



Document 1

MONTREAL'S 2022 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

General Overview

Québec 

This document was produced by the Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal (DRSP) and the Direction des services généraux et partenariats urbains (DSGPU) of the Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal, in collaboration with Ville de Montréal.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal would like to thank all partners who contributed to planning and executing the enumeration of people experiencing homelessness in Montréal in 2022, and to developing these thematic documents.

NOTES

This document has been drafted using neutral wording as much as possible to ensure terms and phrases do not include gender references to individuals.

This document is available online on the CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal portal: <https://ccsmtlpro.ca/drsp>

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ISBN 978-2-550-97731-5 (Online)

2022 ENUMERATION

The Enumeration of Visible Homelessness was carried out simultaneously in 13 regions of Québec the night of October 11, 2022. In Montréal, the CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal (CCSMTL) was responsible for planning operations and mobilizing the homelessness community, the Réseau de la santé et des services sociaux (RSSS) establishments and hundreds of volunteer canvassers to conduct this third enumeration exercise in the Montréal area.¹

Aimed at measuring the extent of the phenomenon of visible homelessness, the process is aligned with the orientations of the *Politique nationale de lutte à l'itinérance (Québec government)*, the *Plan d'action interministériel en itinérance 2021-2026 – S'allier devant l'itinérance* (MSSS) as well as the *Plan concerté montréalais en itinérance 2021-2026 – S'unir dans l'action* (CCSMTL). The enumeration exercise is also based on an agreement between the governments of Québec and Canada related to the *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy* program.

A series of thematic documents has been produced to make the results of Montréal's 2022 enumeration accessible. The primary objectives of these documents are to outline the extent and main characteristics of visible homelessness in Montréal, and to draw comparisons with data from the 2018 enumeration, where applicable. This initial "Overview" document provides a summary of the most significant results.

1. Ville de Montréal sponsored and financed the 2015 enumeration. The 2018 enumeration, coordinated by the MSSS, was carried out simultaneously in 11 regions of Québec and was part of an agreement between the governments of Québec and Canada in relation to the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), as was the case for the 2022 exercise.

1. ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING VISIBLE HOMELESSNESS² IN MONTRÉAL

The 2022 enumeration revealed that for the Montréal region, the estimated number of people experiencing visible homelessness was **4,690**. This estimate reflects a **33% increase** compared with 2018, taking into account the methodological differences between these two exercises. In 2018, an 8% to 12% increase was noted,³ compared with the 2015 study, also taking into account the methodological variations.

It is important to point out, however, that this figure is not an exact reflection of the reality, since it is impossible, for example, to locate every single person concerned on a single night across the entire area. **The number of people experiencing homelessness in Montréal is therefore undoubtedly higher than this estimate.**⁴

In 2022, the estimated number of people experiencing visible homelessness in Montréal **accounted for approximately 47% of that in the rest of Québec**. Therefore, Montréal's proportion has decreased since 2018, when 54% of those concerned were located in the city.

In order to provide a general picture of Montréal's visible homelessness as at October 11, 2022, the following sections incorporate data from **1,704 people** experiencing homelessness who agreed to answer a questionnaire, and from **estimates based on a variety of methods** (canvassing with observation sheet, adjustment for non-covered areas, deployment of on-site canvassers, completion of questionnaires, collection of administrative data, etc.).

2. The enumeration process aims to quantify the extent of the phenomenon of visible homelessness. It is not intended to assess or estimate that of people experiencing hidden homelessness (see sidebar on this subject).

3. Latimer, E., & Bordeleau, F. (2019, pp. 82, 116-119). Dénombrement des personnes en situation d'itinérance sur l'île de Montréal le 24 avril 2018. Ville de Montréal and CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal.

4. MSSS (2023, p. 6). Dénombrement des personnes en situation d'itinérance visible au Québec. Rapport de l'exercice du 11 octobre 2022. From: <https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/fichiers/2023/23-846-05W.pdf>

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING VISIBLE HOMELESSNESS

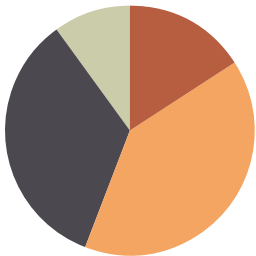
Gender

Cisgender men **66%** (2018: 74% | 8 pp⁵)

Cisgender women **29%** (2018: 23% | 6 pp)

Gender-diverse people **5%** (2018: 3%*⁶ | 2 pp)

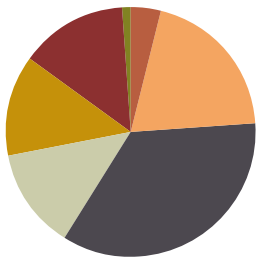
Age



- Under 30 years: **16%** (2018: 19% | 3 pp)
 - 30 to 49 years: **40%** (2018: 40%)
 - 50 to 64 years: **34%**
 - 65 years and over: **10%**
- 50 years+: (2018: 41% | 3 pp)

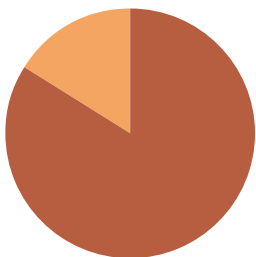
Note that in 2022, 9 respondents were minors.

Education level



- No diploma: **4%**
- Primary school: **20%**
- High school: **35%**
- Vocational training: **13%**
- CEGEP/college: **13%**
- University: **14%**
- Other: **1%**

Sexual orientation



- Heterosexual people: **84%** (2018: 87%* | 3 pp)
- Homosexual, bisexual people and other sexual orientations: **16%** (2018: 13%* | 3 pp)

5. The percentage point (pp) is defined as the difference between two percentages.

6. Data marked with an asterisk (*) in the document should be interpreted with caution due to differences between the 2018 and 2022 questionnaires in terms of the wording of the questions and the response choices.

Indigenous people

13%

First Nations: ●●●●●●●● 8%

Inuit: ●●● 3%⁷

Other Indigenous identities: ●● 2%

(2018*: First Nations, Métis or other Indigenous ancestries: 13% | Inuit: 3%)

People with a migration background

20%
(2018: 19%* | 1 pp)

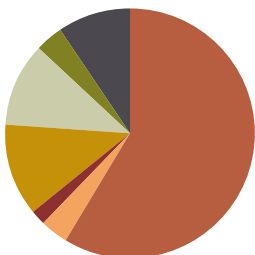
Immigrants ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●● 13%

Refugees ●● 2%

Refugee claimants ●●● 3%

Other migration status ●● 2%

Ethnic identity



White: **64%**

Arabic: **4%**

Asian: **2%**

Indigenous: **13%**

Black: **12%**

Latin American: **4%**

Other: **10%**

People who were previously in the youth protection system

24%

Former members of the Canadian Armed Forces or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

5%

(2018: 4%* | 1 pp)

7. 82% of Inuit experiencing homelessness in the 2022 enumeration were in Montréal (MSSS, 2023, p. 5).



3. UNSHELTERED AND SHELTERED HOMELESSNESS

Unsheltered and sheltered homelessness are two facets of the complex reality of “visible” homelessness. During the 2022 enumeration, data was collected from people experiencing one or the other of these realities.

Unsheltered homelessness

17%

Estimated proportion of people who spent the night of October 11 to 12, 2022 unsheltered, **for example in the street, a park, an abandoned building, an encampment or a vehicle**. This is a 5% decrease from 2018 when the proportion was 22%.



People who spent the night unsheltered:

- Cisgender men: 75% (2018: 90% | 15 pp)
- Cisgender women: 18% (2018: 8% | 10 pp)
- Gender-diverse people: 7% (2018: 3% | 4 pp)
- Indigenous people: 15% (2018: 19% | 4 pp)

Temperatures recorded on the night of the Montréal enumeration:

- October 11, 2022 at 9 p.m.: 11 °C
- April 24, 2018 at 9 p.m.: 17 °C

7. Latimer and Bordeleau (2019).



Sheltered homelessness

83%

Estimated proportion of people who spent the night of October 11 to 12, 2022 in **various shelters, temporary housing or other premises**. In 2018, the proportion of sheltered homelessness was estimated at 78%, which indicates a 5% increase in 2022.

Sheltered people were found primarily at the following locations:

Transitional
resource

26%⁸

Emergency
shelter

25%

Mixed
organization

9%

Violence-related
shelter

8%



NOTE:

In the 2022 enumeration:

- 9% of respondents were considered to be experiencing hidden homelessness, because they were staying temporarily in a hotel, motel or rooming house.
- 4% of respondents had dependent children with them (same percentage as in 2018).

8. These percentages are calculated based on the total estimated number of people experiencing homelessness in Montréal in 2022, i.e. 4,690.

TABLE 1: Number of people experiencing homelessness enumerated in an unsheltered location or in a shelter resource on October 11, 2022, by borough or associated city

Borough or associated city	Number of people in an unsheltered location	Number of sheltered people ⁹
Ville-Marie	296	859
Le Plateau-Mont-Royal	107	611
Mercier-Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	71	567
Le Sud-Ouest	45	435
Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	42	<15 ¹⁰
Rosemont-La Petite-Patrie	36	246
Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Ville Mont-Royal, Outremont	25	91
Verdun	17	<15
Lachine	<15	27
LaSalle	<15	15
Pierrefonds-Roxboro, L'Île-Bizard-Sainte-Geneviève	<15	25
Pointe-Claire, Dollard-Des-Ormeaux	<15	<15
Dorval	<15	<15
Montréal-Nord	<15	75
Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension	<15	29
Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles, Anjou, Saint-Léonard	<15	55
Baie-d'Urfé, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Kirkland	<15	<15
Saint-Laurent	<15	29
Westmount	<15	<15
Côte Saint-Luc	<15	<15
Confidential addresses/Other ¹¹	N/A	192
Métro (assigned stations and underground Montréal)	89	N/A
Hidden locations	27	N/A
Total	797	3,359

N/A: Not applicable



NOTE:

Borough groupings (e.g. "Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Ville Mont-Royal, Outremont") are the result of the sampling strategy used by the INSPQ to ensure more accurate estimates. This limits the presentation of data, which cannot all be broken down individually for each borough. Details of the sampling strategy are provided in thematic document #2, "Methodology."

9. This table presents the data provided by emergency shelters, violence-related shelters, transitional resources, therapy centres and mixed resources that chose to participate in the 2022 enumeration exercise.

10. For confidentiality purposes, data for sites with fewer than 15 people enumerated are masked in the table.

11. Organizations with a confidential address include first- and second-stage domestic violence shelters.

4. OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN HEALTH ISSUES REPORTED

The 2022 exercise in Montréal made it possible to gather information on certain health issues self-reported by the homeless people who took part in the enumeration:

59% | reported a **mental health** issue

55% | reported a **tobacco use** issue

54% | reported a **substance use** issue
Note: This figure rose to 80% for those who spent the night unsheltered.

45% | reported one or more **medical conditions or physical illnesses**

35% | reported a **learning or cognitive** limitation

31% | reported a **physical limitation**

9% | reported a **gambling** problem

5. LOSS OF MOST RECENT HOME

When asked about the loss of their last home, people most often cited the following reasons:

Eviction from a dwelling	Insufficient income	Substance use problems	Mistreatment ¹²	Conflicts with spouse
23%	17%	13%	12%	12%

*Note: Respondents could give more than one answer to the question.

In 2018, the most frequently cited reasons for the loss of their most recent home were addiction (20%), inability to pay rent or mortgage (18%), and various types of conflicts – with spouse (11%), parent / guardian (8%) or other (7%).¹³

6. EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

When asked about their source of income, respondents cited the following sources:¹⁴

Social assistance / Social solidarity programs	Job	Pension / Programs for seniors	Unemployment or disability benefits	Empty bottles, begging, sex work, selling drugs
58%	17%	12%	11%	11%

*Note: Respondents could give more than one answer to the question.

Compared with the 2018 exercise, there was an **increase in the number of people who stated they were employed**. Furthermore, in 2022, people experiencing homelessness in Montréal differed in certain respects from those in the rest of Québec:

People with employment income	People receiving a retirement pension or benefiting from a program for seniors	People receiving money from a social assistance or social solidarity program
17%	12%	58%
Rest of Québec: 15%	Rest of Québec: 6%	Rest of Québec: 64%

12. Mistreatment can be inflicted by a variety of people, including: spouse, parent, guardian, child, landlord, janitor, roommate, neighbour, family member, sibling, stepfather, drug dealer or strangers.

13. This information should be interpreted with caution due to the methodological differences between the 2018 and 2022 exercises, in terms of the wording of the questions and the response choices in the questionnaires.

14. Respondents could give more than one answer to the question.

CONCLUSION

The 2022 enumeration exercise aimed to estimate the number of people experiencing visible homelessness in Montréal during the night of October 11 to 12, 2022, and to outline some of their characteristics based on information gathered via questionnaire. The analysis of the compiled data revealed the following general findings:

- the number of people experiencing visible homelessness in Montréal has been increasing since 2015;
- the percentage of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness is lower than in 2018;
- eviction and insufficient income are the main reasons given by people for losing their homes;
- there are proportionally more women experiencing visible homelessness than in 2018;
- several groups are over-represented in the visible homeless population compared to the general population, including: Indigenous people, LGBTQ2+ people, people who were in the youth protection system, and people who have served in the Canadian Armed Forces or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police;
- people experiencing visible homelessness have significant mental health and substance use issues;
- the proportion of seniors experiencing visible homelessness is growing;
- the proportion of people from migration backgrounds experiencing homelessness has increased slightly since the 2018 enumeration.

These findings are discussed in the other documents in the series.

Visible and hidden homelessness

The enumeration exercise targeted the phenomenon of **visible homelessness**. People experiencing visible homelessness are those with no permanent home and **no shelter**, who are staying **in locations not meant for human habitation** or in a **temporary resource**, and who have no possibility of finding safe, permanent housing in the foreseeable future.

Generally, people experiencing **hidden homelessness** are those with **no permanent home**, who are **temporarily staying in a hotel establishment or rooming house, or at the home of a family member or friend**.¹⁵⁻¹⁶

It is currently estimated that people who have experienced at least one episode of hidden homelessness in their lifetime account for **4.2% to 7%** of the Québec population.¹⁷⁻¹⁸

While the enumeration was not intended to quantify hidden homelessness, it was observed that **169 people were experiencing this situation in 2022**, representing 10% of the individuals enumerated. Of note is that **certain groups of people may have been rendered invisible in the data collection** notably due to the absence of questions tailored to their specific realities.

The limitations of the enumeration process

Measuring the extent of homelessness is an arduous exercise. At present, there is no single method that can capture the complexity of this phenomenon. As such, it is essential to draw on **several methods and several data sources** to paint as accurate a picture of the reality as possible.

While the enumeration process undoubtedly underestimates the number of people experiencing homelessness in Montréal, this method remains relevant and provides information to better support and guide actions for those affected.

The document about the **methodology for the Montréal enumeration** addresses the logistical and methodological issues in more detail.

15. Latimer and Bordeleau (2019).

16. Gravel, M.-A. (2020). Itinérance cachée : définitions et mesures. Au Québec et à l'international. Institut de la statistique du Québec. From: www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/statistiques/conditions-vie-societe/securite/victimisation/itinérance-cachee-definitons-mesures-quebec-international.html

17. Gravel (2020).

18. Institut de la statistique du Québec (2023). *Québec Population Health Survey, 2020-2021*. From: <https://statistique.quebec.ca/en/document/itinérance-cachee-definitons-et-mesures-au-quebec-et-a-l-international>



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