



Saint-Léonard

THE TERRITORY AND ITS POPULATION

Saint-Léonard became a borough of the City of Montreal in 2002. With over 78,000 inhabitants, it is by far the most populated municipality in Montreal's east end. Several major thoroughfares run through the territory: Autoroute 40, rue Jean-Talon and rue Jarry run east and west, and boulevards Langelier, Viau and Lacordaire run north and south. However, the Autoroute Métropolitaine splits the territory in two and acts as an obstacle to local travel.

Contrasting demographics in an evolving neighbourhood

The percentage of seniors in Saint-Léonard is significantly higher than the Montreal average; in fact, there are nearly 16,000 people 65 and over, or 20% of the population (17% in Montreal). The ageing of the population has been accelerated by the construction of several senior housing complexes, such as those alongside the Autoroute Métropolitaine. At the other end of the demographic spectrum, children under the age of 15 also represent 20% of the population (16% in Montreal).

Immigrants have certainly contributed to Saint-Léonard's demographic growth. After an initial wave of Italian immigration, the neighbourhood is now becoming more culturally diverse, with the arrival of people primarily from the Caribbean and Northwest Africa. Today, one in two Saint-Léonard residents was born outside Canada (34% on the island), a percentage that represents over 37,000 people – one of the highest numbers on the island. Two-thirds of the immigrant population comes from the following five countries: Italy (24%), Algeria (19%), Haiti (11%), Morocco (10%) and Vietnam (4%). Looking at immigration's recent impact on neighbourhood demographics, 80% of residents are first- or second-generation immigrants (59% for the island). The neighbourhood also has a significant number of newcomers (10%, compared to 7% for Montreal), including some asylum seekers. Newcomers often have difficulty getting their credentials and skills recognized.

While Saint-Léonard has long been known as a middle-class community, many indicators reveal that the situation is no longer so clear-cut, as Saint-Léonard has the highest number of low-income individuals in Montreal's east end. In fact, one in five individuals, or 16,000 residents, lives on a low income. After Montréal-Nord, Saint-Léonard has the highest number of young children living in a low-income household (nearly 21,000, or 30%). The area also has a high percentage of families (70%). Pockets of poverty are more commonly found in areas close to major thoroughfares, particularly the south part of the territory and in Viau-Robert in the west.

The growing number of vulnerable individuals puts pressure on social housing and community services. Compared to other Montreal neighbourhoods with similar low-income statistics, Saint-Léonard lags far behind in this area. There are just two affordable housing complexes with a total of 407 units; this represents only 2.1% of the rental stock, compared to 11.3% on the island of Montreal.

SNAPSHOT OF THE TERRITORY

Most populated municipality in Montreal's east end

Population: 78,305

Between 2011 and 2016, demographic growth of +3.4% (+2,600 people) compared to +2.9% in Montreal.

Several major roads run through it, affecting travel within the neighbourhood

Contrasting demographics

Significant ageing of the population: 15,700 seniors, or 20% (Montreal: 17%).

High numbers of children: 15,425 children under 15, or 20% (Montreal: 16%).

Many families

14,755 families with children, or a rate of 70% (Montreal: 63%).

4,445 of these families are single-parent households (30% compared to 33% in Montreal).

The second-highest number of adults with low education of any Montreal neighbourhood

16,085 people 15 and over, or one quarter of the population, do not have a high school diploma (26%, compared to 17% in Montreal).

Children particularly affected by poverty

The territory has 16,280 people living on a low income, some of them living in pockets of poverty, one of which is Viau-Robert.

The second-highest number of children growing up in a low-income household of any Montreal neighbourhood: in actual numbers, 2,115, or a rate of 30% (Montreal: 23%).

2,330 low-income seniors, and 4,045 people 65 and over living alone.



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Adults with low education and youth academic success

Just over one quarter (26%) of Saint-Léonard's adult population has a low education, one of the highest rates in Montreal. With over 16,000 adults without a high school diploma, the neighbourhood has the second highest number of people in that category on the island, after Montréal-Nord.

Saint-Léonard has a large population of young people and families. In fact, it has close to 15,000 families, of which 70% are of immigrant origin. Some young people are affected by their family's migration experience and the associated issues, and this can have an impact on their integration and progress at school. The culture shock these young people experience often makes them feel torn between the values of their host society and their traditional family values, leading to tension between cultures and generations within the family unit. Moreover, more than one in two children under 6 speaks neither English nor French as their mother tongue, and one in four children is lacking in at least one aspect of school readiness.

COMMUNITY DYNAMICS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Roughly twenty agencies are active in the community. In addition to the older sectoral round tables that work on issues related to early childhood, youth, seniors, food security, social housing, employment and entrepreneurship, there is also the more recently established Concertation Saint-Léonard (an intersectoral and multi-network round table). The abundance of committees and relative scarcity of members has caused some agencies to lose momentum. Also, the same community actors often sit on different round tables and task forces, leading to questions about the way things are done.

The neighbourhood lacks the facilities to fulfill the population's needs. However, a recent increase in the community's recreation services and facilities has led a variety of agencies (specifically youth-focussed ones) to find operating space in the park buildings located in neighbourhood parks, where people of all ages and backgrounds can come together. Similarly, space-strapped schools are at maximum capacity and are struggling to accommodate local school-age children.

In 2016, Saint-Léonard was selected to be part of the Centraide-led Collective Impact Project (CIP). Since then, just over \$900,000 has been allocated to support educational and academic success as it relates to such issues as immigration, affordable housing and citizen participation. With CIP support, the neighbourhood's attitude to inter-agency collaboration has evolved, thereby increasing its ability to take action. Centraide has also observed that citizens and agencies are collaborating more closely, making it easier to tailor community services to resident needs.

In 2019-2020, Centraide is making a total investment of \$425,260 to support seven agencies and projects in Saint-Léonard, including the community round table. The agencies that receive support address issues related to families, seniors, food security, and welcoming newcomers.

ISSUES THAT ENGAGE CENTRAIDE

— Consolidating progress

Given the neighbourhood's various challenges and significant needs, Centraide wants to ensure that the progress made in the past few years is not lost. It will therefore focus on programs and projects that maximize its investments and make the community more capable of responding to its social challenges.

Considerable and growing ethno-cultural diversity

37,360 immigrants, or 49% of the population (Montreal: 34%). This means Saint-Léonard has both the highest actual number and the highest percentage of immigrants of any Montreal neighbourhood.

Shifting demographics: in 2006, two in five people were immigrants; in 2016, the proportion had grown to one in two people.

Immigrants primarily come from Italy, Algeria, Haiti, Morocco and Vietnam.

It has one of the highest numbers of recent immigrants of any Montreal neighbourhood: 7,605 or 10% (Montreal: 7%).

69% of families with children are immigrants (Montreal: 51%).

80% of newborns have an immigrant mother (Montreal: 58%).

80% of the population was either born outside Canada or has one or two immigrant parents (Montreal: 59%).

The percentage of people from visible minority groups living in the neighbourhood is also much higher than it is for the island (43% compared to 33%), with high numbers of people from the Arab (19%) and black (11%) communities.

Housing an issue, particularly for families

65% of families are single-parent households (Montreal: 60%).

A significant percentage of families with children spend too much of their income (30% or more) on rent (37% compared to 29% in Montreal).

The territory has 407 social and community housing units.

Demographic and economic data: 2016 Census; 2015 Report of the Director of Public Health for Montreal; Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montreal, 2019.

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– Welcoming and integrating immigrants

Centraide recognizes that newcomers face many and significant challenges. It will therefore support projects that promote inclusion and cultural diversity, as well as attempting to improve the often difficult living conditions of immigrants, particularly in terms of housing and food security.

– Targeting actions for vulnerable young children and youth

A combination of factors – the physical environment, family income, racism, culture, employment – have a significant impact on the school-readiness of young children and the academic success of young people. Given this, Centraide will focus particular attention on initiatives that promote academic success and fully integrate immigrant families into the school system and the neighbourhood as a whole.

– Strengthening collective action

Centraide will focus on the capacity-building and expertise-transfer needs identified by the agencies and the community round table, particularly as they apply to the governance of community agencies, the planning of intersectoral action, living together and citizen participation.

– Breaking the isolation of seniors

Saint-Léonard has a large senior population. In the coming years, Centraide will focus particular attention on the initiatives of agencies that work with seniors, specifically elderly immigrants who are sponsored by their children, and community initiatives aimed at breaking the isolation of seniors and ensuring their well-being.

INVESTMENT

FROM CENTRAIDE OF GREATER MONTREAL 2019 - 2020

Inclusion

- Accueil aux immigrants de l'Est de Montréal

Living conditions

- Table Ronde de Saint-Léonard (La)

Community development

- Concertation Saint-Léonard

Neighbourhood life

- Carrefour des femmes de Saint-Léonard
- Centre des aînés du réseau d'entraide de Saint-Léonard

Youth and families

- Maison de la famille de Saint-Léonard
- Réussite des jeunes, vivre-ensemble et participation citoyenne (Collective Impact Project PIC)