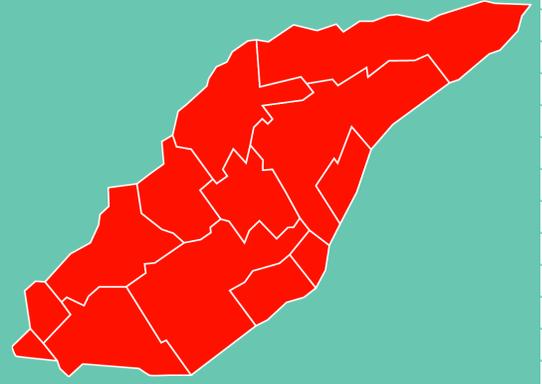


# Laval

TERRITORIAL ANALYSIS  
2018-19



## THE TERRITORY AND ITS POPULATION

### One island, one city, one region

Laval is currently the third largest city in Quebec and has 422,990 residents. Laval is a young city that was created in 1965 with the merger of 14 formerly agricultural municipalities. These municipalities became neighbourhoods whose names are still used to denote local communities and that have been grouped administratively into Laval's six municipal offices (BML).

One of Laval's distinguishing governance features is that it is at once a city, a regional county municipality, and a provincial administrative region. Therefore, the same officials belong to three decision-making levels, which makes Laval's governance structure unique in Quebec. The year 2013 marked a significant turning point for Laval, as the elections led to a brand-new municipal council, bringing a wind of change within the administration.

### Demographic growth strongly marked by immigration

From 2011 to 2016, Laval experienced 5% growth, which is higher than Montreal's growth rate (3%). Demographic forecasts suggest that this growth will continue in the coming years. The city continues to benefit from interregional migration, although this contribution has been on the decline since 2010. Behind Montreal and the Montérégie, Laval is the third largest region where immigrants choose to settle.

Growth in the immigrant population is one of Laval's most striking demographic features. In 2016, nearly one out of three people in Laval was born outside the country, compared to one out of five in 2006. Today, over half of Laval newborns have at least one immigrant parent. Laval is home to post-war immigrant communities that have come mainly from Greece and Italy and then Lebanon starting in the 1980s. These communities coexist with more recent immigrant populations from Northwest Africa, Haiti and the Middle East as well as many Syrian refugees. This growing ethnocultural diversity is transforming all Laval neighbourhoods at varying speeds and has required the development of support structures. Poverty is a concern for many stakeholders in Laval and is most often experienced by recent immigrants.

In demographic terms, the Laval population is younger than that of Montreal and Quebec as a whole. Laval has a high demographic weight of young people under the age of 20, while its population is also aging at a higher rate compared to Montreal. The percentage of seniors rose from 14% in 2006 to 17% in 2016. This reality poses challenges for the coming years particularly in terms of resource accessibility and social isolation.

### From commuter town to major urban centre

Although the misconception that Laval is just a commuter town is still prevalent, Laval is actually a dynamic city that is gradually changing into a major urban centre. In recent years, development has been kick-started by many large-scale projects, such as the construction of the metro station and the Autoroute 25 bridge, the university campus, the Cité de la Biotech, and a new amphitheatre. Laval's urban planning is characterized by major roads that divide up a vast territory, and residential areas are found next to major commercial, industrial or agricultural sectors, which encourages car transportation. The territory's size compared to the availability of public transit and safe infrastructure for active transportation can increase isolation and vulnerability, especially for people who live in neighbourhoods with limited resources.

For example, difficult access to fresh and affordable food in some sectors (such as more remote areas like Saint-François) is a factor that makes underprivileged populations even more vulnerable.

## SNAPSHOT OF THE TERRITORY

### Laval: Quebec's third largest city

Total population of 422,990 people.

Chomedey, Laval's most populated neighbourhood, is home to 21% (88,350 people) of Laval's population.

**A diverse and changing city: An urban fabric predominantly made up of single-family residences typical of the suburbs, combined with the realities of a major urban centre**

### Territory divided into six Laval municipal offices (BML)

Duvernay, Saint-François and Saint-Vincent-de-Paul (BML 1); Pont-Viau, Renaud-Coursol and Laval-des-Rapides (BML 2); Chomedey (BML 3); Sainte-Dorothée, Laval-Ouest, Laval-Les Îles, Fabreville-Ouest and Laval-sur-le-Lac (BML 4); Fabreville-Est and Sainte-Rose (BML 5); Vimont and Auteuil (BML 6).

### Significant demographic growth

From 2011 to 2016, population growth of 5% in Laval, which is higher than Montreal's growth rate (3%).

### Immigrant numbers constantly growing

In 2016, nearly one out of three Laval residents (29%) was an immigrant, compared to one out of five (20%) in 2006.

More people from an immigrant background in some neighbourhoods, particularly Chomedey (43%) and Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides (30%).

In 2015, 53% of Laval newborns had at least one parent with an immigrant background.

### More recent immigrants choose to live in Laval

Between 2006 and 2016, the percentage of new immigrants in Laval grew from 2.5% to 3.7% of the total population.

Three out of five recent immigrants settle in Chomedey (5,640) and in Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides (4,360).

### Visible minority population growing

In 2016, one out of four people (26%) came from a visible minority group compared to 14% in 2006. The Black, Arab and Latin American communities are the most strongly represented in the territory.

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Laval's urban landscape is characterized by a predominance of single-family residences, while apartment buildings are mainly located in the central neighbourhoods on the south of the island. The lack of affordable social housing units creates added pressure on more vulnerable groups (single-parent families, newcomers, seniors, young people, people in situation of homelessness, etc.). However, these last few years have seen the emergence of developmental initiatives aiming for improvements in this area. A new building code was created and came into force in March 2018. Also, over 400 social housing units are under construction mainly in Chomedey.

Just like in major urban centres, large-scale development projects are speeding up in Laval, which is putting pressure on housing costs for groups in the community, whether they are tenants or the owners of aging buildings that need major repairs.

## Poverty concentrated in the central neighbourhoods of the south sector

Poverty can be found almost everywhere in Laval and affects nearly 46,500 people, or 1 person out of 10, but it is mainly concentrated in Laval's south-central neighbourhoods, i.e., Chomedey, Laval-des-Rapides and Pont-Viau. Chomedey has many distinguishing features: by itself, it is home to one fifth of the Laval population, and it has the highest poverty rates. Across the island, it is striking to see well-off sectors alongside underprivileged ones. Vulnerable sectors are therefore surrounded by more well-off areas, such as Laval-Ouest or areas on the east part of the island. Stakeholders are currently studying diagnostic portraits of the sectors to decide on the potential for integrated urban revitalizations (RUI) for Laval-Ouest and Fabreville-Ouest, Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, and Saint-François.

Chomedey, Laval-des-Rapides and Pont-Viau have higher percentages of low-income families, single-parent families, and children under the age of six who are in a situation of poverty. This reality is very concerning, as it affects nearly one in four young children in these sectors. People living alone, particularly seniors, are another vulnerable group with a high concentration in these three neighbourhoods. Finally, these areas also have a significant number of immigrants, particularly recent immigrants who are likely to experience hardship throughout their immigrant journey.

The neighbourhood of Chomedey is the most cosmopolitan, as nearly one third of Laval's immigrant population resides there. Across the territory, 43% of people are immigrants. The largest concentrations of recent immigrants (people who have been in the country for fewer than five years) are also found in Chomedey, Laval-des-Rapides and Pont-Viau. In these sectors, access to employment is difficult and working conditions are often precarious, as revealed by a high unemployment rate and much lower incomes despite higher education levels. Other factors may also contribute to this vulnerability, such as small social networks, language barriers, or systemic discrimination.

In Laval's south-central neighbourhoods, many households are dealing with difficult living conditions. They have significant numbers of renters compared to the Montreal average, along with high residential mobility. In Chomedey, two out of five households dedicate too much of their income (30% or more) to rent.

## COMMUNITY DYNAMICS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Centraide of Greater Montreal supports 27 community agencies and projects in Laval, for a total investment of \$2,667,441 in 2018-2019. These agencies and projects act both locally and regionally. This includes support for two neighbourhood roundtables (Initiative locale Saint-François en action and the Comité de développement local de Chomedey) and for the Corporation de développement communautaire (CDC) de Laval, particularly for its role in regional collective action.

## Community agencies are essential to Laval life

Laval has over a hundred community agencies that are active in multiple areas. Just like the young city of Laval that missed the industrial revolution, the Laval community sector did not grow from the grassroots or labour movements that are historically associated with that period. In the past 40 years, agencies have invested more in developing services. There has been a boom in community entrepreneurship and increased activity around developing projects that have a greater focus on the social economy.

## High proportion of youth and families

17% young people under the age of 15. 76,910 families with children, or a rate of 66%.

## An aging population

From 2006 to 2016, the percentage of people aged 65 and over increased from 14% to 17%.

The percentages of seniors in Chomedey (23%), and Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides (19%) are higher than the Laval average.

## Poverty present throughout the territory but concentrated in the south-central neighbourhoods

In Laval, 1 out of 10 people (11%, 46,500 people) has a low income. In Chomedey, Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides, this rate is closer to one out of five.

## Seniors and families are hit particularly hard by poverty

15% of people 65 and over in Laval live on a low income. These percentages are 18% in Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides and 21% in Chomedey.

## 13% of children under the age of 6 are growing up in families affected by poverty. This rate is much higher in Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides (21%) and Chomedey (22%).

## Single parenthood and single living are more widespread in the central neighbourhoods

In Laval, one out of four families (26%; 20,150) is headed by a single parent. This rate is higher in Pont-Viau and in Laval-des-Rapides (35%) and in Chomedey (28%).

Out of the 41,925 people who live alone in Laval, half live in Chomedey, Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides.

This reality particularly affects seniors, 24% of whom live alone in Laval. These rates are the highest in Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides as well as Chomedey (31% and 28%, respectively).

## Residential mobility higher in the central neighbourhoods

41% of households in Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides and 38% of households in Chomedey have moved in the past five years, compared to 32% in Laval.

## Housing: A primary concern for the community

In Laval, one out of three people is a renter.

The percentages of renters are much higher in Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides as well as in Chomedey: 53% and 44%, respectively.

36% of renter households dedicate a high portion of their income (30% or more) to rent.

In Chomedey, this rate (41%) exceeds the Laval average.

Rate of affordable social housing units in Laval's rental market is lower than that of Greater Montreal: 8%, compared to 11% for the Greater Montreal area (2017).

Most social housing units are found in the sectors of Chomedey and Pont-Viau and Laval-des-Rapides.

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The CDC de Laval, which includes about one hundred of the territory's agencies, is looking to ensure that grassroots and community movements can actively participate in Laval's socioeconomic development. In 2012, the CDC organized the second "Forum social de Laval," which encouraged many agencies and citizens to have their say about the social issues in Laval neighbourhoods (e.g., food security, housing, urban planning, immigration) and which led to many concrete projects. In 2017, these issues were included in the Politique régionale de développement social (PRDS) de Laval, developed under the leadership of the Ville de Laval and the Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (CISSS) de Laval, with significant participation from the CDC, community groups, and residents.

Community agencies have a presence in all neighbourhoods, particularly in densely populated and underprivileged sectors like Chomedey, Laval-des-Rapides and Pont-Viau. In these neighbourhoods, community stakeholders are facing growing needs as well as complex and intersecting social problems. Elsewhere in Laval, such as in Vimont and Auteuil, in Laval-Ouest, Sainte-Dorothée and Fabreville, poverty is more diffuse and creates pressure on the few local agencies in these areas that are more isolated but that must meet multiple social needs. Regional agencies that serve the entire territory struggle to make their services accessible to everyone. To improve service delivery across the island, some stakeholders have implemented promising practices to reach vulnerable people where they live, such as street work with youth or the homeless, relocations to central neighbourhoods, and more.

## Emergence of a regional social development vision

In June 2017, Laval adopted its first regional social development policy (PRDS) at the provincial level. This process has emerged in the context of the Government of Quebec's administrative transformations, which gave new powers to the Laval municipality, for example, through a transfer of responsibilities that used to belong to the Conférences régionales des élus (CRÉ) and Centres locaux de développement (CLD). With these new duties, the Ville de Laval has invested more in social development through an administrative shake-up and a renewal in the area of democratic management. At the same time, the health and social services sector went through a major reorganization to integrate all services within a single administrative unit for each region. This reform created the CISSS de Laval, which has become the only institutional representative for the health sector in the region.

Representatives from the City and the CISSS de Laval have had to seize opportunities related to major transformations. In collaboration with different community stakeholders, Laval began a large-scale project in spring 2016 to create a social development vision for the Laval region called the PRDS. This ambitious project generated high citizen participation, as many residents got involved in the process. To bring about this new regional vision, which was created by stakeholders who actively contributed to these reflections and this work, Laval will create a governance structure and an action plan for the next five years.

## Collective work taking new forms

This push for development has also translated into the deployment of new collective structures to better coordinate action across the territory. Many roundtables and committees mainly run by institutional stakeholders have been created around issues such as food security, housing, and homelessness. In a context of immense challenges related to academic perseverance and the school readiness of young children, a lot of collective action is being done for youth and family issues. This area has prompted many Laval stakeholders to become involved in new organizations (e.g., Regroupement lavallois pour la réussite éducative, Saines habitudes de vie). Locally, the deployment of Avenir d'enfants and Québec en Forme groups in each of Laval's six BML has also gotten communities involved to address these issues. Many institutional actors are providing ongoing support for these processes. New ways of working together have been developed to varying extents and at varying speeds depending on the sector. Right now, many community partners are concerned about the sustainability of citizen and community action carried out through these local initiatives.

## Decline in low education rate

Percentage of people without a high school diploma decreased from 22% in 2006 to 19% in 2016. However, this rate remains higher than in Montreal (17%).

## Issues specific to Laval youth

Out of all Quebec regions, Laval has the highest rate of children who do not have the skills they need to start school, at 30% (29% in Montreal, 26% for all of Quebec).

In Laval, the dropout rate of 17% is lower than the rates for Montreal and Quebec (21% and 18%, respectively). However, this rate is still high in Chomedey (29%) and in Duvernay, Saint-François and Saint-Vincent-de-Paul (20%).

*Sociodemographic and economic data: 2016 Census; Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur (2012-2013); Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal, Direction régionale de santé publique de Laval, Institut de la statistique du Québec, Quebec Survey of Child Development in Kindergarten (2012).*

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These new structures are part of a network of collective action that is already quite complex and that has been forged in Laval's specific historical, social and political context. The growth in organizations—over 70 listed both regionally and locally—has been particularly demanding for community stakeholders. Indeed, it is difficult for a limited number of agencies to keep contributing effectively, which in turn makes it challenging for them to choose priorities to avoid being stretched too thin.

To address the growing number of consultation mechanisms, limited resources, and the need to coordinate diverse action plans in the same territory, local collective action has been restructured in some sectors such as Saint-François and Chomedey. In these two very different neighbourhoods, local stakeholders (thanks to their respective communities that have been very active for many years) have started participatory processes for neighbourhood planning. These “bridging” activities have brought about a greater coordination of initiatives and have given rise to collective projects. Despite progress, challenges remain when it comes to articulating local needs and regional priorities and encouraging stakeholders to innovate around collective action in social development.

## ISSUES THAT ENGAGE CENTRAIDE

Centraide of Greater Montreal's mission targets four key issues to fight poverty in Laval.

### — Diversity and inclusion

Major growth in the immigrant population has prompted agencies and communities to develop strategies to fight poverty and social exclusion that are better adapted to Laval's changing demographics and the particular challenges of immigrants (culture shock, language barriers, social isolation, systemic discrimination, integrating children at school, access to employment, etc.).

In the coming years, Centraide would like to continue its support to reinforce the capacity of agencies and communities to adapt their strategies and initiatives to a context of diversity. We will be attentive to cross-sectoral and multi-network initiatives that encourage immigrants and people from cultural communities to be fully included and to fully participate in Laval society. We also want to encourage agencies to create an organizational life that, in all its aspects, reflects the ethnic and cultural makeup of their communities.

### — Young people's success and social integration

The living conditions of families in underprivileged environments as well as their ability to break out of social isolation and help their children develop their full potential are ongoing issues that engage Centraide. The accumulation of problems that some young people face (school readiness gaps among young children, high school dropouts, drug addiction, homelessness, etc.) is of concern to many stakeholders in Laval.

In the coming years, support for families and children and for issues surrounding academic success and the social inclusion of young people will again be an ongoing focus for Centraide.

### — Housing, transportation and food security

In some Laval neighbourhoods, it is more difficult to access quality and affordable housing, public transit and low-cost food. All of these factors aggravate the vulnerable situations of people experiencing poverty or social exclusion. Centraide will be particularly attentive to collective projects that can respond to these issues. We should also note the construction of over 400 new social housing units for families, mainly in Chomedey, which will have challenges integrating new residents.

### — Collaboration in social development

In spring 2017, Laval created a vision as well as orientations and goals for social development that will be supported by shared governance principles. The goals of these collective and collaborative efforts are to increase coordinated action and develop and carry out collective projects, for either the entire territory (e.g., in the Chomedey or Saint-François neighbourhoods, which have a certain level of maturity in local collective action) or a specific issue (e.g., food security, housing or immigration). Centraide would like to encourage the work of agencies and engagement initiatives that are part of this collective process.

Depending on the prioritized issues, Centraide will pay particular attention to initiatives deployed in neighbourhoods that are most affected by these problems.

## INVESTMENT

### FROM CENTRAIDE OF GREATER MONTREAL 2018-2019

#### Community development

- Comité de développement local de Chomedey (CDLC)
- Corporation de développement communautaire de Laval (CDC)\*
- Initiative locale Saint-François en action

#### Inclusion

- Association Lavalloise pour la déficience intellectuelle et le trouble du spectre de l'Autisme (ALDI)\*
- Association lavalloise de parents et amis pour le bien-être mental (ALPABEM)\*
- Centre d'implication libre de Laval - C.I.L.L. - Sainte-Rose\*
- StimuleArts\*
- Travail de Rue Île de Laval (TRIL)

#### Living conditions

- ACEF de l'Île-Jésus\*
- Relais communautaire de Laval (Le)

#### Neighbourhood life

- Association pour aînés résidant à Laval (siège social)
- Association pour aînés résidant à Laval - Saint-François
- Centre communautaire Le Rendez-vous des aîné(es) (Laval)
- Centre communautaire Val-Martin
- Centre des femmes de Laval (Le)\*
- Comité d'animation du troisième âge de Laval (CATAL)

#### Volunteer action

- Centre de bénévolat et Moisson Laval\*

#### Youth and families

- Bureau d'aide et d'assistance familiale Place Saint-Martin\*
- Bureau de consultation jeunesse (BCJ) - Laval\*
- CHOC Carrefour d'HOmmes en Changement\*
- Diapason-Jeunesse (head office)\*
- Diapason-Jeunesse - Le Cafardeur, café étudiant 14-17 ans
- Dolphin Children's House, Laval
- La Parentèle de Laval
- Maison de la Famille de Saint-François
- Maison de quartier Fabreville

\* Regional vocation