

THE RURAL ONTARIO INSTITUTE'S RURAL COMMUNITY WELLBEING PROJECT: MAKING THE DATA AVAILABLE TO FRANCOPHONES



Rural Community Wellbeing Project

Making the data available to francophones

Rural Ontario Institute
July 2026

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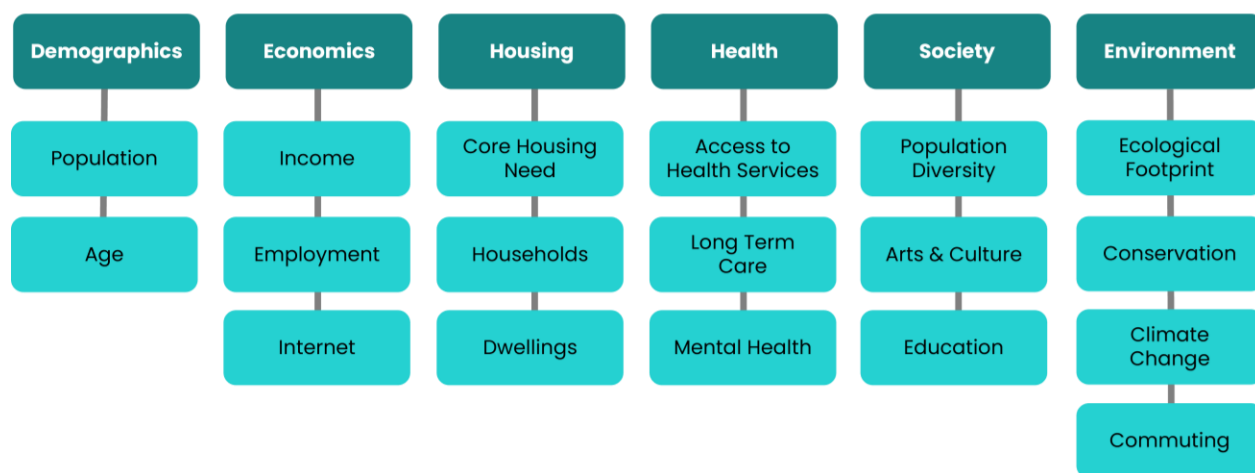
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Overview

The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is a charitable organization committed to developing leaders, informing decision makers and connecting communities ROI is recognized for its expertise in leadership development, rural capacity building, and program development, demonstrated through the delivery of flagship initiatives including the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) and the Rural Change Makers (RCM) program. We provide data research and analysis on rural priorities, sharing information and equipping communities with tools through our Rural Community Wellbeing Dashboard and accompanying factsheets, and Rural Housing Information System - addressing the housing and homelessness crisis faced by thousands of Canadians.

ROI's Rural Community Wellbeing project aims to improve access to community data information and evidence for rural decision-making, empowering people to tell a holistic story about all aspects of community wellbeing and adopting a standardized approach that can be applied across Canada (see [Project Overview](#) for more detailed information).

The dashboard was made available in English in September 2024. The 60 indicators displayed are organized into 6 categories, which are further divided into themes.



In rural Ontario, 13% of residents have knowledge of the French language – 298,155 inhabitants. The francophone population is largely in Eastern and Central Ontario¹, and the francophone population also represents a larger percentage of the population in the less populated areas of Northern Ontario. RCWB has all the urban centers data available for

¹ Ontario Ministry of Francophone Affaire, [2025 Report on Francophone Affairs | ontario.ca](#)

comparison 11% of Ontarians in urban areas can hold a conversation in French, which represents 1,251,185 inhabitants.

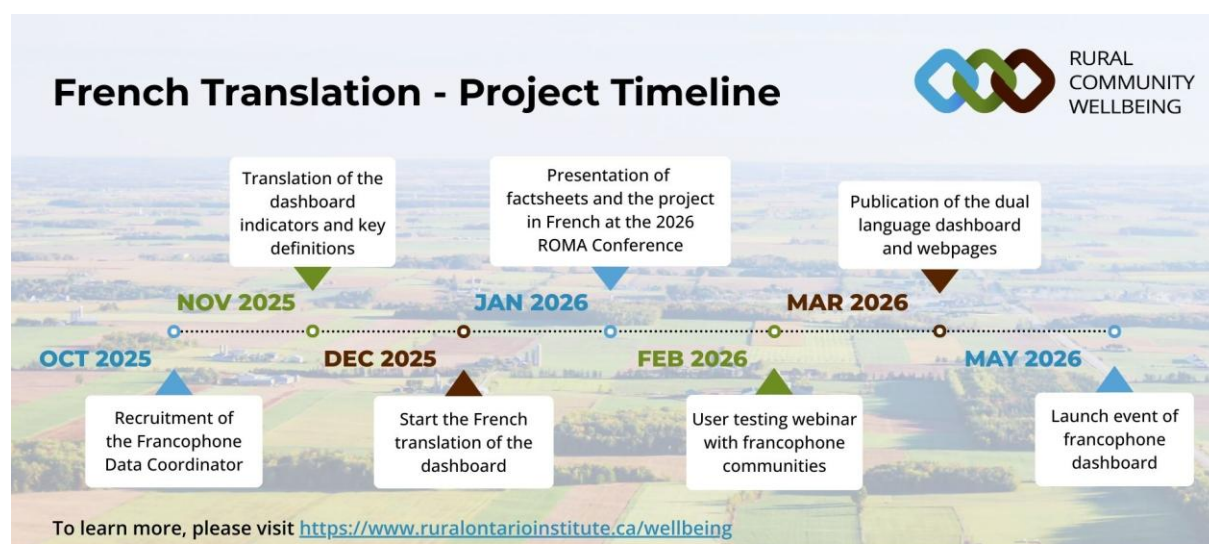
Thus, the francophone population represents a significant portion of the population, with its own challenges.

ROI's Rural Community Wellbeing project reports the indicator "knowledge of French" on the [Society Dashboard](#). It displays the proportion of the population that can conduct a conversation in French and is sourced from the data from Statistics Canada's Census of Population data.

In 2025, ROI received funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation — one of the founding funders of the RCWB Project when it was launched in 2023–2024 — to make all Wellbeing resources and dashboards available in both official languages. The Rural Community Wellbeing dashboard was made available in French in April 2026 ([Press release here](#)).

Timeline

[Phase 2](#) of the RCWB project was completed in 2025, following Phase 1, which focused on research and initiated community engagement. The translation of the dashboard started in Phase 3 of the project.



The 8-month timeline above details the different steps between the recruitment of ROI's Francophone Data Engagement Coordinator, Emeline Nicolich, in October 2025 to the launch of the French dashboard in spring 2026.

Developing the French dashboard

Translating the indicators and the glossary

The first step was to translate the indicators and main definitions that would be used in every document and resource.

A subscription to [DeepL Pro](#) was purchased to facilitate the translation process.

A global glossary was developed by the ROI's Francophone Data Engagement Coordinator. This glossary is an internal document that displays the translation for every major term used in the project. This glossary is then uploaded into the glossary used by DeepL.

Translating and naming conventions

Indicator names and terms

Defined by Statistics Canada

-> Use Statistics Canada's French version

Defined by another organization

-> Use the French term provided by the organization
e.g. the Gouvernement of Ontario

No translation already available

-> Use the best translation identified

Organization names

French name exists

-> Use the French name
e.g. Statistics Canada, Mass Culture

No French Name

-> Keep the English Name
e.g. ROMA, Ontario GeoHub

Special case : Rural Ontario Institute

Our organization's name is translated into "Institut Rural de l'Ontario"

Translating the resources

The Rural Community Wellbeing resources (factsheets and some custom reports) were translated using [Canva's translation tool](#). All the other resources edited in PowerPoint, Word, and Excel were translated using DeepL software.

ROI's Francophone Data Engagement Coordinator then corrected all the Canva and DeepL translation to ensure accuracy and consistency.

The following Rural Community Wellbeing documents were translated:

- RCWB project webpages on the website: all the RCWB webpages (see details below)
- Factsheets: 19 factsheets
 - Rural Classification
 - Geographies
 - Age
 - Population
 - Migration and Immigration
 - Income
 - Indigenous People
 - Jobs by Industry 2022
 - Languages
 - Racial Diversity
 - Jobs and Wages
 - Housing
 - Work
 - Mental Health
 - Seniors
 - Ecological Footprint
 - Climate Change
 - Internet
 - Commuting
- Download data files: 6 Excel files
 - Demographic
 - Housing
 - Economics
 - Society
 - Health
 - Environment
- ROI Open License content
- Project Overview
- Project reports:
 - Phase 1 Report
 - Phase 2 Report
 - Ecofootprint Report and Ecofootprint Methods
- Custom report: Temiskaming custom report
- Case reports:
 - Cape Breton Case report
 - Huron county case report
- Communication material:
 - Feedback survey
 - RCWB brochure

The translation and layout of this material was finished in December 2025.

Translating the webpages

The webpages were translated using the services of the Rural Ontario Institute's website provider, [RKD](#). RKD recommended having a bilingual website – for the RCWB project pages – , with a French toggle button at the top-right corner, in order to switch to the French website. Once on the French website, all the pages of the website appear the same, except for the “Wellbeing” that would now appear as “Bien-être” (see results in section 4)

All the French parent and child webpages were created by RKD. The Communications Coordinator from ROI used the material provided by ROI's Francophone Data Engagement Coordinator to replace the English text into French text.

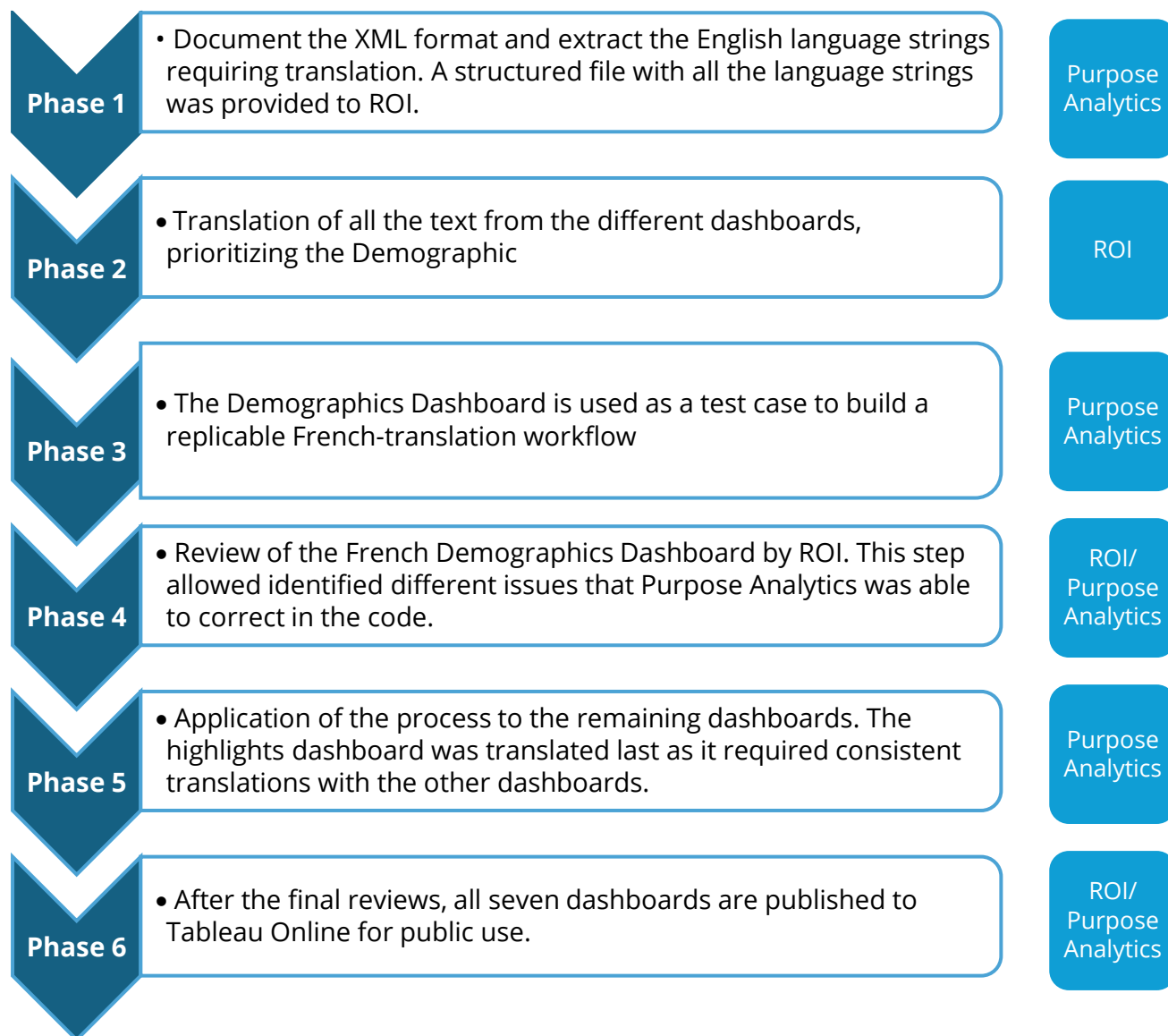
For the dashboards, the embedded text for each dashboard was provided to RKD to have the dashboard embedded into the website (see results in section 4).

Translating the dashboards

For the translation of the dashboards, ROI subcontracted software engineering firm, [Purpose Analytics](#). ROI's Francophone Data Engagement Coordinator worked in collaboration with Purpose Analytics' Data Scientist, who brought their expertise on the software [Tableau](#).

Purpose Analytics supported ROI in the translation of the dashboards. The translation also prompted design and layout changes to accommodate the longer French-language labels.

The content of Tableau Workbooks is encoded in a machine-readable language called XML. Given the scale of the project (7 dashboards with three to five tabs per dashboard), Purpose Analytics recommended to implement the translation by modifying the XML code instead of replicating the dashboards in French by hand. Below are the steps followed and the timeline.



Date	Completion of the task
17-Nov-2025	Extract text
30-Nov-2025	Translation of the Demographics dashboard
15-Dec-2025	First version of the Demographics dashboard and the replacement code
02-Feb-2026	Code applied to translation Economics and Housing dashboards
23-Feb-2026	Code applied to translation Health and Society dashboards
16-Mar-2026	Code applied to translation Environment and Highlights dashboards
30-Mar-2026	Publication on Tableau Public

Once the dashboards were published on Tableau Public, the embed code was retrieved to provide it to RKD for the ROI RCWB website pages.

Once the French website and dashboards were ready, a French video was created as a [user guide](#).

Project details

Project team

The team involved in the project:

- Kezia Cowtan, ROI, Data Programs Manager
- Emeline Nicolich, ROI, Francophone Data Engagement Coordination
- Brianna Pitt, ROI, Communication Coordinator
- Maia Pelletier, Purpose Analytics, Data Scientist
- Paul Onofio, RKD, Web Designer

Cost and expenses

The total estimated cost for the project for the period between October 2025 and May 2026 is \$160,000. The distribution of the costs between the different internal and external costs is reported below.

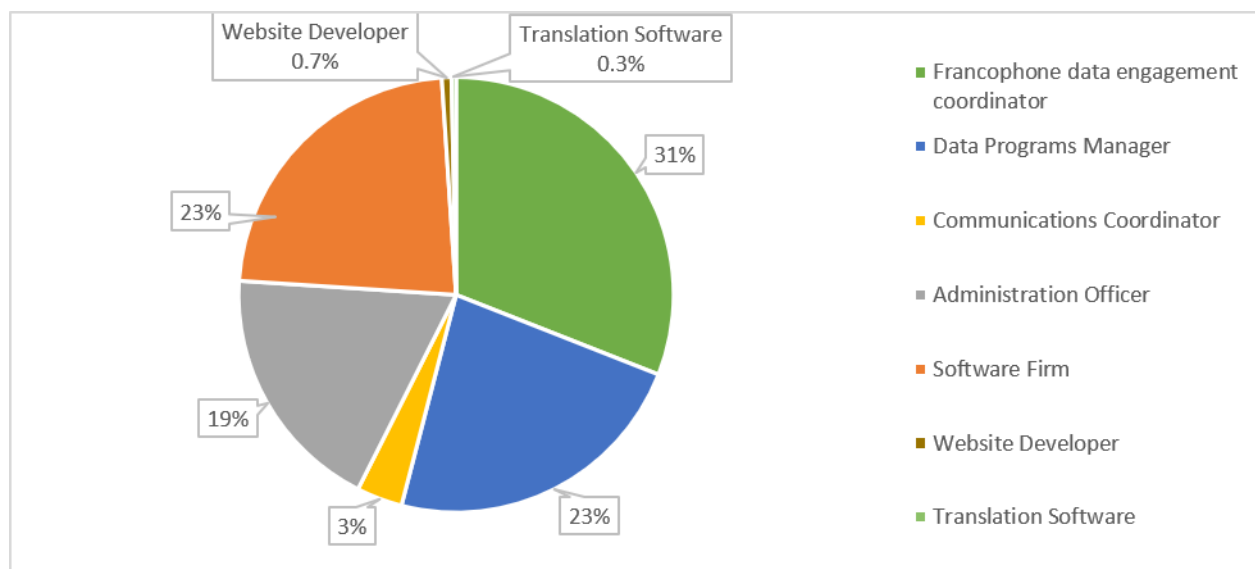


Figure 1 -. The estimated costs are reported for the period when the translation was undergone, between October 2025 and May 2026.

Results

See some screenshots of the [Wellbeing pages](#) in French:



Figure 2 - Home page of the Wellbeing page on the French website. The button to change the language is at the top-right

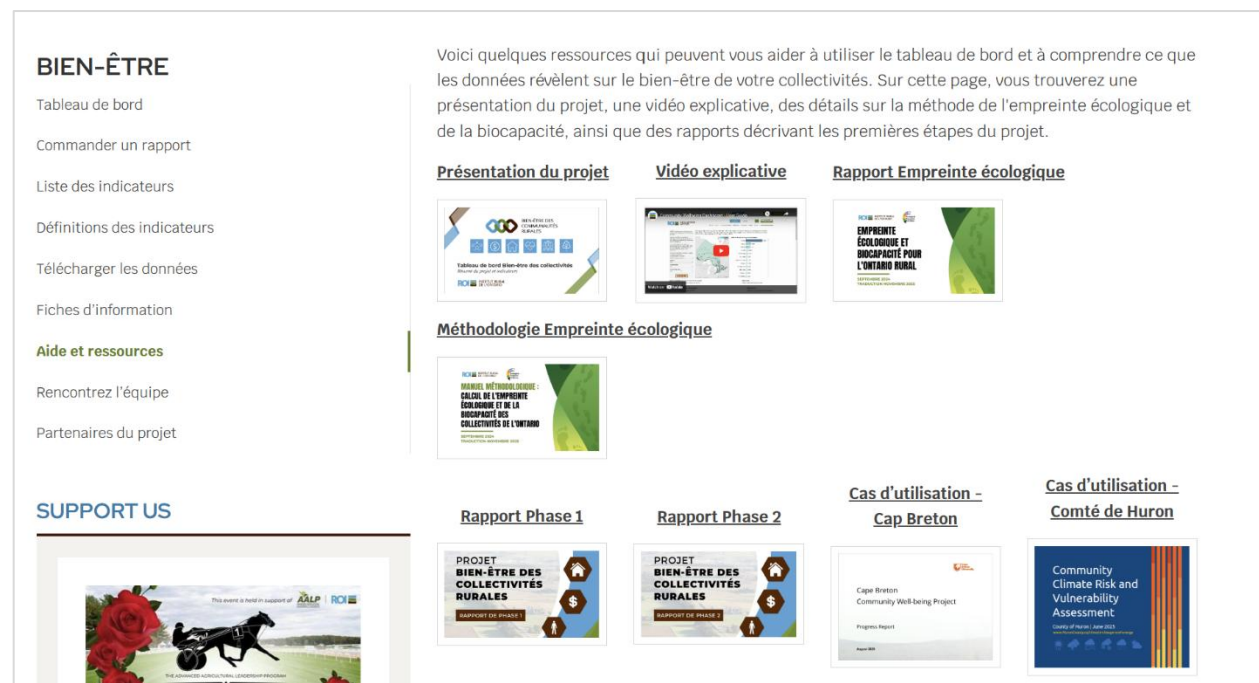


Figure 3 - Resource page on the French website

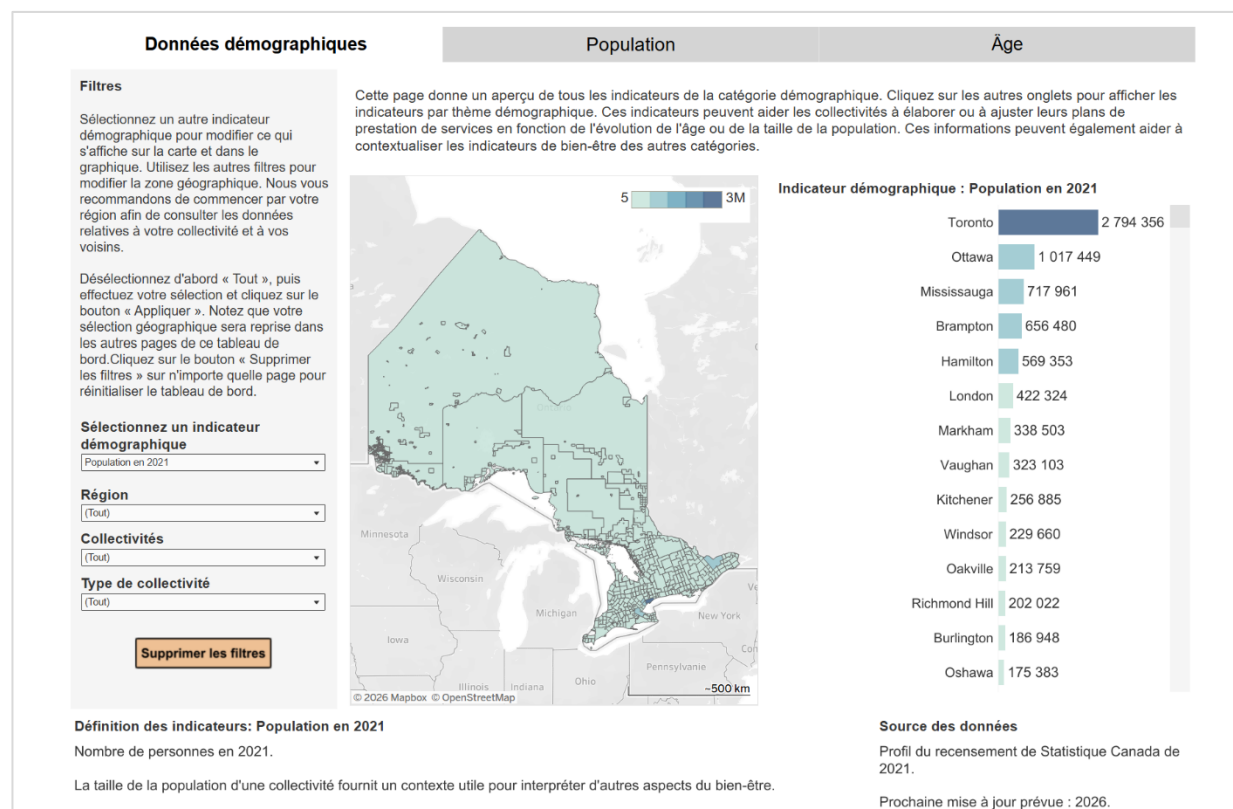


Figure 4 - First page of the Demographics dashboard on the French website

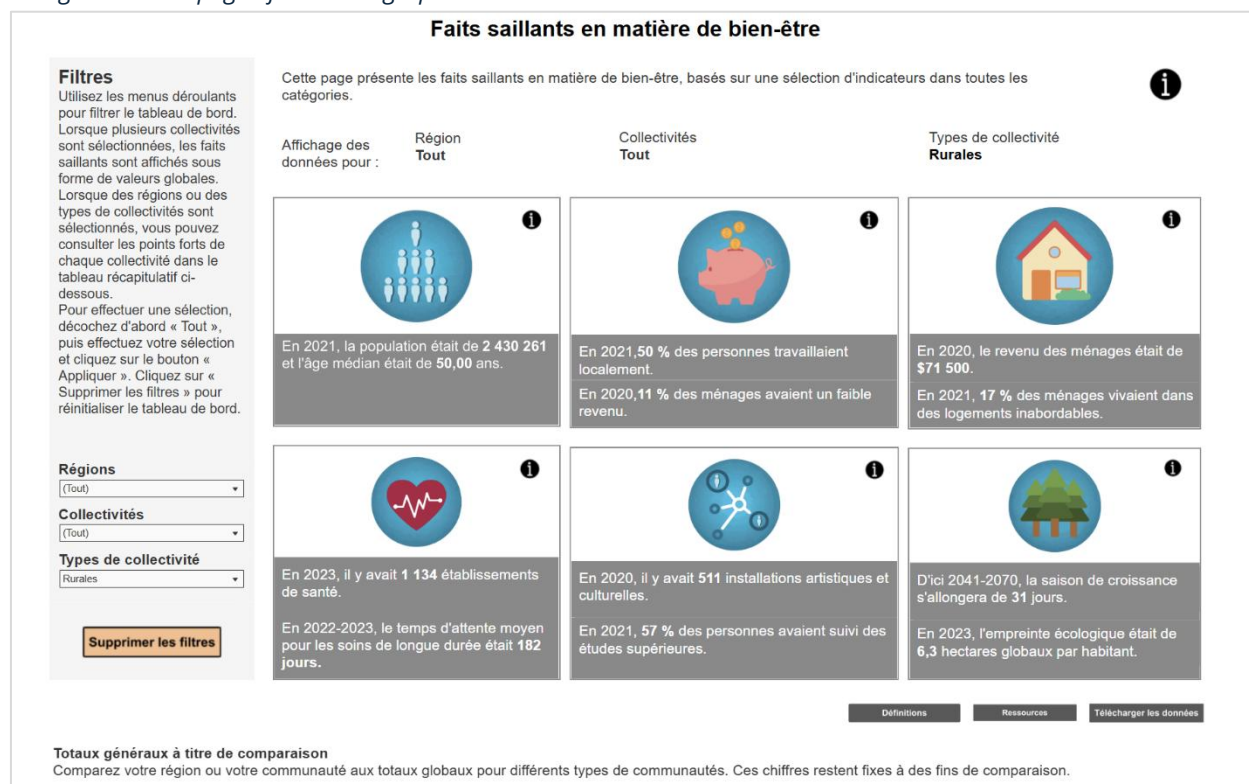


Figure 5 - Highlights dashboard in French, showing the values for Rural Ontario

Engaging with Francophone communities

Engaging online

All social media posts about RCWB project have been published in both French and English since the dashboard's launch. Here are the socials : [Facebook](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Youtube](#)



Figure 6 - Screenshot of a LinkedIn post posted on May 19, 2026.

Between April 1st, 2026, and June 24th, 2026, there were 54 active users for the bien-être section (French pages of the website) with 525 views total. There were 27 users for the page

[tableau-de-bord](#) specifically, with 203 views. The most frequently viewed French dashboard is the Health dashboard (51 views over the period), followed by the Economics dashboard (48 views), and the Society dashboard (29 views).

Page path and screen class	↓ Views	Active users	Views per active user	Average engagement time per active user
Total	525 3.29% of total	54 0.83% of total	9.72 Avg +295.15%	2m 34s Avg +316.71%
/bienetre	127 (24.19%)	30 (55.56%)	4.23	56s
/bienetre-tableau-de-bord	78 (14.86%)	33 (61.11%)	2.36	37s
/bienetre/tableau-de-bord/sante.aspx	51 (9.71%)	10 (18.52%)	5.10	2m 10s
/bienetre/tableau-de-bord/economie.aspx	48 (9.14%)	13 (24.07%)	3.69	1m 30s
/bienetre/tableau-de-bord/societe.aspx	29 (5.52%)	9 (16.67%)	3.22	46s
/bienetre-ressources	27 (5.14%)	11 (20.37%)	2.45	21s
/bienetre-fiches-information	23 (4.38%)	10 (18.52%)	2.30	43s
/bienetre/tableau-de-bord/demographie.aspx	21 (4%)	7 (12.96%)	3.00	53s
/bienetre-rapport	19 (3.62%)	9 (16.67%)	2.11	48s
/bienetre/tableau-de-bord/faits-saillants.aspx	19 (3.62%)	6 (11.11%)	3.17	36s

Figure 7 - Google analytics results on the French pages of the website between April 1st and June 24th, 2026.

Webinars

As the goal of the dashboard is to provide communities with meaningful data, engaging with francophone communities and organizations is a priority in this project, as ROI has continuously done with anglophone communities since the launch of the dashboards in 2024.

Introduction webinar

ROI hosted a preliminary French webinar on February 17th, 2026. The goal was to introduce the francophone communities and organizations to the project, gather their needs and feedback, and start engaging with them.

35 people registered, and 23 attended the webinar, and an additional 7 people requested the recording. Given that it is a



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first event with the francophone communities, those numbers are very positive, which shows a real interest in the project.

The participants came from Eastern Ontario and Northern Ontario. They were from government agencies, communities, or non-profit francophone organizations. Among the 6 participants who gave feedback, all of them found the session interesting for their work. Here are a few comments by the participants:

- “Great! Congratulations on this French-language initiative! It will provide even more support to our French-speaking communities! Especially in economic development, etc...”
- “Good work. We really lack evidence-based data when writing our projects.”
- “Thanks for the presentation! It's much appreciated!”

Launch webinar

ROI launch of the dashboard was a webinar organized on May 21st, 2026. The goal of this webinar was to introduce the francophone communities to the dashboards, explain its features, detail the data and how it can be used, and answer the questions they might have.



A total of 53 people registered, and 17 attended the webinar, representing an increase compared to the first webinar and demonstrating the project's ability to reach new audiences. The participants came from Eastern Ontario and Northern Ontario. They were from communities or non-profit francophone organizations. Among the 10 participants who gave feedback, all of them found the session interesting for their work. Here are a few comments by the participants:

- “Great presentation!”
- “Thank you so much. Really helpful.”
- “Thanks a lot!”
- “Great tool! ”

Other events

Thanks to these first webinars, other opportunities have arisen.

Pierrette Desrochers, member of the Steering Committee and in charge of Rural Economic Development at the Ministry of Rural Affairs, mentioned the Wellbeing dashboard and its availability in French to the 60 participants at her conference at FONOM Conference on May 12, 2026. FONOM Conference : [2026 – FONOM | The Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities](#)

ROI's Francophone Data Engagement Coordinator, Emeline Nicolich, held a booth on June 9, 2026, at the Regional Forum of RSIFEO. She engaged with around 40 participants. Furthermore, the 100 participants at the event saw ROI's booth held by Emeline as well as the logo on the presentations in the conference room.

Steering committee

Below are the members of the Francophone Steering Committee as of end of June 2026. The Steering Committee provides strategic guidance to ensure the overall success of the project

First Name	Last Name	Organization	Role	Region
Pierrette	Desrochers	Ministry of Rural Affairs	Rural Economic Development	Northern Ontario
Fred	Standley Vincent	Réseau de soutien à l'immigration francophone de l'est de l'Ontario	Health coordinator	Eastern Ontario (Ottawa, Cornwall, Hawkesbury, Kingston)
Jennifer	Lambert	Prescott and Russell United Counties	Coordonnatrice du plan de logement	Prescott and Russell

The Francophone Steering Committee held its first meeting on June 25, 2026. Its three members are committed to a one-year term. During this initial meeting, they provided feedback and comments on the data included, particularly on data specific to Francophone communities. They also shared initial contacts and ideas for Francophone organizations to engage with.

The Steering Committee meets once every three months.

We thank all members for their involvement in the Committee and for the recommendations they provide.

Next steps

Concerning the development of the dashboard, each change, new definition or new data point will be updated on both the English and French dashboards going forward.

ROI will continue promoting data and results in French. The organization will also continue engaging with francophone communities during webinars or in-person events. We will continue to work with the Francophone Steering Committee for long-term sustainability and oversight of the Bien Etre site.

ROI will continue to prioritize credible data for rural communities and decision makers in English and French to support our mandate and mission.

LET'S STAY CONNECTED

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