



NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

Eastern Bridge Project

Public Participation – Round 1

SUMMARY REPORT
DECEMBER 2025

Context

The Government of Canada is moving forward with the next phase of the new Eastern Bridge project on the Montée Paiement–Aviation Parkway Corridor. This corridor has consistently been identified as the technically preferred corridor for an additional interprovincial bridge in the eastern part of the National Capital Region.

In 2021, the government created an integrated project team with staff from both Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) and the National Capital Commission (NCC). PSPC is leading the overall project planning and delivery, which includes the design, procurement, and construction of the bridge. The NCC has responsibility in the areas of transportation planning, impact assessment, and engagement activities.

Overview of public participation

This report summarizes the initial round of public participation for the Eastern Bridge project. In this first round, the public was invited to:

- identify the project’s most important benefits from a community perspective;
- share their thoughts on the project’s potential impacts on people, places, and the environment;
- propose mitigation measures; and
- help shape the initial planning and design principles that will guide the project’s development.

Phase 1 engagement activities included:

- **A survey:** An online survey accessible through the NCC’s website was open from June 19 to July 10, 2025. The survey received 5,113 responses.
- **Three Public Advisory Group (PAG) meetings:** The PAGs were established for Ontario, Quebec, and Environment & Sustainable Transportation groups. Their initial meetings were held in July 2025.

Feedback received during the first phase of public consultation will be used by the integrated project team to inform the development of the project’s planning and design principles. In addition, work will continue to incorporate feedback into the development of the Initial Project Description, scheduled for submission to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada in winter 2026.

What we heard

Round 1 of public participation on the Eastern Bridge project revealed a range of perspectives, from optimism about the bridge’s potential to improve regional mobility and economic development, to caution about its necessity and impact.

The following sections summarize comments received, highlighting the benefits identified and the concerns raised, and presenting the mitigation measures proposed. A more specific overview of the comments received from respondents who identified their residence location in the National Capital Region (Quebec or Ontario portion) is also presented. Residents on the Ontario side were identified by postal codes beginning with a K, while those living in Quebec were identified by postal codes beginning with a J.

Transportation and connectivity

For this category, respondents were asked to identify which aspects of transportation and connectivity would benefit the region, what their specific concerns were in this area, and how those concerns could be mitigated.

Among project benefits, reducing truck traffic in the downtown core was ranked the most important by 38.5% of respondents. Reducing potential commute times (17.9%) and better options for public transit (14.2%) were the other highest rated benefits.

“Allowing for conversion for dedicated public transit uses would be proactive.”

With respect to concerns, the most common (with 25.6% of respondents ranking it their top concern) was traffic impacts on neighbourhoods. Other concerns included the impact of construction activities (18.9%) and the increased congestion on nearby roads (16.9%).

To mitigate these concerns, respondents proposed several measures, including dedicated lanes for active transportation, improved coordination with existing transit systems and traffic calming strategies in adjacent neighbourhoods. Some also recommended grade separation at key intersections to reduce congestion and enhance safety for all users.

“Public transit, biking, and walking lanes should be included in the new design.”

Quebec residents’ feedback

Quebec residents identified reduced truck traffic in downtown cores as their top benefit (37.97% of responses), as well as reduced commute times (20.57%) and better options for public transit.

Among their main concerns, Quebec residents identified the impact of traffic on neighbourhoods (22.85%) and the impacts of construction activities (22.85%).

“Speed should be reduced on the streets of neighbourhoods adjacent to the bridge.”

Ontario residents’ feedback

Ontario residents indicated that reducing truck traffic was the top benefit (39.76%). They also gave more importance to connections for pedestrians and cyclists (11.26%) than Quebec residents (9.19%).

*More cycling, transit, and pedestrian options are always great.
Doesn't need to be fancy but always good to be a consideration.
Connectivity of this bridge to transit stations may be important - i.e.
maybe people drive across the bridge then park near Blair or
Cyrville to take the train downtown.*

Ontario residents expressed concerns about traffic impacts on neighbourhoods (26.18%). Similar to Quebec residents, Ontario residents listed the impacts of construction activities (19.51%) and increased congestion on nearby roads (17.32%) as their next highest concerns.

Community and health impacts

To better understand local perspectives and feedback on the bridge’s impact on communities and the National Capital Region as a whole, respondents were asked which specific community and health factors would result in benefits for the region, what specific concerns they had, and how those concerns could be mitigated.

The most important benefit identified by residents was reducing traffic, noise, and accident impacts on downtown communities (identified in 51% of cases), while 17% of responses noted the bridge potentially reducing the distance to visit family and friends as a benefit.

In terms of impacts, 31% ranked the potential impacts on neighbouring communities through traffic or infrastructure changes resulting from the project as their top concern. Other primary concerns included potential displacement (16%) and the impact on marginalized communities (12.7%).

Comments in response to mitigation measures provided suggestions to minimize traffic and noise impacts, while also ensuring continued community involvement in the project and equitable planning to protect vulnerable populations.

“There should be proper soundproofing of the routes so that increased traffic does not translate to increased sound pollution.”

Quebec residents’ feedback

Quebec residents identified reducing traffic, noise, and accident impacts on downtown communities as their top benefit with 52.0% of them ranking it first). Other benefits were of lesser importance: reducing distance to visit family and friends (16.5%), supporting Francophone communities (4.0%), improved access to health care (3.7%), and landscaping / public art (6.2%). Lastly, 13.2% selected “Other” with unique suggestions.

“The project must be reflective of the city’s current active transportation network and contribute to community health well-being.”

Among their concerns, Quebec respondents ranked traffic impacts on neighbourhoods highest (39.2%), followed by impacts on marginalized groups (14.8%), and increased population density (9.9%).

Ontario residents’ feedback

Ontario respondents mirrored Quebec in prioritizing reduced traffic, noise, and accident impacts (51.4% ranked this as their top benefit). Other benefits followed similar patterns: reducing distance to visit family and friends (16.7%), supporting Francophone communities (5.6%), improved health care access (3.8%), and landscaping / public art (3.4%), with “Other” at 13.2%.

Most Ontario responses (50.2%) identified traffic impacts on neighbourhoods as the top issue, followed by displacement (15.5%), marginalized communities (12.7%), and density (7.3%).

“The project must not allow the same community and health risks and damage that currently exist on King Edward Avenue (due to heavy truck traffic) to be transferred or allowed to occur on Aviation Parkway and nearby if this bridge is built. There must be lessons learned and risk mitigation in the entire planning and design of this project.”

Economic and practical considerations

Respondents were asked to identify the project’s potential economic benefits and concerns.

Responses mostly focused on increased efficiency in the movement of goods resulting from a potential new bridge, with 31% of responses indicating this as their top benefit. Further, 18.5% of responses highlighted that a top benefit would be the removal of trade barriers resulting from a new connection between Ontario and Quebec.

“This project will stimulate economic growth by improving freight efficiency, supporting commercial development near the corridor, and enhancing access to jobs and services across Ottawa and Gatineau.”

Concerns included potential impacts on property values, with 28.6% of responses indicating this as their most significant concern resulting from the project. Another major concern was property taxes (25.6%), which outpaced the other concerns listed in the survey.

Suggestions for mitigation measures include reassessing the bridge’s location to better serve growing communities, coordinating with other infrastructure projects, and ensuring that the bridge supports future economic growth without compromising community well-being.

Quebec residents' feedback

Quebec residents identified the efficient movement of commercial goods as their top priority (27.2% of responses). Other favoured benefits include removing barriers to interprovincial trade (19.7%), improved access to goods and services (10.5%), and rapid project delivery and cost-effective design (12.6%). There was lower support for attracting new investments (4.2%) and widening employment opportunities (7.5%).

As for concerns, Quebec residents were most worried that the project will increase their property taxes (25.5% ranked it their top concern). Other concerns noted were a negative effect on property values (24.8%), displacement issues (17.9%), and limiting business access.

"I worry that the extended period of construction to build the bridge could force some businesses into closing, especially those that are closest to the construction. I would want the project team to personally contact those businesses to hear their concerns and come up with solutions to not have them lose so much business that they can no longer afford to stay open."

Ontario residents' feedback

Ontario respondents also identified the efficient movement of commercial goods as their top benefit (31.2% of responses). They expressed more modest support for removing trade barriers (18.9%), rapid project delivery and cost-effective design (10.4%), and access to goods and services (6.8%), with relatively few ranking widening employment opportunities (7.1%) or new investments (6.6%) at the top.

Their concerns centre on negative effects on property value (29.5% ranked it their top concern) and increased property taxes (24.7% ranked it their top concern); displacement and business-access issues register as secondary worries.

Environmental concerns

Respondents were asked about the project's potential environmental impacts and to identify the most important aspects to mitigate. As a new infrastructure project would have impacts on the local environment, unlike the previous categories, the survey only provided impacts (rather than benefits) and included a list of 13 potential impacts.

Though a number of potential impacts were mentioned, most responses indicated particular concerns related to the project's impact on the water.

“Ensure that the river maintains healthy populations and water quality and can still be enjoyed by the population for recreational activities.”

Nearly a quarter (24%) of responses listed marked effects on the river and the riverbed as their top concern, while a similar number were related to water pollution and aquatic ecosystems (11.3%). Another concern was greenhouse gas emissions resulting from future use, ranked the top concern by 12.7% of responses. Finally, construction impacts were also important, as indicated in some responses, with noise and dust during construction (8.2%) and carbon footprint during construction (4.9%) being highlighted.

“Make sure residents are informed of upcoming disruptions, ensure work schedule is organized to minimize disruption.”

Mitigation suggestions identified by respondents included the use of green building materials, noise-reducing barriers, and accelerated construction timelines to limit prolonged disruption. There was also support for preserving wildlife corridors and ensuring stormwater management systems were in place.

“Be responsible and respectful, avoid spill and conduct major cleaning operations at each phase of the construction.”

Quebec residents' feedback

Quebec respondents placed effects on the river and riverbed at the top of their environmental concerns, with 26.4% ranking it first. Other major concerns included greenhouse gas emissions related to future use (13.9%), water pollution and harm to aquatic wildlife (10.0%), and impacts on Kettle Island habitats (9.5%). Lesser, but notable, concerns were noise and dust during construction (6.5%), salt runoff into the river (6.5%), and miscellaneous “other” suggestions (6.5%).

“Reduced salt use, salty runoff collection and diversion. Low carbon building methods, sitting as far from Kettle Island as possible. As few piers as possible.”

Ontario residents' feedback

Ontario respondents' top concern was the effects on the river and riverbed, with 23.4% ranking it first. Other top concerns were greenhouse gas emissions (13.6%), water pollution (11.5%), and Kettle Island habitats (10.0%), followed by noise/dust during construction (7.8%), and salt runoff (7.3%). Lower-ranked issues included the carbon footprint (5.8%), species at risk (4.3%), and light pollution (2.4%).

“Choosing an experienced constructor and have knowledgeable NCC specialists continuously monitoring the daily activities to ensure best practices are in place and being followed.”

Planning and design principles

Respondents were provided with the four draft themes for the planning and design principles (Connected Locally and Regionally, Sustainable and Resilient, Safe and Equitable, Functional and Responsive). For each theme, they were asked to rank design guidelines in order of importance. Respondents were also provided with the opportunity to give additional feedback on the guidelines.

Across all four themes, clear priorities emerged. In Theme 1 (Connected Locally and Regionally), respondents placed the greatest emphasis on the efficient movement of trucks, with roughly one third ranking it as their top priority. Active transportation and seamless transit connectivity followed, though with lower shares. Regionally, Ontario respondents leaned more toward truck movement and active transportation, while Quebec respondents showed stronger support for transit integration.

“A bridge with at least four lanes would be so much more practical, especially for traffic during rush hours.”

Theme 2 (Sustainable and Resilient) highlighted environmental protection as the dominant concern, with nearly one quarter of respondents ranking it first overall. It ranked even higher among Quebec residents (close to 29%). Other considerations, such as adapting for future operational demands and balancing climate risk, were secondary priorities. Ontario respondents gave slightly more weight to reducing maintenance impacts, while Quebec respondents emphasized climate resilience.

“The face of Eastern Ottawa is about to change irreversibly. Think about this through every part of the design phase and think about people on both sides of the river.”

In Theme 3 (Safe and Equitable), minimizing impacts on residents stood out as the most frequently ranked top priority, followed by personal safety and security. Investment in surrounding communities and designing for all ages were also important. Ontario respondents were particularly focused on minimizing resident impacts, whereas Quebec respondents placed slightly more emphasis on safety.

Finally, Theme 4 (Functional and Responsive) showed overwhelming consensus: responding to existing and future population growth dominated, with over 40% of respondents ranking it first. Other priorities—such as adapting to surrounding conditions, considering seasonal impacts, and adding public space—were far less prominent. Regional differences were minimal, though Quebec respondents expressed slightly more interest in adding public space.

“Please consider a transit-focused hub connection between Ottawa & Gatineau's transportation networks and invest into the communities impacted by the project.”

Next steps

Feedback received during the first phase of public consultation will be used by the integrated project team to inform the development of the project's planning and design principles. In addition, work will continue to incorporate feedback into the development of the Initial Project Description, slated for submission to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada in winter 2026.

In fall 2025, a public touchpoint is scheduled to share the updated planning and design principles, following feedback received during Phase 1 of public participation. This touchpoint will also include meetings with stakeholders and the Public Advisory Groups.

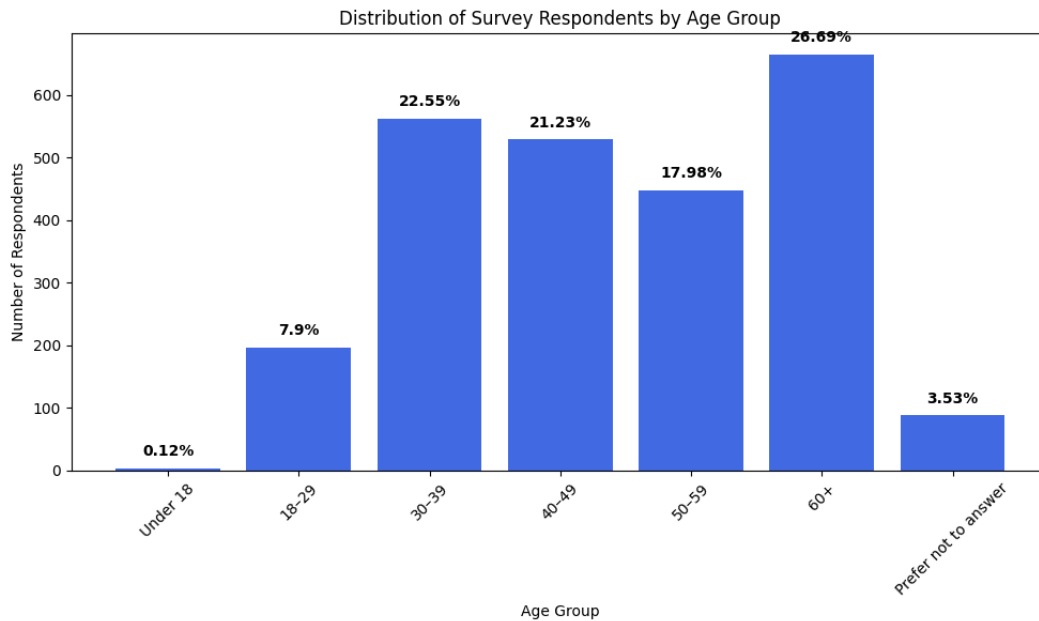
Following this, the next round of public participation activities is scheduled for early 2026. These activities will provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the early design concepts for the bridge.

Appendix 1: Demographics

Respondents' demographic information was collected through the survey.

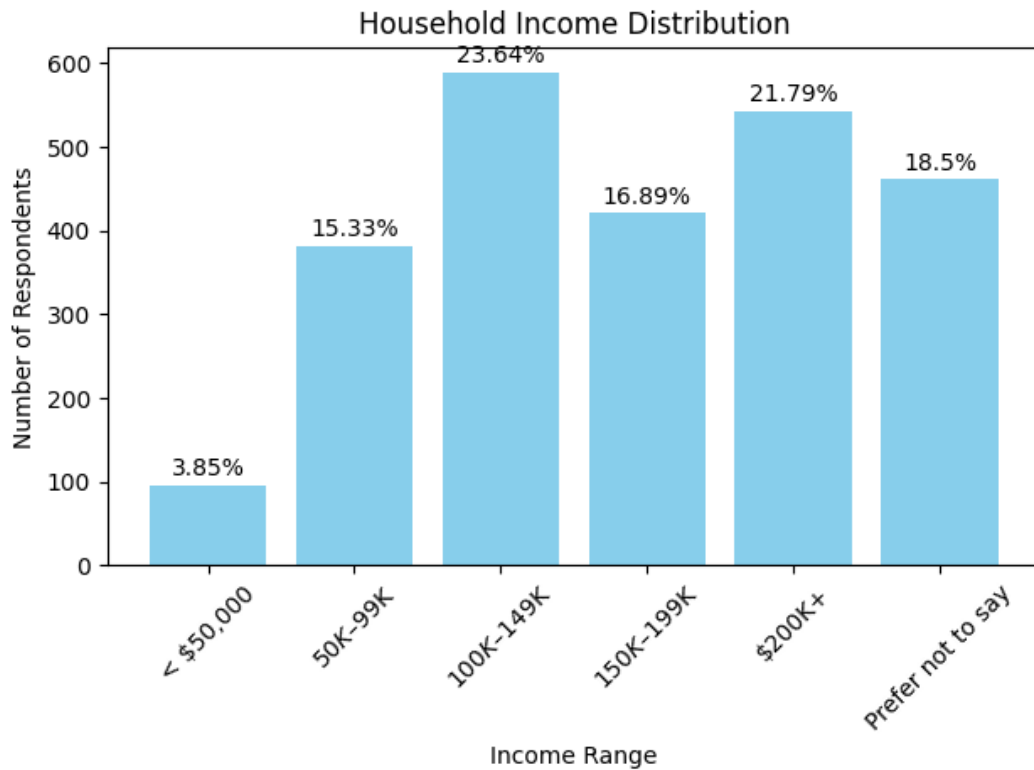
Age

The largest respondent groups were aged 60 and over (26.69%), 30–39 (22.55%), and 40–49 (21.23%), indicating a higher level of engagement from older adults and working-age professionals. Survey results generally aligned with 2021 Census data for age groups in the Ottawa–Gatineau census metropolitan area. However, a notable exception was the 18–29 age group, which accounted for only 7.9% of respondents (compared with approximately 13% representation in the regional Census data).



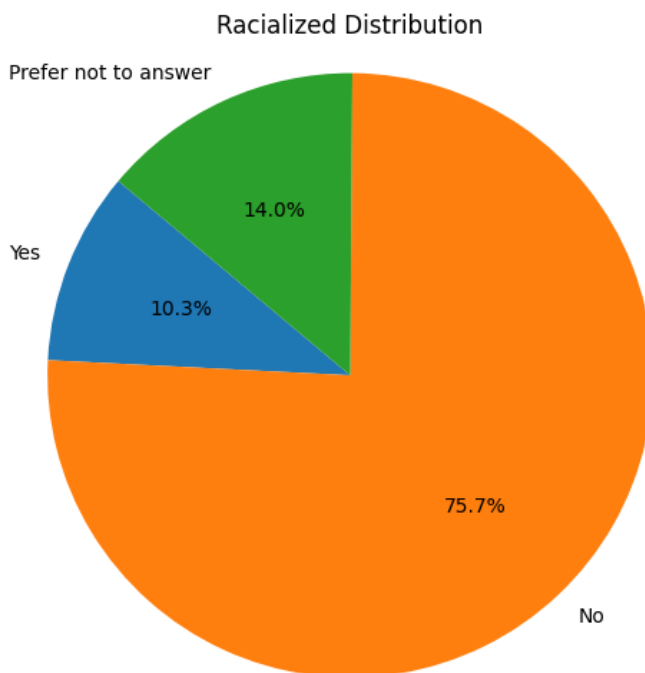
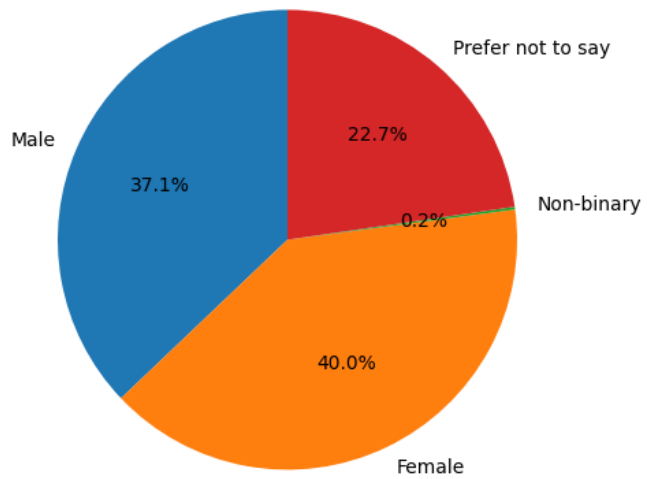
Household income

The largest respondent groups reported household incomes of \$100,000–\$149,000 (23.64%), \$200,000+ (21.79%), and \$150,000–\$199,000 (16.89%), indicating strong participation from middle- to upper-income households.



Gender

The gender distribution presented in the graph aligns with Census data for the Ottawa–Gatineau census metropolitan area, despite a number of respondents indicating their preference not to respond to this question.

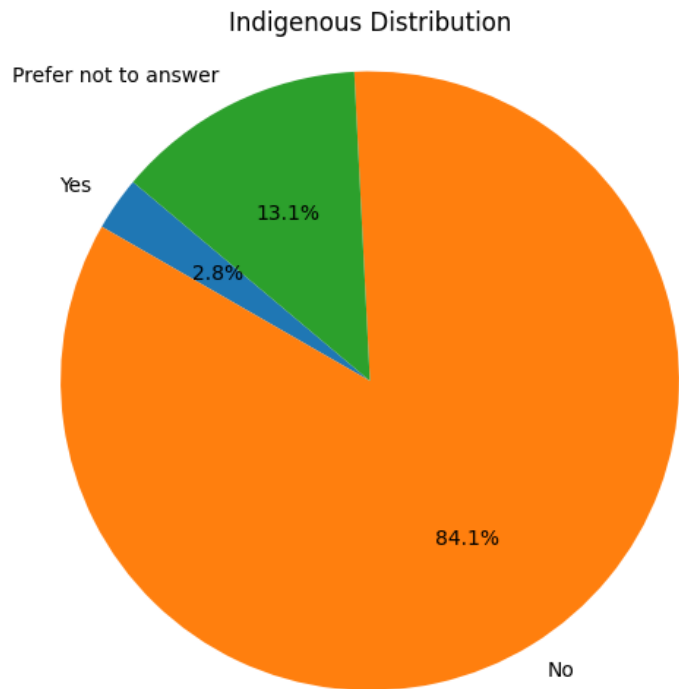


Identified as a racialized person

Approximately 10% of survey respondents identified as racialized, which is lower than the average of 26% in the Ottawa–Gatineau census metropolitan area.

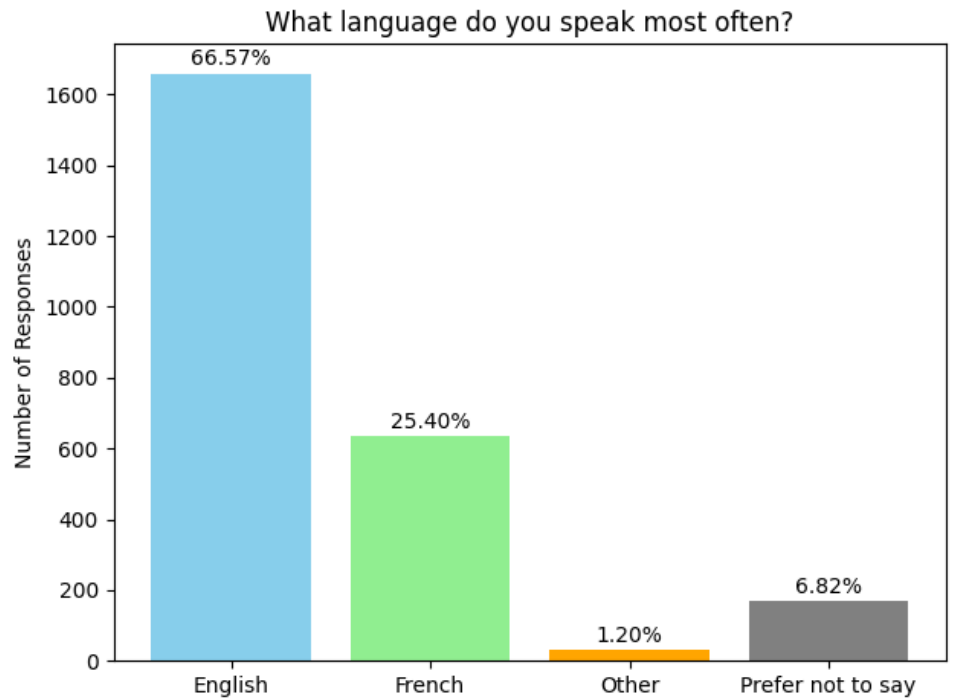
Identified as Indigenous

The proportion of survey respondents who identified as Indigenous aligns with the 3% who identify as Indigenous in the Ottawa–Gatineau census metropolitan area.



Language

Language data is consistent with averages for the Ottawa–Gatineau census metropolitan area, with survey respondents indicating that they speak English most often (67%), nearly matching the average for the region (66%).



Origin

A large majority of responses (90.5%) were received from respondents residing within the National Capital Region. A further breakdown by postal code is provided below, showing that most respondents live within, or close to, the project corridor.

