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

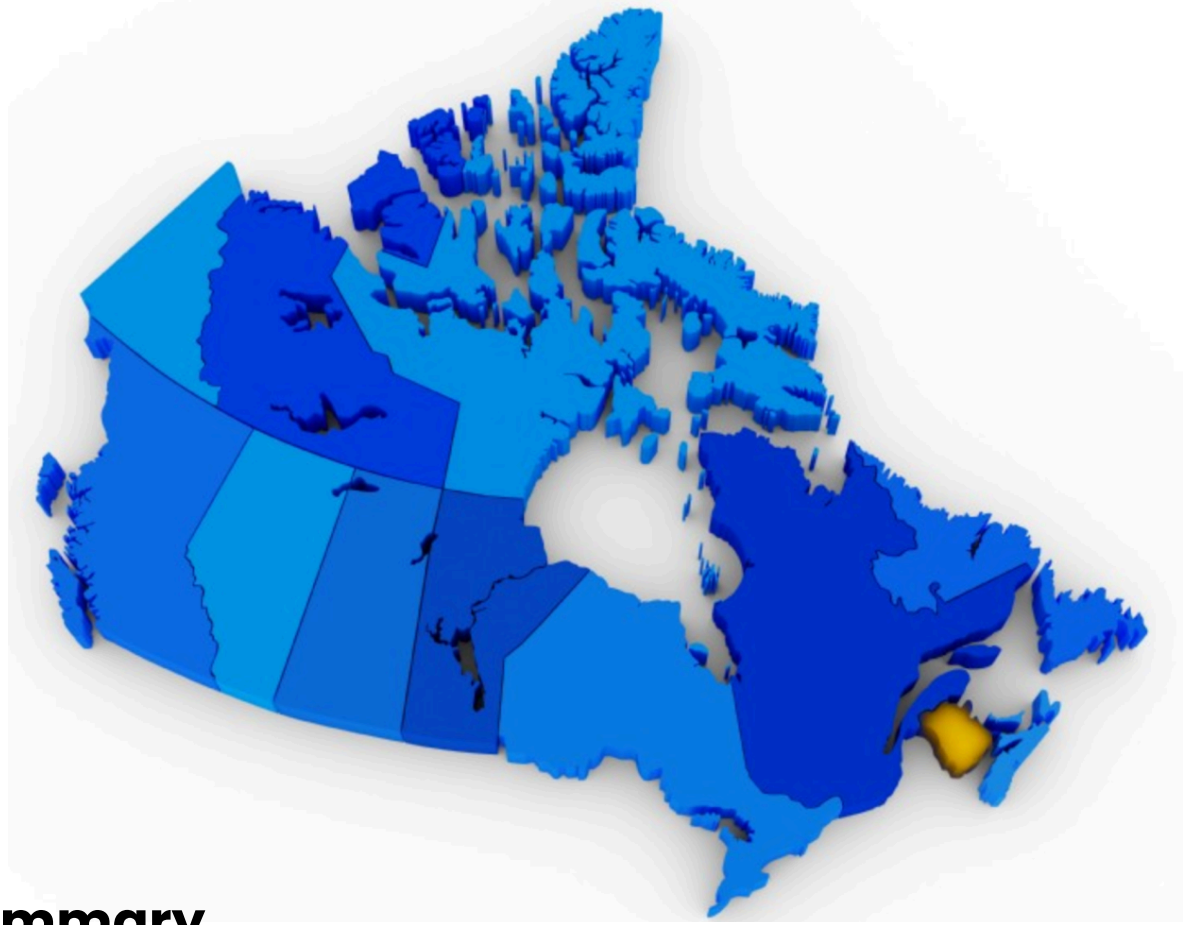
Profile of French-language ELCC services for children aged 0 to 4 eligible for French-language education in

New Brunswick

cnpf

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Summary

Several communities in New Brunswick 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 New Brunswick as of September 1, 2025, and suggests communities to target to optimize the impact of these new spaces.

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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.

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

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

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 Canadians 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 communities of the province of New Brunswick, 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 des garderies éducatives du Nouveau-Brunswick (AFGÉNB) [Francophone Association of Early Childhood Daycares of New Brunswick], the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and direct calls to various French-language ELCC services. The identified spaces are accurate as of September 1, 2025. We have thus identified 227 French-language ELCC services offering a total of 6,319 full-time spaces across the province of New Brunswick[3].

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 New Brunswick, we used the datasets that locate the children in the province 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.

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

[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.

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)[4]. 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.

[4] 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.[5] 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[6] arrives at a similar conclusion: two thirds of parents mention location as a determining factor in choosing childcare services for their child.

[5] 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.
[6] Statistics Canada, *Table 42-10-0006-01 Parent and guardian reasons for using main childcare arrangement, children aged 0 to 5 years*, 2025.

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.

4- Presentation of results

According to the 2021 *Census of Population*, there were 11,240 children aged 0 to 4 eligible for French-language education in New Brunswick. With 6,319 full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services, the provincial average ratio is **0.56 spaces per child**, or 1 space for every 2 children.

As a whole, the province is considered to have a **medium-need** area. For it to be well served, 1,549 spaces would need to be added. This places the province in a relatively advantageous position compared to other provinces regarding access to French-language ELCC services. Table 1 presents a summary of the situation regarding available French-language ELCC spaces and children for the three areas of the province.

Table 1: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in New Brunswick*

Area	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
North-East	1,672	2,885	**0.58**
North-West	1,021	1,350	**0.76**
Southern	3,626	7,005	**0.52**
Total province	**6,319**	**11,240**	**0.56**

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 sectors where the needs are greatest.

The North-East Area

The North-East area corresponds to the portion of the Acadian Peninsula running along the Baie des Chaleurs and the Québec border. It covers the territory of the Gloucester and Restigouche census divisions. There are 2,885 children eligible for French-language education. With 1,672 full-time spaces distributed among 59 French-language ELCC services, this area is considered to have a **ratio of 0.58** spaces per child, making it a **medium-need** area.

The situation in the two census divisions is similar. In Gloucester County, there are 1,239 spaces for 2,045 children, representing a ratio of 0.61 spaces per child. In Restigouche County, there are 433 spaces for 840 children, which is a ratio of 0.52. Thus, both counties are individually considered medium-need areas. Table 2 presents this situation.

Table 2: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the North-East area of New Brunswick*

Census division	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Gloucester	1,239	2,045	**0.61**
Restigouche	433	840	**0.52**
Total North-East area	**1,672**	**2,885**	**0.58**

Gloucester County

The Gloucester census division includes 27 communities and rural communities with at least 10 children eligible for French-language education. These communities are presented in Table 3.

As the main urban centre of the area, the community of Bathurst has 275 children and 245 full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services. With a ratio of 0.89, this makes the community a well-served area. However, this finding quickly changes if the rural municipality of Bathurst is added. With an additional 100 children and only 5 spaces, the Bathurst area becomes a medium-need area (0.67).

A similar observation can be made for the Beresford area. The central community of Beresford has 82 spaces for 115 children, making it an area well served by current French-language ELCC services. However, when taking into account the neighbouring communities of Nigadoo (0.00), Petit-Rocher (2.31), Pointe-Verte (0.00), and the rural community of Beresford (0.55), the overall ratio for the area becomes 0.68, just below the adequate coverage level.

The Shippagan (overall ratio of 0.84) and Caraquet (1.12) areas represent areas with enough full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services. Conversely, the Paquetville (overall ratio of 0.26), New Bandon (0.23), and Inkerman (0.22) areas all represent high-need areas. Finally, the Tracadie (0.54), Saint-Isidore (0.54), and Allardville (0.63) areas have a medium-need for spaces.

Table 3: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Gloucester County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Tracadie (RM)	244	455	**0.54**
Bathurst	245	275	**0.89**
Bathurst (RM)	5	100	**0.05**
Beresford	82	115	**0.71**
Nigadoo	0	45	**0.00**
Petit-Rocher	81	35	**2.31**
Pointe-Verte	0	10	**0.00**
Beresford (RM)	104	190	**0.55**
Shippagan	89	100	**0.89**
Lamèque	5	35	**0.14**
Sainte-Marie–Saint-Raphaël	0	20	**0.00**
Le Goulet	0	15	**0.00**
Shippagan (RM)	134	120	**1.12**
Caraquet	74	100	**0.74**
Bas-Caraquet	42	20	**2.10**
Caraquet (RM)	42	20	**2.10**
Paquetville	21	25	**0.84**
Paquetville (RM)	0	55	**0.00**
Saint-Isidore	49	45	**1.09**
Saint-Isidore (RM)	0	45	**0.00**
Bertrand	28	40	**0.70**
Saint-Léolin	0	15	**0.00**
Maisonnette	0	15	**0.00**
Grande-Anse	0	25	**0.00**
New Bandon (RM)	0	25	**0.00**
Inkerman (RM)	14	65	**0.22**
Allardville (RM)	22	35	**0.63**
Total Gloucester	**1,239**	**2,045**	**0.61**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality

There is an overall shortage of 193 spaces across the county. To maximize the impact of these spaces, more than a third of them (75) should be created in the Tracadie area. Given the scattered population, it is difficult to pinpoint a specific community where these spaces should be added. The villages of Nigadoo (shortage of 32 spaces) and Lamèque (shortage of 20 spaces) are communities where a new facility-based French-language ELCC service could also be considered.

Restigouche County

Restigouche County has 840 children and 433 full-time spaces distributed among 19 French-language ELCC services. With a **ratio of 0.52**, the county represents a **medium-need** area. Table 4 presents the distribution of spaces and children across the county's communities.

Table 4: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Restigouche County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Campbellton	61	130	**0.47**
Tide Head	0	30	**0.00**
Atholville (RM)	96	105	**0.91**
Kedgwick (RM)	44	105	**0.42**
Saint-Quentin	125	85	**1.47**
Saint-Quentin (RM)	0	70	**0.00**
Eel River Crossing	0	65	**0.00**
Charlo	0	35	**0.00**
Balmoral	107	65	**1.64**
Dalhousie	0	60	**0.00**
Dalhousie (RM)	0	30	**0.00**
Addington (RM)	0	20	**0.00**
Eldon (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Rest of the county	*0*	*25*	***0.00***
Total Restigouche	**433**	**840**	**0.52**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality

The county's main community, Campbellton, has 130 children. It constitutes a medium-need area thanks to its three French-language ELCC services offering 61 spaces. When adding the neighbouring community of Tide Head and the rural

community of Atholville, the area's ratio increases to 0.59, but this remains insufficient to adequately meet the area's needs.

The village of Saint-Quentin has the highest number of spaces (125) in French-language ELCC services. With only 85 children to serve, this makes it a well-served area. Even when adding the rural community, the resulting ratio is 0.81, which represents a well-served community.

Balmoral (ratio of 1.64) has the highest number of spaces per child in the entire county. However, it is likely that children from the neighbouring communities of Charlo, Eel River Crossing, and Dalhousie also attend these French-language ELCC services, as none of those communities offer French-language spaces. The 107 spaces are therefore insufficient to meet the needs of the area (ratio of 0.42).

In total, there is a shortage of 155 full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services across Restigouche County. To maximize the impact of these spaces, it would be wise to target the communities of Eel River Crossing (shortage of 46 spaces), Dalhousie (42 spaces), and Campbellton (30 spaces). The rural community of Kedgwick (30 spaces) could also benefit from French-language ELCC services.

The North-West Area

The North-West area of New Brunswick encompasses Madawaska and Victoria counties, which run along the Québec border—west of the Baie des Chaleurs—and the United States border. There are 1,350 children eligible for French-language education in this area. Given the presence of 37 French-language ELCC services offering 1,021 full-time spaces, the area is considered **well served**. Table 5 presents the distribution of children and spaces across this area.

Table 5: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the North-West area of New Brunswick*

Census division	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Madawaska	813	1,040	**0.78**
Victoria	208	310	**0.67**
Total North-West area	**1,021**	**1,350**	**0.76**

Although the early childhood services situation is acceptable when looking at the area, it is worth looking more closely at the situation within these two counties. Indeed, several communities fall into less well-served categories when evaluated individually.

Madawaska County

Madawaska County has 31 French-language ELCC services offering 813 full-time spaces. With 1,040 children in the county, this number of spaces is **sufficient** to meet the needs of families (**ratio of 0.78**). Table 6 presents the situation regarding spaces and children in the county.

Table 6: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Madawaska County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Edmundston	537	460	**1.17**
Saint-Basile (IR)	0	25	**0.00**
Saint-Basile (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Lac Baker	0	20	**0.00**
Haut-Madawaska (RM)	71	115	**0.62**
Saint-Joseph (RM)	0	60	**0.00**
Saint-Jacques (RM)	61	50	**1.22**
Rivière-Verte	0	20	**0.00**
Rivière-Verte (RM)	0	40	**0.00**
Sainte-Anne-de-Madawaska	21	35	**0.60**
Sainte-Anne (RM)	0	35	**0.00**
Saint-Léonard	54	50	**1.08**
Saint-Léonard (RM)	0	35	**0.00**
Saint-André (RM)	69	70	**0.99**
Rest of the county	*0*	*15*	***0.00***
Total Madawaska	**813**	**1,040**	**0.78**

Notes: RM = Rural Municipality; IR = Indigenous reserve

This county includes the city of Edmundston. With 460 children eligible for French-language education, it represents the third-largest concentration of Francophones after the cities of Moncton-Dieppe and Fredericton. Edmundston has 20 French-language ELCC services and 537 full-time spaces. This allows the city to be well served, offering more than one space per child (ratio of 1.17).

The village of Saint-Léonard (ratio of 1.08) as well as the rural communities of Saint-Jacques (1.22) and Saint-André (0.99) all have enough spaces to meet the needs of their respective communities.

The rural community of Haut-Madawaska has three French-language ELCC services and 71 spaces. Although this is a significant offering, it is insufficient for the number of children (115), making it a medium-need sector (ratio of 0.62). The situation is similar for the village of Sainte-Anne-de-Madawaska (ratio of 0.60).

In the case of the other communities, although there are between 10 and 60 children, there are no facility-based or home-based French-language ELCC services present, meaning they represent high-need areas.

Victoria County

Victoria County includes six French-language ELCC services offering educational services in French and 208 spaces within these services. With 310 children, this results in a **ratio of 0.67**, just below the threshold for a **well-served** area. Table 7 presents these findings.

Table 7: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Victoria County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Grand-Sault	158	140	**1.13**
Grand Falls (RM)	0	45	**0.00**
Drummond	50	15	**3.33**
Drummond (RM)	0	75	**0.00**
Denmark (RM)	0	20	**0.00**
Perth-Andover	0	10	**0.00**
Plaster Rock	0	10	**0.00**
Total Victoria	**208**	**310 ***	**0.67**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality
* The total differs due to Statistics Canada's rounding of values.

More than 75% of the spaces in this county are in the town of Grand Falls. With spaces for 140 children, this results in more than one space per child (ratio of 1.13). If parents from the neighbouring rural community of Grand Falls travel to town and use services in Grand Falls, the ratio drops to 0.85, but the town remains a well-served area.

The county's other two French-language ELCC services are in the village of Drummond. It appears that most children live in the surrounding rural community. Looking at the village and the rural community of Drummond together, there are 50 spaces for 90 children, representing a ratio of 0.55. This community would, therefore, be considered a medium-need area, and an additional 13 spaces would be required to meet demand.

For the other communities, the low number of children could justify adding home-based French-language ELCC services.

The Southern Area

The Southern area of the province covers the entire area bordering the United States (starting from Route 109), Nova Scotia, and the Northumberland Strait. It includes 11 counties, namely Westmorland, Kent, York, Northumberland, Sunbury, Saint John, Albert, Kings, Carleton, Charlotte, and Queens.

This area has 7,005 children and 3,626 full-time spaces in French-language ELCC services, representing a **ratio of 0.52** spaces per child. This ratio categorizes the area as having **medium needs**. Table 8 presents the distribution of children and spaces in childcare centres.

Table 8: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in the Southern area of New Brunswick*

Census division	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Westmorland	2,230	3,490	**0.64**
Kent	432	840	**0.51**
York	316	765	**0.41**
Northumberland	226	440	**0.51**
Sunbury	95	375	**0.25**
Saint John	168	365	**0.46**
Albert	0	295	**0.00**
Kings	159	290	**0.55**
Carleton	0	65	**0.00**
Charlotte	0	50	**0.00**
Queens	0	30	**0.00**
Total Southern area	**3,626**	**7,005**	**0.52**

To meet the needs of this area, 1,274 spaces would need to be added. A more specific analysis by county will help identify the best locations to target for adding these spaces.

Westmorland County

The Westmorland County area has the highest number of children eligible for French-language education in the entire province. It is therefore not surprising that 85 of the 227 French-language ELCC services are in this county. Offering 2,230 spaces for the 3,490 children living there, its **ratio sits just below the threshold for well-served areas.** Table 9 presents the distribution of spaces and children by municipality.

Table 9: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Westmorland County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Moncton	966	1,460	**0.66**
Dieppe	791	920	**0.86**
Moncton (RM)	0	285	**0.00**
Memramcook (RM)	114	185	**062**
Shediac	97	140	**0.69**
Shediac (RM)	66	155	**0.43**
Cap-Pelé	86	65	**1.32**
Beaubassin-Est (RM)	110	210	**0.52**
Salisbury	0	15	**0.00**
Salisbury (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Sackville	0	25	**0.00**
Dorchester	0	15	**0.00**
Botsford	0	10	**0.00**
Total Westmorland	**2,230**	**3,490 ***	**0.64**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality
* The total differs due to Statistics Canada's rounding of values.

Moncton-Dieppe is the city in the county with the highest number of children eligible for French-language education in the entire province. There are 2,380 children and 65 French-language ELCC services, providing a total of 1,757 spaces. With a ratio of

0.74, the city is categorized as a well-served area. However, the rural municipality of Moncton includes an additional 285 children for whom no spaces are available. When these children are added to the city's total, the ratio drops to 0.66, changing the area's status to medium needs. Approximately 110 spaces would be required for the city of Moncton-Dieppe and its surrounding rural community.

The community of Shediac and its surrounding rural community account for six French-language ELCC services and 163 spaces for the 295 children residing there. This results in a ratio of 0.55 for the area, placing it in the medium-need category. Although the needs are less acute in absolute terms compared to Moncton-Dieppe, Shediac is still short 44 spaces.

The rural community of Memramcook is also just a few spaces away from being a well-served community. With a ratio of 0.62, creating 16 spaces would resolve the supply issue.

The rural community of Beaubassin-Est and the village of Cap-Pelé have nine French-language ELCC services and 196 spaces in French-language childcare centres. This is sufficient for the area, resulting in a ratio of 0.71.

The other communities in the county where children reside have no French-language ELCC services. Consequently, these communities are classified as high-need areas. Looked at individually, they could benefit from home-based French-language ELCC services.

Kent County

Kent County has 840 children eligible for French-language education. The 22 French-language ELCC services offer 432 spaces for these children. With a **ratio of 0.51**, the county represents a **medium-need** area. An additional 156 spaces would need to be added to achieve adequate coverage for the county. Table 10 presents the distribution of spaces and children by municipality.

Table 10: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Kent County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Dundas (RM)*	0	140	**0.00**
Cocagne (RM)	125	90	**1.39**
Saint-Antoine	77	85	**0.91**
Bouctouche	66	75	**0.88**
Wellington (RM)	28	80	**0.35**
Sainte-Marie-de-Kent (RM)	30	75	**0.40**
Saint-Charles (RM)	0	65	**0.00**
Saint-Louis-de-Kent	40	25	**1.60**
Saint-Louis (RM)	0	45	**0.00**
Richibucto	66	30	**2.20**
Rexton	0	10	**0.00**
Richibucto (RM)	0	45	**0.00**
Acadieville (RM)	0	25	**0.00**
Carleton (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Weldford (RM)	0	10	**0.00**
Saint-Paul (RM)	0	10	**0.00**
Rest of the county	*0*	*15*	***0.00***
Total Kent	**432**	**840**	**0.51**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality

The rural community of Dundas has the highest number of children (140). However, it

has no French-language ELCC services. This makes it the second-largest locality in the province with children but zero available spaces. Yet, the presence of children eligible for French-language education would justify creating a 98-space facility-based French-language ELCC service in this rural community. Conversely, the rural community of Cocagne, with 125 spaces for 90 children, benefits from a ratio of 1.39, which is well above one space per child.

The rural community of Wellington as well as the villages of Bouctouche and Saint-Antoine account for 171 spaces for 240 children, making it a well-served area (0.71). A similar result is found for the rural community of Richibucto, including the villages of Richibucto and Rexton (66 spaces for 85 children, representing a ratio of 0.78).

The rural communities of Sainte-Marie-de-Kent (ratio of 0.40) and Saint-Louis-de-Kent (ratio of 0.57) lack spaces and are thus classified as medium-need areas. The other rural communities have no French-language ELCC services to meet local needs. In the case of Saint-Charles, a 44-space facility-based French-language ELCC service should be added to meet local demand. In the remaining communities, home-based French-language ELCC services could fill the gaps.

York County

York County has 765 children and nine French-language services offering full-time spaces. With 316 spaces, the resulting **ratio is 0.41**, meaning the county is classified as a **medium-need** area. However, almost all these spaces are located in Fredericton. Table 11 presents the distribution of these spaces and children by community.

Table 11: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in York County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Fredericton	306	485	**0.63**
Douglas (RM)	0	50	**0.00**
Hanwell (RM)	0	50	**0.00**
Saint Marys (RM)	0	40	**0.00**
New Maryland	10	40	**0.25**
New Maryland (RM)	0	35	**0.00**
Bright (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Kingsclear (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Prince William (RM)	0	10	**0.00**
Rest of the county	*0*	*25*	***0.00***
Total York	**316**	**765**	**0.41**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality

Fredericton, the capital, is the third-largest city in the province, after Moncton and Saint John. However, its concentration of children eligible for French-language education is the second highest, following Moncton-Dieppe. It is therefore not surprising to find seven French-language services there. With 306 spaces for 485 children (ratio of 0.63), the city is just 34 spaces away from being considered well served.

The reality is quite different for the rest of the county. Aside from two home-based French-language ELCC services in New Maryland (for a total of 10 spaces), there are no French-language ELCC services in the other communities. Yet, rural communities such as Douglas (50 children), Hanwell (50 children), Saint Marys (40 children), and New Maryland (35 children) could benefit from facility-based French-language ELCC services ranging from 25 to 35 spaces.

For the rural communities of Bright, Kingsclear, and Prince William, the dispersion of

Francophone children suggests that home-based French-language ELCC services would be more appropriate to meet the demand.

Northumberland County

Northumberland County has 440 children eligible for French-language education and seven French-language ELCC services with full-time spaces. These seven services offer 226 spaces, which is approximately 1 space for every 2 children (**ratio of 0.51**). Table 12 presents the distribution of these spaces and children by municipality.

Table 12: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Northumberland County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Miramichi	100	145	**0.69**
Alnwick (RM)	44	115	**0.38**
Neguac	20	50	**0.40**
Hardwicke (RM)	37	35	**1.06**
Rogersville	25	25	**1.00**
Rogersville (RM)	0	25	**0.00**
Glenelg (RM)	0	20	**0.00**
Newcastle (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Northesk (RM)	0	10	**0.00**
Total Northumberland	**226**	**440**	**0.51**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality

Miramichi, the main community, is just two spaces away from being a well-served area.

The rural community of Hardwicke and the village of Neguac show a similar situation. With a combined population of 85 children and 57 spaces, the area is short just three spaces from being a well-served community.

The rural community of Alnwick presents a greater challenge. With 115 children but only 44 spaces, an additional 33-space French-language ELCC service would be required to

meet the community's needs. As for Rogersville, although the village itself is well served (25 spaces for 25 children, or a ratio of 1.00), adding the surrounding rural community—which also has 25 children—drops the ratio to 0.50, making it a medium-need community.

Finally, for the rural communities of Glenelg, Newcastle, and Northesk, the dispersion of children suggests that adding home-based French-language ELCC services would be more appropriate to serve these communities.

Sunbury County

Sunbury County has 375 children eligible for French-language education. Table 13 presents the distribution of these spaces and children by community in this county.

Table 13: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Sunbury County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Oromocto	95	180	**0.53**
Lincoln (RM)	0	95	**0.00**
Burton (RM)	0	35	**0.00**
Maugerville (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Rest of the county	*0*	*50*	***0.00***
Total Sunbury	**95**	**375**	**0.25**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality

The three French-language services found there are all located in Oromocto. With 95 spaces for 180 children, Oromocto offers 1 space for every 2 children (ratio of 0.53). This town would need to add a 31-space French-language service to adequately meet demand.

The county's three rural communities (Lincoln, Burton, and Maugerville) all lack a childcare centre. In Lincoln, however, the number of children could justify adding 67

spaces, while in Burton, a 25-space centre could be considered. The dispersion of children in the rural community of Maugerville suggests that adding two home-based French-language ELCC services would be more appropriate to meet local needs.

Saint John County

Saint John County includes only two communities with enough children eligible for French-language education, namely the city of Saint John and the community of Simonds. With a total of 365 children and 168 spaces in French-language ELCC services, the county is classified as a **medium-need** area (**ratio of 0.46**). Table 14 presents the situation in Saint John County.

Table 14: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Saint John County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Saint John	168	335	**0.50**
Simonds	0	15	**0.00**
Rest of the county	*0*	*15*	***0.00***
Total Saint John	**168**	**365**	**0.46**

As can be seen, the three French-language ELCC services in the area are all located in the city of Saint John. The city remains a medium-need area with a ratio of 0.50. An additional 67 spaces would need to be added to allow it to be well served. For the community of Simonds, two home-based French-language services would meet the community's needs.

Albert County

Albert County has 295 children but no French-language ELCC services. It is therefore classified as a **high-need** area. Table 15 presents the situation in this county.

Table 15: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Albert County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Riverview	0	205	**0.00**
Coverdale (RM)	0	45	**0.00**
Hillsborough (RM)	0	15	**0.00**
Hillsborough	0	10	**0.00**
Rest of the county	*0*	*20*	***0.00***
Total Albert	**0**	**295**	**0.00**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality

The community of Riverview, with 205 children, could justify the creation of 144 spaces in French-language ELCC services to meet demand. The rural community of Coverdale (short 32 spaces) represents another community where the creation of a French-language ELCC service is justified. For the community of Hillsborough, home-based French-language ELCC services would be more appropriate to properly serve the community.

Kings County

Kings County has 290 children eligible for French-language education. With four French-language ELCC services and 159 spaces, it is classified as a **medium-need** area (**ratio of 0.55**). Table 16 presents the situation in this county.

Table 16: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Kings County*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Quispamsis	159	190	**0.84**
Rothesay	0	55	**0.00**
Hampton	0	20	**0.00**
Grand Bay-Westfield	0	15	**0.00**
Kingston (RM)	0	10	**0.00**
Sussex (RM)	0	10	**0.00**
Total Kings	**159**	**290 ***	**0.55**

Note: RM = Rural Municipality
* The total differs due to Statistics Canada's rounding of values.

The four French-language ELCC services are in the community of Quispamsis. With 190 children in this community, it is classified as a well-served area (ratio of 0.84).

However, the other communities in the county are all high-need areas. While the community of Rothesay could benefit from a 39-space French-language ELCC service, the children in Hampton and Grand Bay-Westfield are too dispersed to justify anything other than home-based French-language ELCC services.

Carleton, Charlotte and Queens Counties

The last three counties in the Southern area have been grouped together because they all share a similar situation. First, there are no French-language ELCC services in these areas, meaning all three counties are classified as **high-need** areas. Second, although there is an overall shortage of 102 spaces across these three counties, these individual communities and rural municipalities have too few children to justify anything other than home-based French-language ELCC services. Table 17 presents the situation in these counties.

Table 17: *Distribution of spaces in French-language ELCC services and children in Carleton, Charlotte and Queens Counties*

Municipality	No of spaces	No of children	Ratio
Carleton County	0	65	**0.00**
Woodstock	0	10	**0.00**
Woodstock (RM)	0	10	**0.00**
Richmond (RM)	0	10	**0.00**
Charlotte County	0	50	**0.00**
Grand Manan	0	10	**0.00**
St. Stephen	0	10	**0.00**
Queens County	0	30	**0.00**
Total Carleton, Charlotte and Queens	**0**	**145**	**0.00**

5- Conclusion

This study aimed to identify the areas and municipalities in New Brunswick that experience a shortage of French-language early learning and childcare services (ELCC), where the number of available spaces is very insufficient compared to the needs of children eligible for French-language education 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 province.

Overall, Francophone families in New Brunswick do not have access to enough full-time French-language spaces in French-language ELCC services. With a **ratio of 0.56 spaces per** eligible **child** aged 0 to 4, coverage is sufficient for the province to be rated at a **medium-need** level. This still represents a **shortage of 1,549** spaces across the province.

However, the shortage of spaces is not concentrated in a single community. This includes a shortage of 144 spaces in the community of Riverview, 110 in Moncton-Dieppe, and 67 in Saint John; as well as 98 in the rural community of Dundas and 75 in the rural community of Tracadie.

Obviously, it is unrealistic to assume that every community can support viable French-language ELCC services, given the number of children eligible for French-language 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 New Brunswick offering full-time spaces as of September 1, 2025

A) GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Allardville	Garderie d'Allardville	22
Bathurst	Garderie Au pays des enfants inc.	5
	Garderie communautaire de Caraquet inc.	123
	Garderie Familio	29
	Garderie Bimbo Daycare Inc.	23
	Les Amis de la Grandview inc.	53
	Club des Amis 6	12
Sainte-Anne	Club des Amis 7	5
Beresford	Club des Amis Halte scolaire	37
	Garderie Manège enchanté 2020 inc.	45
Robertville	Garderie Carrefour des amis	56
	Garderie Bourgeoys 2	40
Dunlop	Garderie Les petits zhiboux	3
	Garderie Chez Steph	5
Bertrand	Centre de la petite enfance Acamie	28
Caraquet	Garderie Les petits trésors I.H. ltée	0
	Garderie Chez Ginette	5
	Ami Bee #2	36
	Garderie Chez Tetelle	33
Bas-Caraquet	Garderie Tina Mallet	42
Landry Office	Garderie La Rivière	14
Sainte-Marie–Saint-Raphaël	Garderie L'Univers des petits	5
Paquetville	Garderie Ici on grandit 1	21
Petit-Rocher	Garderie Ici on grandit	29

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
	Garderie Chez Tante Rosi	52
Saint-Isidore	Garderie Jade	44
	Garderie Chez É-Anne	5
Shippagan	Garderie Les petits passereaux inc.	55
	À petit pas dans mon école	34
Haut-Shippagan	Club des Amis – Robertville	31
Haut-Lamèque	Garderie La p'tite relève	16
Pointe-Brûlée	Garderie L'Univers des petits papillons	43
Petite-Lamèque	Les amis à Julie	44
Tracadie-Sheila	Garderie Les p'tites tornades	60
	Garderie Chez Tante Rosi ltée 2	52
	Garderie communautaire Les Schtroumpfs inc.	41
	École de la Petite Enfance	5
Pont-Landry	Garderie La villa des amis ltée	45
Pont-Lafrance	Garderie La découverte Centre de développement de l'enfant	5
Tracadie Beach	École de la Petite Enfance 3	36

B) RESTIGOUCHE COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Val-d'Amour	Garderie L'Enfant magique inc.	60
	Garderie des Apprentis-Sages	10
Atholville	Garderie coopérative de Rogersville II	26
Balmoral	Garderie Doux Câlins	5
	Garderie Tourbillon de soleil inc.	32
	Garderie La forêt des découvertes 2	38
	Garderie La forêt des découvertes inc.	32
Campbellton	Garderie Les sentinelles	28
	Garderie Chez Cyn	21
	Garderie Au coin des petits	12

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Kedgwick	Garderie Au royaume en chant T	5
	Garderie Chez Julie	17
	Garderie Centre éducatif Le Palais du plaisir inc.	17
Kedgwick Ouest	Centre éducatif Les farfeloups	5
Saint-Quentin	Garderie Les mélodilous Centre éducatif	30
	Garderie Mon autre maison	21
	Garderie Chez Nini	10
	Garderie Les débrouillards(es) inc.	4
	L'Énergicentre	60

C) MADAWASKA COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Saint-Basile	Nature ludique – CAHM	5
	Garderie des P'tits Amis 1	45
Verret	Garderie L'Arc-en-ciel d'amis	3
Edmundston	Garderie Le p'tit monde des enfants	56
	Garderie du Domaine 2 inc.	51
	Garderie du Domaine inc.	20
	Garderie des P'tits Amis	20
	Garderie des P'tits Amis 1	5
	Les Vortex de la vallée	5
	CPE Les Poussins	13
	Ã la garderie comme à la maison	30
	Garderie Mélubulles 1 inc.	57
	Garderie Mélubulles 2 inc.	20
	CPE Phare-O-Bulles 2 inc.	44
	CPE Phare-O-Bulles inc.	60

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
	Garderie Les zamibulles inc.	60
	Garderie Mont Ste-Marie inc.	13
	Garderie Mont Ste-Marie Inc. préscolaire et après-classe	5
	Garderie Câlins	5
	Garderie Chez Nadine	20
Haut-Madawaska	Garderie Les p'tits amis de Amy	20
	Centre éducatif Bouge O Max 2	0
	Garderie de l'Imaginaire	32
	Garderie Les p'tits chatons	19
Saint-André (MR)	Halte-garderie École Saint-Jacques 4	39
	Garderie Chez Alma	30
Saint-Léonard	CPE Les amis de Zoé	5
	CPE La ribambelle en folie ltée	49
Sainte-Anne-de-Madawaska	Garderie Chez Sabrina	21
Saint-Jacques (MR)	Centre éducatif Nature ludique	25
	Centre éducatif Bouge O Max inc.	36

D) VICTORIA COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Drummond	Les p'tits trésors de Steph	45
Grand-Sault/Grand Falls	Les amis de Madi 1 (2022)	5
	CPE Les petites abeilles	58
	Madi's Friends Daycare Ltd.	50
	Centre de soins et d'éducation Marika inc.	10
	Garderie La petite famille	40

E) WESTMORLAND COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Grand-Barachois	Garderie des Petits Pêcheurs 3	35
	Garderie des Petits Pêcheurs	30
	Garderie Chez Isa	5
	Les petites sauterelles	30
	Centre éducatif La marelle Educational Center	5
Scoudouc	Garderie Je joue et j'apprends	5
Cap-Pelé	Garderie des Petits Pêcheurs 2	10
	Garderie La marelle Daycare	35
	Centre éducatif L'Envol de Dieppe	41
Dieppe	La Garderinade	5
	Garderie La cartine Daycare inc.	5
	Garderie La cartine Daycare	17
	Garderie La cartine Daycare 2	33
	Garderie Les petits amis de Cathy	9
	Garderie Le coin des copains	0
	Académie Powerplay Academy	18
	Académie Powerplay Academy 2	18
	Académie Powerplay Academy 4	45
	Garderie Les p'tits cœurs Daycare	4
	Garderie Les p'tits cœurs Daycare groupe 2	4
	Montessori Dieppe	54
	Après-classe Montessori Dieppe After School	27
	Garderie La mélodie (2014) inc.	33
	Garderie La mélodie 2 (2014)	45
	Centre éducatif Le platinum (2015) inc.	44
	Garderie Chez Sylvie	56
	Nos Petits Camarades	17

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
	Garderie Le royaume	24
	Chez Cathy	35
	Garderie La coccinelle	25
	Centre éducatif Les p'tits crayons 2	5
	Centre récréatif « A » Safari social	30
	Safari social	34
	Safari social 2	0
	Garderie Chez Nadi	3
	Centre préscolaire La gardérisson inc.	32
	Garderie Au p'tit carrousel	0
	Garderie Chez Martine	46
	Garderie des P'tits Marins	56
	Garderie des P'tits Marins 2	5
	Garderie Chez Alinou	44
	Au pays des merveilles	5
	Garderie Chez Smarties	13
Memramcook	Once Upon a Time Daycare/Garderie Il était une fois	26
	Garderie Adorable	4
	Centre éducatif Les p'tits crayons inc.	45
	Centre éducatif des Aventuriers 2	6
	Centre éducatif des Aventuriers ltée	33
Moncton	Garderie La floraison	60
	Academie Powerplay Academy Moncton Campus 4	38
	Academie Power Play Academy Moncton Campus 2	12
	Academie Power Play Academy Moncton Campus 3	60
	Garderie Chez Walid	5
	Garderie ABC Daycare	44
	Garderie ABC Trois	32

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
	Garderie Mon doudou – Jeux de lettres	15
	Service de garde Les toutous	5
	Roche Papier Trio	10
	Roche Papier Uno	18
	Roche Papier Duo	49
	Garderie Univers d'enfants 1	31
	Garderie Univers d'enfants 2	51
	Institut Apprenti-sage 1	56
	Garderie Arlequin II Daycare	30
	Le Phare familial	20
	Service de garde du Phare familial	20
	Service de garde Chez Tiago Childcare Services	33
	Centre éducatif des Trois Chênes	20
	Centre éducatif des Trois Chênes 5	20
	Centre éducatif des Trois Chênes 3	52
	Centre éducatif des Trois Chênes 4	49
	Garderie Les chatounets	5
	Garderie Champlain Daycare	44
	Garderie Champlain Daycare 3	41
	Roche Papier Ciseaux	54
	Roche Papier Stylo – Moncton	35
	Roche Papier Stylo 2	10
	Centre de jour L'Éveil	47
	Karen's Learning Center	0
Shediac	Garderies Les petits sourires	27
	Garderie La mélodie 3 (2014) inc.	29
	Le jardin du soleil 2016	8
	Le jardin du soleil 2024	33

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Shediac Bridge	Oli 3	30
	Le Château des bouts choux	36

F) KENT COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Bouctouche	Garderie Les frimousses	5
	Garderie Royaume des papillons	19
	Garderie La Sagouine et ses p'tits acadiens inc.	42
Grande-Digue	Garderie des P'tits Mollusques	15
Notre-Dame	Garde'rire-Centre éducatif de Cocagne	40
Cocagne	Causerie Amicale	23
	Les ami(e)s à Nanette	37
	Garderie Myrabel	5
	Garderie Chez Kri Kri	5
Richibucto	La Boussole I	20
	La Boussole III	15
	Le coin des petites souris	16
	Garderie L'Étoile filante	15
Sainte-Marie-de-Kent	Mon École My School Child Care	30
Saint-Antoine	La Boussole II	45
	La p'tite garderie de Ste. Anne	32
Saint-Louis-de-Kent	La Boussole V	40
Sainte-Anne-de-Kent	Garderie Anne-Marie 2	28

G) YORK COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
New Maryland	La P'tite Garderie	5
	La P'tite École	5
Fredericton	Chez Gisèle	5
	Garderie Les hirondelles	30
	Garderie Les p'tits poussins	48
	Garderie Les perroquets	60
	Franco I	43
	Franco III	60
	L'Éveil enfantin	60

H) NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Village-Saint-Laurent	Garderie du Petit Nid douillet	22
	Garderie Les p'tits cœurs à Manou inc.	22
Baie–Sainte-Anne	Les p'tits cœurs à Manou inc.	37
Miramichi	Les p'tits baie marins	50
	Les beaux soleils	50
Neguac	Les mini-michis	20
Rogersville	Garderie Les petits anges	25

I) SUNBURY COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Oromocto	Les moussaillons	51
	Les petits trésors	39
	Garderie Les petits ours	5

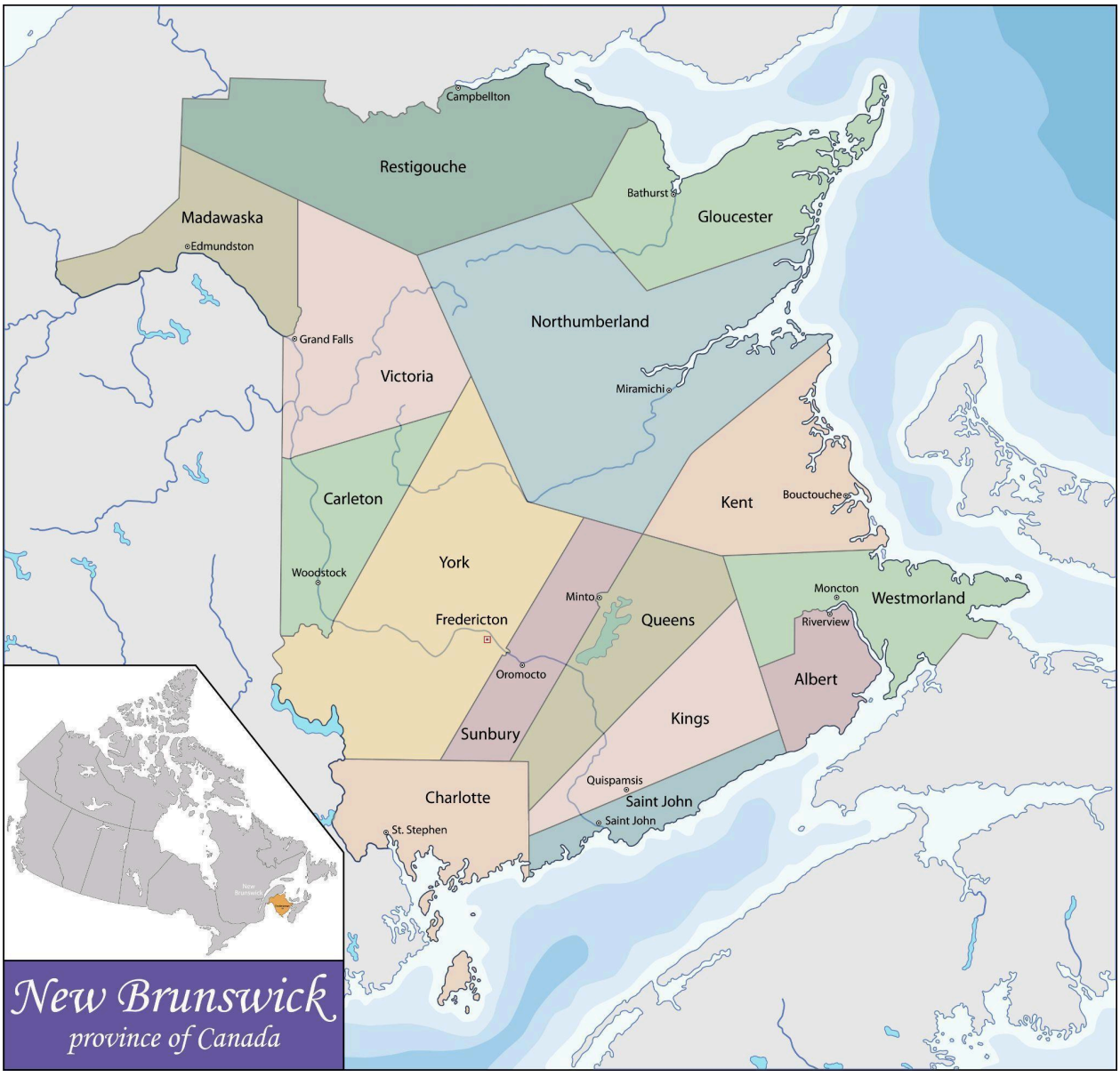
J) SAINT JOHN COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Saint-Jean	Garderie À grand pas	60
	Garderie À petits pas	60
	Garderie au Bourgeonnet	48

K) KINGS COUNTY

Municipality	Name of the French-language ELCC service	No of available spaces
Quispamsis	Garderie des P'tits Mollusques 3	60
	La Vallée des découvreurs	12
	Les Rayons de la vallée	57
	Les Soleils enchantés	30

Appendix 2 – New Brunswick census divisions



Source: ID 79937090 @ Volina | Dreamstime.com