	Le Manège – Sainte-Kateri	26
Barrhaven-Manotick	Le Manège – Jean-Robert-Gauthier	34
Barrhaven-Manotick	Centre de l'enfant Aux 4 vents	39
Barrhaven-Manotick	Centre éducatif La Clémentine – Jonathan-Pitre	49
Belleville	Centre éducatif Cité jeunesse	39
Belleville	Centre de garde d'enfants L'Envol	47
Belleville	Military Family Resource Centre	49
Carleton Place	La Coccinelle – J.-L.-Couroux	39
Casselman	Centre éducatif Au jardin des câlins	26
Casselman	Centre éducatif Quatre saisons	49
Champlain	Atelier des Petits Champlain	35
Champlain	Garderie Champlain Daycare	39
Clarence-Rockland	École maternelle coopérative de Russell/ Russell Co-op Nursery School	20
Clarence-Rockland	Centre préscolaire parascolaire St-Mathieu	31
Clarence-Rockland	Garderie municipale Ste-Trinité	39
Clarence-Rockland	Orleans Montessori Children's House Inc.	40
Clarence-Rockland	Garderie parascolaire Carrefour-jeunesse	47
Clarence-Rockland	Tiny Hoppers Rockland	55

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	N° of available spaces
Clarence-Rockland	L'Arche des amis de Russell	93
Cornwall	Centre éducatif Terre des jeunes	31
Cornwall	Centre éducatif Notre-Dame	39
Cornwall	St. John Bosco Children's Centre – Ange Gabriel	39
Cornwall	Centre éducatif Rose des vents	47
Cornwall	Centre éducatif Marie-Tanguay	88
Cumberland	La Coccinelle – Saint-Guillaume	16
Cumberland	La Coccinelle – Arc-en-ciel	39
Cumberland	La Coccinelle – Le Prélude	47
Gloucester	MIFO – École Sainte-Marie	16
Gloucester	Programme Petits pas à trois – École Sainte-Bernadette	16
Gloucester	MIFO – École des Pins	26
Gloucester	Centre éducatif La Clémentine	39
Gloucester	Centre éducatif Les Petits Trésors – Blackburn Daycare	39
Gloucester	Centre éducatif Séraphin-Marion	39
Gloucester	La Coccinelle – La Vérendrye	39
Hawkesbury	AFÉSEO Soleil des petits – Nouvel-Horizon	39
Hawkesbury	AFÉSEO Soleil des petits – Paul-VI	73
Hintonburg	Garderie Tunney's Day Care	67
Kanata	Programme Petits pas à trois – École Roger-St-Denis	16
Kanata	Centre éducatif Cœur des jeunes Saint-Rémi	39
Kanata	Centre préscolaire et parascolaire L'Étoile filante de Kanata Sud	52
Kanata	Kanata North Early Learning Centre	54
Kanata	Centre préscolaire et parascolaire L'Étoile filante de Kanata Nord	57
Kanata	Centre éducatif Cœur des jeunes – Roger-Saint-Denis	60
Kanata	Kanata Heritage Child Care Centre	90
Kingston	La Garderie Croque soleil – Les Explorateurs	32
Kingston	La Maison Montessori Kingston inc.	32
Kingston	La Garderie Croque soleil de Kingston	35

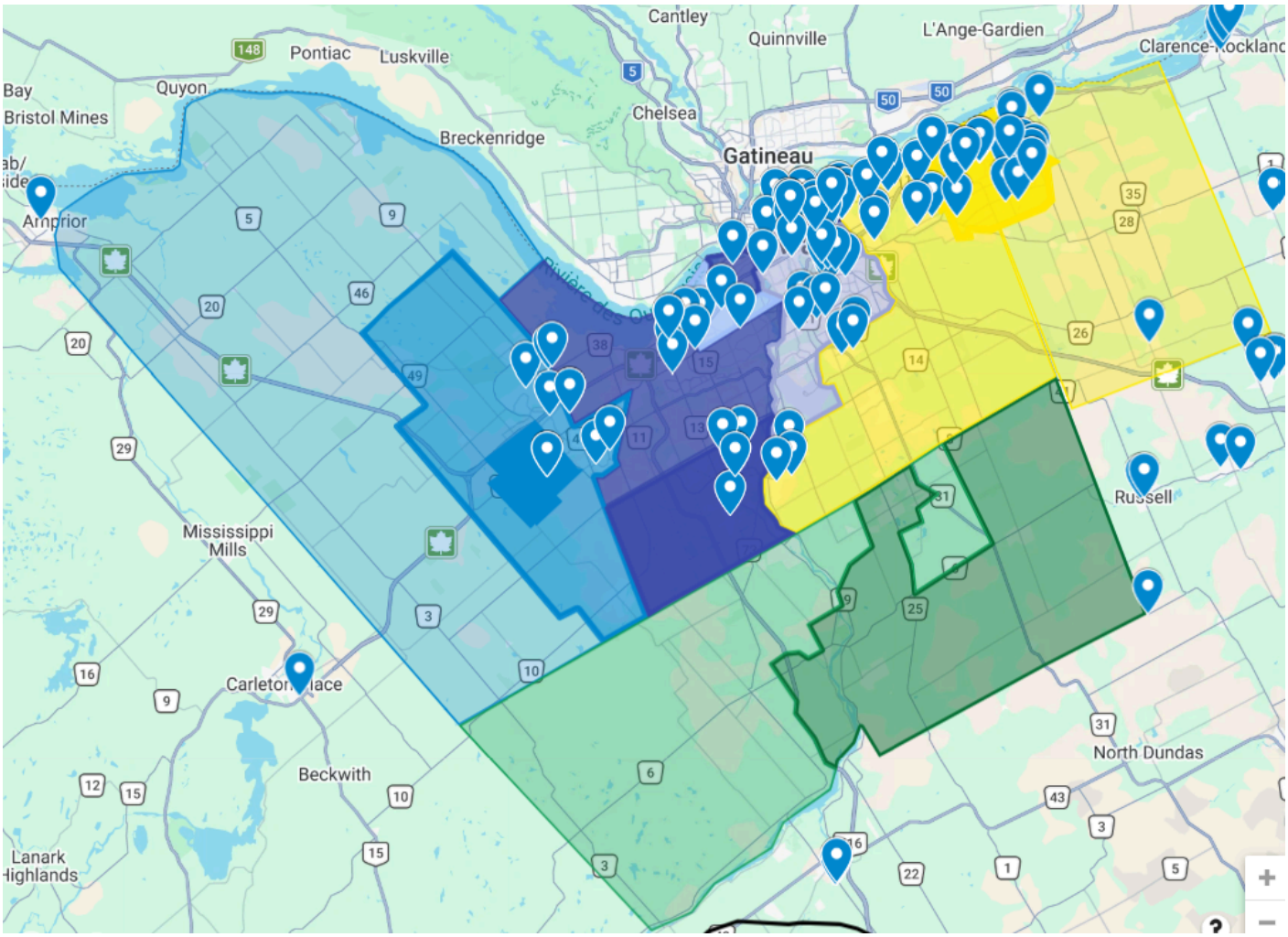
Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	N° of available spaces
Kingston	La Garderie éducative de Kingston	49
La Nation	Centre éducatif Les Petits Trésors – Pavillon St-Albert	34
La Nation	Centre éducatif Au jardin des câlins – Limoges	39
La Nation	Garderie des Amis, Limoges 2 – Bambins et préscolaires	55
Nepean	Programme Petits pas à trois – École Jean-Robert-Gauthier	16
Nepean	Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario – Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre Preschool	26
Nepean	Le Cerf-Volant – Édouard-Bond	26
Nepean	Le Cerf-Volant – École Terre-des-Jeunes	39
Nepean	Le Cerf-Volant – Maison de la francophonie	39
Nepean	Acadekidz	44
Nepean	Centre éducatif La Clémentine – Marie-Curie	54
Nepean	Sessila Academy Inc./Académie Séssila inc.	63
Nepean	Centre de l'enfant Aux 4 vents	65
Nepean	Centre des Petits d'Ottawa (2005) inc.	93
Nepean	Ottawa Montessori School	150
North Glengarry	Centre éducatif Elda-Rouleau	16
North Grenville	Centre de garde d'enfants Notre-Dame	26
North Grenville	Centre éducatif Rivière Rideau	39
North Stormont	Centre éducatif Notre-Dame du Rosaire	39
Orléans	Programme Petits pas à trois – École Reine-des-Bois	16
Orléans	Programme Petits pas à trois – École St-Joseph	16
Orléans	La Coccinelle – Reine des Bois	24
Orléans	La Coccinelle – Béatrice-Desloges	24
Orléans	MIFO – École des Pionniers	26
Orléans	MIFO – École des Voyageurs	32
Orléans	MIFO – École St. Joseph d'Orléans	32
Orléans	La Coccinelle – Des Sentiers	36
Orléans	La Coccinelle	39
Orléans	MIFO – École de l'Odyssée	39

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	N° of available spaces
Orléans	La Coccinelle – De La Découverte	42
Orléans	MIFO – École Étoile de l'Est	48
Orléans	Garderie Heritage Child Care Centre	57
Orléans	La Coccinelle – Alain-Fortin	65
Orléans	Centre parascolaire Alpha 3-12 d'Orléans inc.	73
Orléans	Kids Kingdom	80
Ottawa	Agence de garde La Maisonnée	9
Ottawa	La Coccinelle – Au cœur d'Ottawa	16
Ottawa	Le Manège – Élisabeth-Bruyère	26
Ottawa	Centre éducatif Pinocchio Educational Centre	31
Ottawa	Children on the Hill/Les enfants de la colline	34
Ottawa	Centre éducatif La Clémentine – Bernard-Grandmaître	37
Ottawa	Centre éducatif Brin de soleil	39
Ottawa	Centre éducatif La Clémentine – Michel-Dupuis	39
Ottawa	Dow's Lake Day Care/Garderie Lac Dow	39
Ottawa	Le Cerf-Volant – École Marius-Barbeau	39
Ottawa	Le Cerf-Volant – George-Étienne-Cartier	39
Ottawa	Riverside Montessori Pre-School	39
Ottawa	Garderie Bernadette Child Care Center	49
Ottawa	Service à l'enfance Aladin – Site Sainte-Anne	49
Ottawa	La Coccinelle – Lamoureux	55
Ottawa	Garderie Providence Day Care Centre	62
Ottawa	Garderie Beausoleil	63
Ottawa	Garderie Oasis Child Care Centre	65
Ottawa	Centre éducatif Renée-Tassé	100
Pembroke	Centre éducatif L'Équinoxe	30
Russell	Centre éducatif de la Rivière Castor	39
Russell	Garderie des Amis	42
South Stormont	Centre éducatif Ste-Lucie	39
Stittsville	Programme Petits pas à trois – École Jean-Paul-II	16
Stittsville	Le Manège – Jean-Paul-II	39

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	N° of available spaces
Vanier	Programme Petits pas à trois – École Horizon Jeunesse	8
Vanier	Centre éducatif Les Débrouillards	16
Vanier	Centre éducatif les Débrouillards – École Mauril-Bélanger	16
Vanier	Centre éducatif Tournesol	34
Vanier	Centre éducatif Les Petites Frimousses et Centre éducatif spécialisé L'Image	37
Vanier	Andrew Fleck Children's Services et Centre éducatif Sunflower Child Care Centre	47
Vanier	Centre éducatif Brin de soleil – Horizon Jeunesse	49
Vanier	Service à l'enfance Aladin – Site du Rocher	49
Vanier	St. Laurent Academy/Académie St. Laurent	84
Westboro-Carlington	First Journey Montessori Inc.	31
Total		**5,155**

Appendix 2

Division of the Ottawa CMA by sector and location of French-language ELCC services as of September 1, 2025



Caption

Downtown

Ottawa West

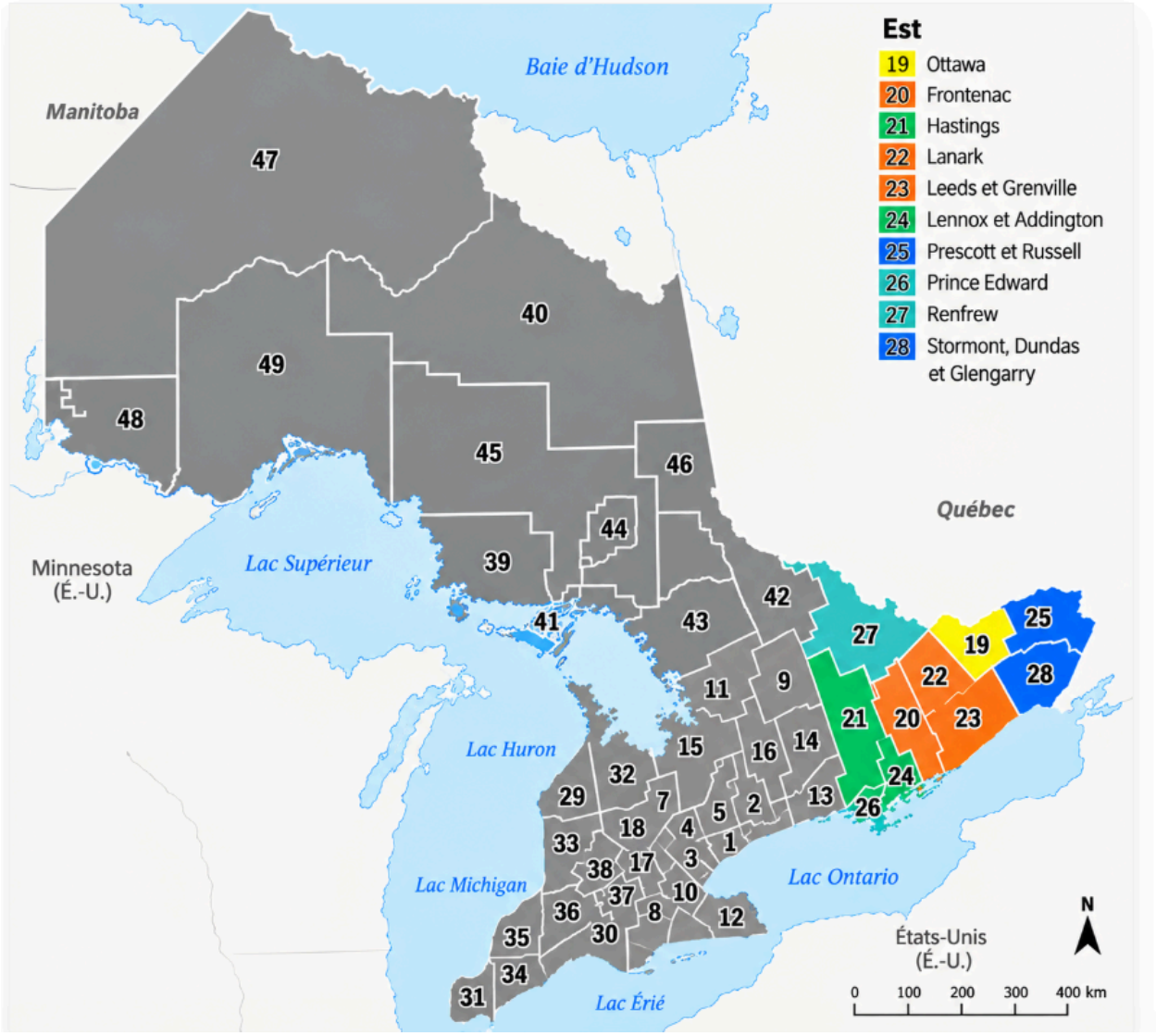
Ottawa East

Ottawa South

French-language ELCC service

Appendix 3

National Capital census divisions
(Statistics Canada, 2021)



Ottawa CMA

Eastern Ontario

Frontenac–Lanark Corridor

Renfrew Division

Hastings-Prince Edward Corridor