THE CART OF INSECURITY

The threshold of **ONE MILLION** food assistance requests per month has been crossed for the first time.

When the essentials become inaccessible in Montreal

Hunger Count 2025
by Moisson Montréal

MOISSON MONTRÉAL

▲ **Employees of Moisson Montréal** shine through their commitment to the cause and are at the service of the accredited agencies.

About Moisson Montréal

Moisson Montréal is the largest food bank in Canada. For **more than 40 years**, the organization has served as a hub for food assistance in the greater Montreal by recovering, sorting, and redistributing food free of charge and equitably to a network of **nearly 300 community agencies**.

Each month, these community agencies supported by Moisson Montréal respond to more than one million requests for food assistance in the form of baskets, cooked meals, or snacks. Together, they form an essential social safety net for vulnerable people: families, individuals, children, seniors, newcomers, and people without housing.

Through strong partnerships with the agri-food industry and the philanthropic community, Moisson Montréal mobilizes the resources needed to respond to ever-increasing demand. Its work is part of a sustainable vision of food security, focusing on innovation and reducing waste. Moisson Montréal does not give food directly to individuals. It acts upstream so that the community agencies can directly feed Montrealers most in need.

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About the Hunger Count

The Hunger Count is a survey in which food banks that are members of Food Banks Canada (FBC) participate. Its purpose is to measure food support interventions carried out by community agencies across the country.

Methodology

The data collection for the Hunger Count is based on information provided by community agencies accredited to Moisson Montréal. Each organization compiles its own data for the period starting March 1 to 31 and submits it to Moisson Montréal during the month of April. These data are then compiled and analyzed with the assistance of Federico Roncarolo, MD, PhD. For the year 2025, **291 community agencies affiliated with Moisson Montréal** participated in the Hunger Count.

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When the numbers speak for themselves

For the first time in its history, Montreal has crossed a troubling milestone: more than one million requests for food assistance are met every month by community agencies.

This sharp increase—**more than 10% in a single year and nearly 54% since 2021**—is not just a number. It reveals a real, tangible, and daily distress — one that takes the form of a grocery basket that is increasingly empty.

Behind every food basket, there are single parents who deprive themselves to feed their children, workers who can no longer make ends meet, students, seniors, and people without housing for whom food assistance is no longer a safety net but a means of survival.

The Hunger Count 2025 provides a clear-eyed view of the scale of the crisis in Montreal. It also gives voice to front line community agencies, which lack the resources to respond to growing demand.

In a context where even the essentials are becoming inaccessible, solidarity must take over.

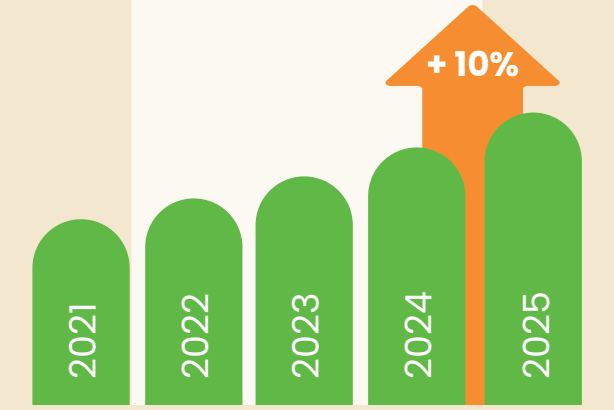
Chantal Vézina,
Executive Director
Moisson Montréal

To address the lack of resources, **Moisson Montréal awarded more than $2 million in grants in 2025** to 69 community agencies.

Support for Community Agencies

Key Findings of the Hunger Count 2025

+54%
since 2021



1,101,876
food assistance requests met monthly by community agencies.

Despite a 27% increase in the food distributed to Montreal community agencies compared to last year, demand still exceeds available resources:

1 in 2 community agencies has to reduce basket contents.

1 in 3 community agencies must refuse people.

+13% **more meals served**

Meal distribution has increased significantly in several organisations working with people experiencing homelessness.

+28% **more snacks distributed**

This increase confirms the importance of maintaining targeted campaigns such as *Hungry for Vacation*, which address very real and recurring needs among young people. While many children lose access to school-based food assistance during the summer break, Moisson Montréal succeeded in distributing more than **765,000 snacks** to over **10,000 children** throughout the summer of 2025.

+2.8%
Single-parent families
They represent nearly one-quarter of assisted households.

▲ Food assistance at the **Bon Courage Community Center in Place Benoît**, one of Moisson Montréal's community agencies in Saint-Laurent.

Monthly distribution of food assistance in community agencies

As the gap between the highest and lowest incomes reaches an unprecedented level in the country[1], more and more low-income households can no longer afford to cover their basic food needs. When the cost of an adequate grocery bill far exceeds what their budget allows, these households turn to accredited agencies to fill the gap.

This pressure is directly reflected on the food assistance network: for the very first time, the number of monthly requests met has passed the one-million mark in Montreal. This represents a **10% increase** compared to 2024 and a **54% increase since 2021**.

378,865
food bank visits per month

+

497,320
meals served per month

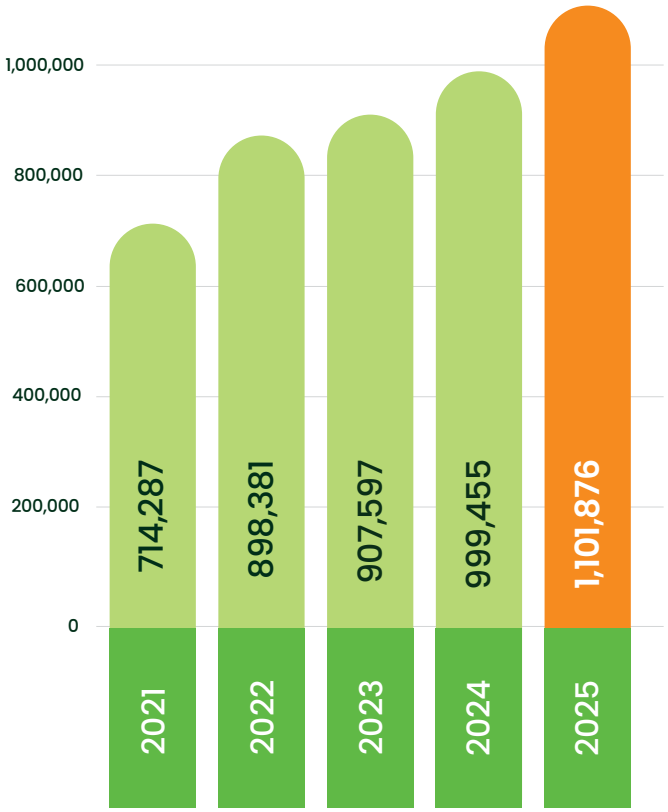
+

225,691
snacks served per month

=

1,101,876
food assistance requests met monthly by organizations

Monthly food assistance requests met by community agencies



Montreal's community agencies alone account for 35.3% of the province's food assistance and serve 43.7% of its beneficiaries, for a total of 261,654 unique individuals per month.

[1] Statistics Canada. (July 16, 2025). *Canadian household sector accounts by income, consumption, saving and wealth, first quarter of 2025.* https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/250716/dq250716a-fra.htm

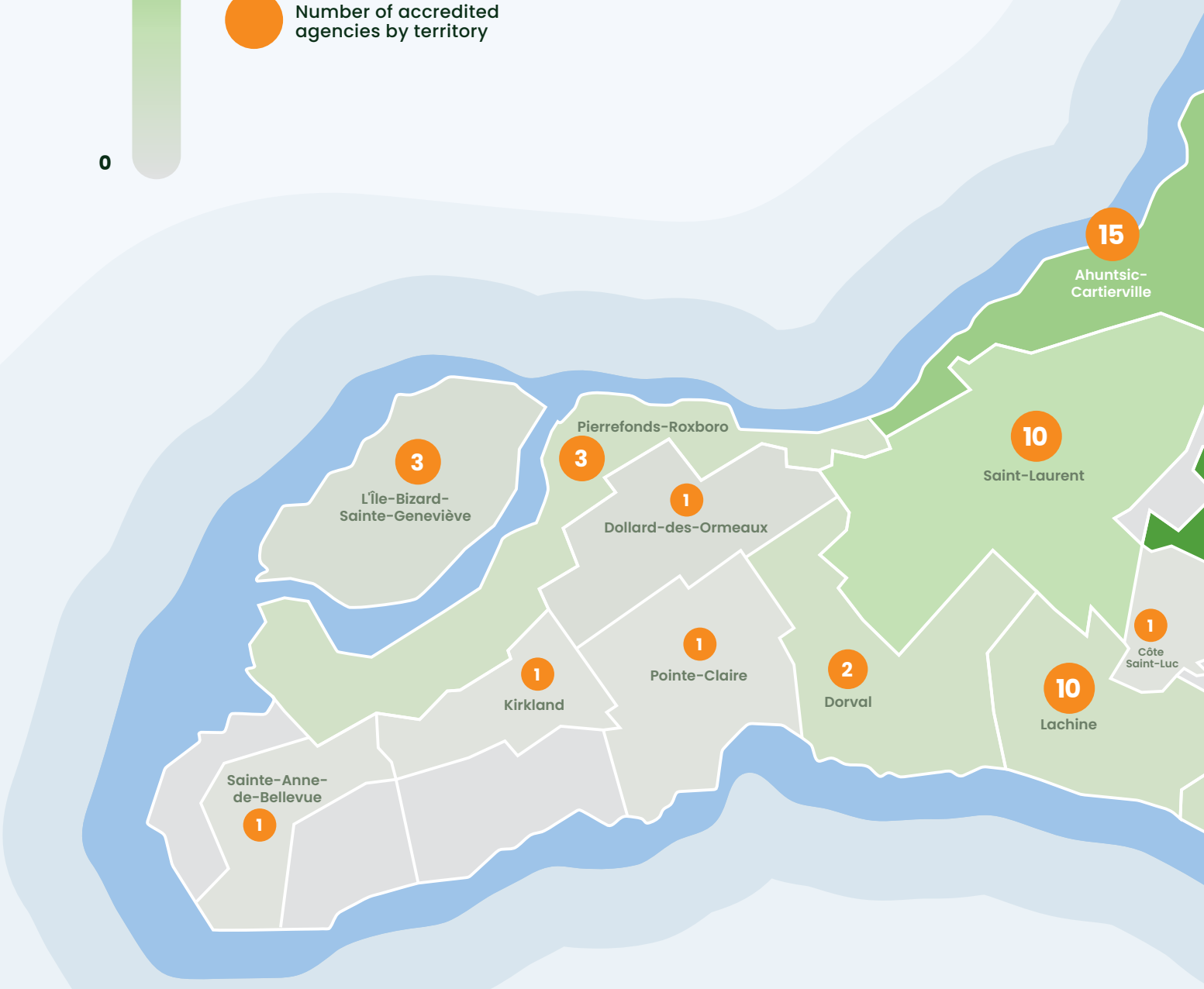
210,000

0

Monthly food assistance fulfilled by Moisson Montréal's community agencies and their distribution across the city.

Excluding the 12 organisations whose locations are confidential.

Number of accredited agencies by territory



Territory	Number of food assistance	%
Ahuntsic-Cartierville	55,440	5.0%
Anjou	4,765	0.4%
Confidentiel	36,826	3.3%
Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	120,787	11.0%
Côte-Saint-Luc	179	0.0%
Dollard-des-Ormeaux	1,869	0.2%
Dorval	16,888	1.5%
Hampstead	2,278	0.2%
Kirkland	114	0.0%
Lachine	15,830	1.4%
Lasalle	18,215	1.7%
Le Plateau-Mont-Royal	58,560	5.3%
Le Sud-Ouest	96,202	8.7%
L'Île-Bizard-Sainte-Geneviève	6,463	0.6%
Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	111,300	10.1%
Montréal-Est	12,780	1.2%
Montréal-Nord	61,306	5.6%
Pierrefonds-Roxboro	9,231	0.8%
Pointe-Claire	35	0.0%
Rivière-des-Prairies–Pointe-aux-Trembles	21,251	1.9%
Rosemont–La Petite-Patrie	22,636	2.1%
Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue	280	0.0%
Saint-Laurent	30,337	2.8%
Saint-Léonard	28,482	2.6%
Verdun	15,314	1.4%
Ville-Marie	200,148	18.2%
Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension	138,270	12.5%
Westmount	16,090	1.5%
Montréal	**1,101,876**	**100.0%**

Food assistance in its different forms

82%
of community agencies provide emergency food assistance

63%
provide meals

57%
provide snacks

	2024	2025
Number of monthly visits	382,403	378,865
Breakfasts	86,830	93,716
Lunches	160,708	207,089
Dinners	111,443	113,460
Collective kitchen portions	15,643	15,529
Home-delivered meals	66,095	67,526
Number of meals served per month	440,719	497,320
Number of snacks served per month	176,333	225,691

Emergency food assistance at **Le Sac à dos**, an organisation supported by Moisson Montréal in Ville-Marie.

Nearly 169,000 people are supported each month through food assistance

Although there has been a slight decrease in the number of visits for emergency food assistance, it remains the most widespread type of aid within Montreal's community food security network.

Taking the form of food banks, community grocery stores, or emergency services, it helps nearly **169,000 people every month** to have enough to eat.

However, there has been a significant increase in the number of meals and snacks served, particularly among the homeless population.

What do Moisson Montréal's community agencies do?

Among the community agencies, **one-third** have food as their **primary mission**. For the majority, food services play a secondary role, yet they remain essential in supporting their beneficiaries. Beyond meeting a basic need, food assistance allows community agencies to build trust, reduce isolation, and guide people toward the appropriate support services.

1 in 3 community agencies has food as its main mission.

Ahuntsic-Cartierville

The **Service de nutrition et d'action communautaire (SNAC)** works to improve food security for residents of Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough.

Saint-Léonard

The **Fondation Le Cœur du Père** focuses on social development and the fight against poverty.

Villeray-Saint-Michel-Parc-Extension

Les Jumeleurs support people with intellectual disabilities, learning difficulties, or autism spectrum disorders.

Ville-Marie

L'Auberge du cœur Le Tournant supports young men in vulnerable situations and at risk of homelessness.

What explains the sharp increase in food assistance?

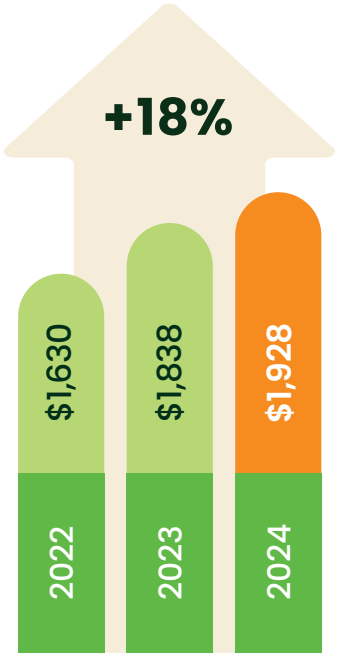
According to community agencies, the main reason behind the rising demand for food assistance in Montreal is the **increased cost of living**—particularly housing and food.

Housing

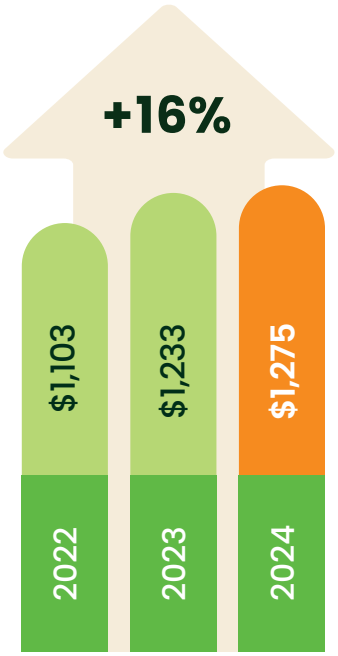
In Montreal, the monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment increased by $298 (18%) between 2022 and 2024[2]. A clear link has been established between rising rents and food insecurity. In Quebec, people living in unaffordable housing are twice as likely to experience food insecurity as those living in housing suited to their income[3]. According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), housing is considered affordable "if it costs less than 30% of the household's pre-tax income."[4]

Food

Alima, Perinatal Social Nutrition Center, an organisation supported by Moisson Montréal, has developed a reference tool recognized for several decades: **The Nutritious and affordable food basket (NAFB)**, which measures the real cost of a healthy and balanced diet in Montreal. Between 2022 and 2024, the monthly price of the NAFB for a Montreal family of four[5] increased by $172, a 16% rise. This increase concretely illustrates the growing pressure on household food budgets and partly explains the escalating demand for food assistance.



Average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Montreal



Average monthly cost of the NAFB for a family of four in Montreal

*Data provided directly by Alima

[2] Statistique Canada. (2025, 25 juin). *Prix des loyers demandés, par type d'unité locative et nombre de chambres à coucher, estimations expérimentales.* https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/fr/tv.action?pid=4610009201&cubeTimeFrame.startMonth=01&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2022&cubeTimeFrame.endMonth=01&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2025&referencePeriods=20220101%2C20250101

[3] Sandy Torres (2025). Crise du logement au Québec : *quels effets sur l'insécurité alimentaire ?*, Montréal, Observatoire québécois des inégalités, p. 22.

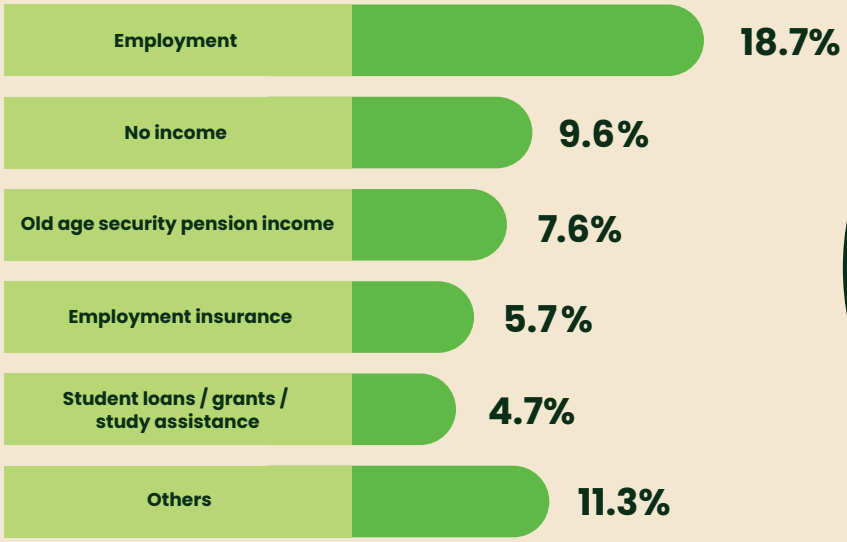
[4] SCHL. (2018, 31 mars). *À propos du logement abordable au Canada.* https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/professionnels/innovation-et-leadership-dans-le-secteur/expertise-de-lindustrie/logements-abordables-/a-propos-du-logement-abordable-/a-propos-du-logement-abordable-au-canada

[5] A family composed of a man aged 31 to 50, a woman aged 31 to 50, a boy aged 14 to 18, and a girl aged 9 to 13.

Primary income source of households using emergency food assistance

42.4% of households relying on food assistance have social assistance as their main source of income — that's more than **two in five households**.

This represents the highest rate observed since 2019, an increase of **3.6 percentage points** compared with last year.



For a growing proportion of people receiving support, food assistance is no longer a complement but an essential need.

The challenges of living alone

In Montreal, the basic amount granted to a single person on social assistance[6] represents **barely one-quarter of the living income**—the income required to live with dignity[7]. In 2025, this gap makes it virtually impossible to lead a decent life without community support.

When the government does not cover basic needs, it is the community sector that absorbs the pressure—and it is reaching a breaking point.

[6] Gouvernement du Québec (2023, 19 décembre). *Montants des prestations d'aide sociale chaque mois.* https://www.quebec.ca/famille-et-soutien-aux-personnes/aide-sociale-et-solidarite-sociale/information-aide-financiere/montants-prestations-aide-sociale

[7] Couturier, E. (2025, 30 avril). *Le revenu viable en 2025. Le logement encore au cœur de la sortie de pauvreté.* Institut de recherche et d'informations socioéconomiques. https://iris-recherche.qc.ca/publications/revenu-viable-2025/

Household composition of individuals accessing food assistance services

Two-parent families

32%

Two-parent families remain the most represented household category for the third consecutive year.

Single-parent families

23.9%

Single-parent families are nonetheless more prevalent than a year ago, increasing from 21.1% to 23.9%.

Couples without children

11.5%

Food assistance at **Mosaik Family Resource Center**, Moisson Montréal's partner organization in Hampstead.

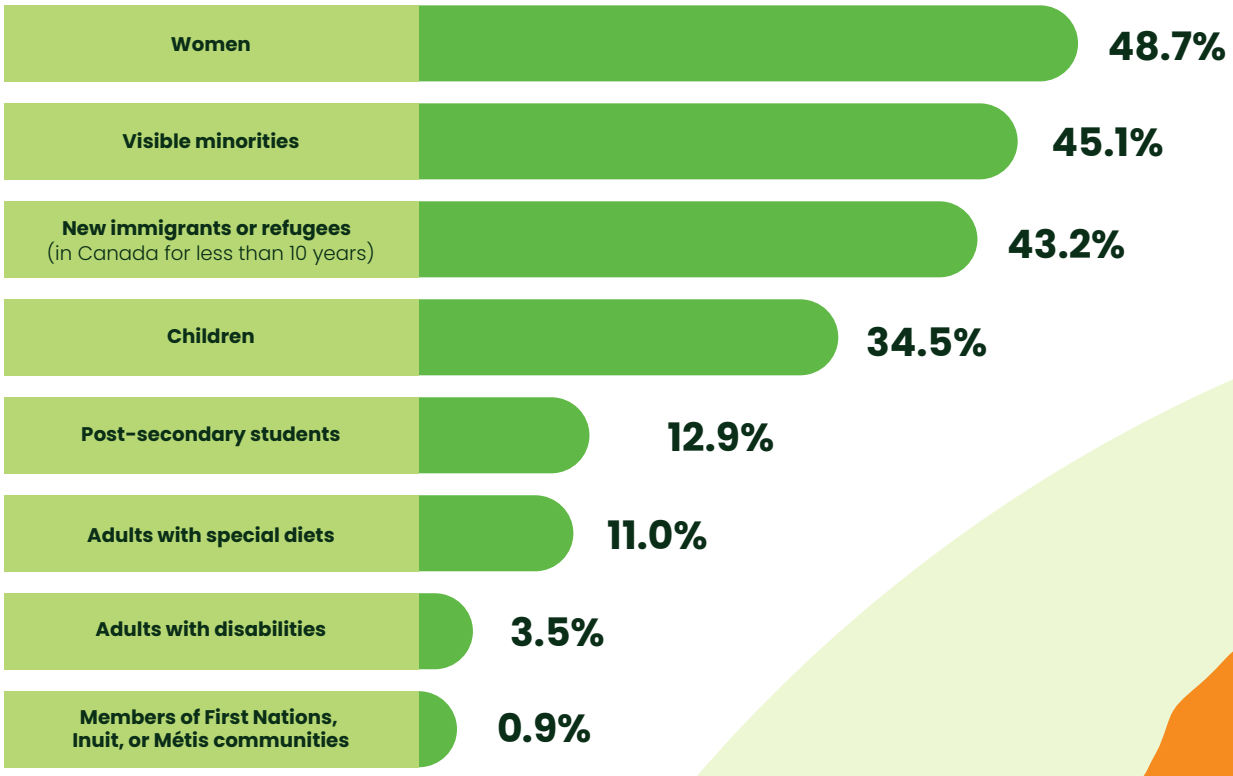
Adults living alone

27.6%

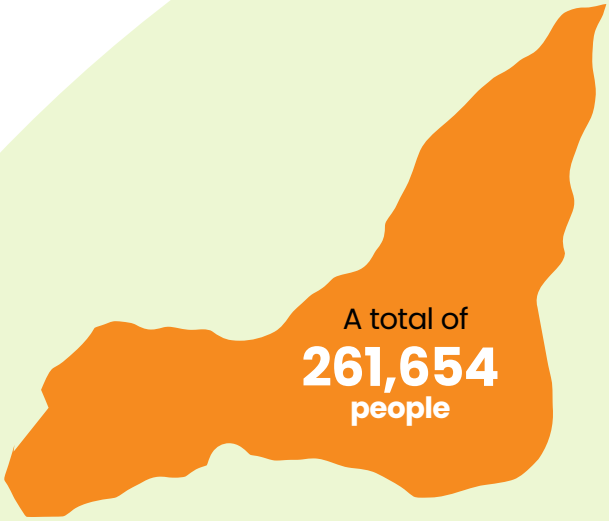
Other

5%

Beneficiaries of food assistance



▲ La **Maison Tangente**, one of Moisson Montréal's partner organizations in Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve.



Montreal is home to 43.7% of the province's food assistance Beneficiaries.

This figure is concerning, as Montreal accounts for less than 1/4 of Quebec's population[8].

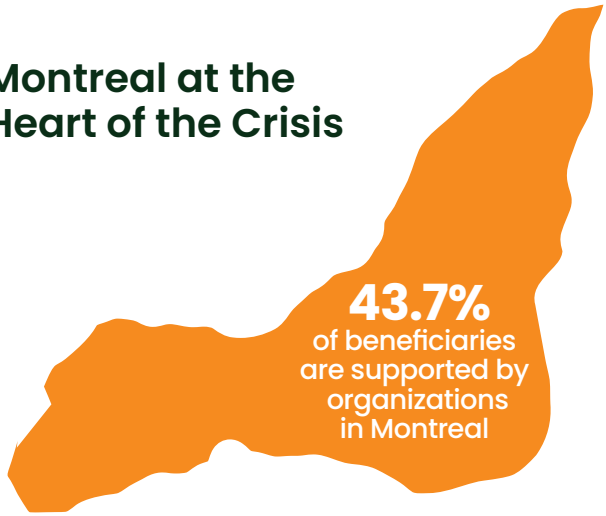
[8] Institut de la statistique du Québec. (2025, 16 janvier). *Estimations de la population des municipalités de 25 000 habitants et plus, Québec, 1er juillet 2001 à 2024.* https://statistique.quebec.ca/fr/produit/tableau/estimations-de-la-population-des-municipalites-de-25-000-habitants-et-plus

Findings

Cost of Living and Food Insecurity

As housing and food costs continue to rise, low-income households are struggling to keep up. This is reflected in the **growing proportion of single-parent families** and social assistance beneficiaries turning to food banks. Without the support of community organizations, many more **families** and **individuals** would be unable to meet their basic food needs.

Montreal at the Heart of the Crisis



Montreal alone accounts for **35.3%** of all food assistance distributed across the province and serves **43.7%** of Quebecers who rely on it.

Food assistance needs remain largely concentrated in the same areas of the city. The following borough organizations offer:

60%
of all food assistance on the Island of Montreal

- **Ville-Marie**
- **Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension**
- **Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce**
- **Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve**
- **Le Sud-Ouest**

Recommendations from the Community Sector

According to Moisson Montréal's partner organizations, the **five policy** measures that would have the greatest impact in reducing hunger within their communities are:

1. **Increasing the availability of affordable housing;**
2. **Expanding mental health support;**
3. **Strengthening support measures for low-income individuals living alone;**
4. **Raising the provincial minimum wage;**
5. **Increasing pensions for seniors.**

Unsurprisingly, Access to Affordable Housing Remains the Top Priority. With skyrocketing rental prices in Montreal, access to food that is affordable, nutritious, and decent has become increasingly difficult for many. Behind every empty grocery basket are people forced to make heartbreaking choices. Food, unfortunately, remains an adjustable expense — and when sacrifices must be made, groceries are often the first to be cut.

At the same time, the number of people experiencing **homelessness** continues to rise, as access to permanent housing becomes increasingly out of reach[9]. Fortunately, several of Moisson Montréal's partner organizations support this vulnerable population, including the Old Brewery Mission in Ville-Marie, CAP St-Barnabé in Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, and Ricochet Hébergement in Pierrefonds-Roxboro.

More Food Distributed, Yet Still Not Enough to Meet Demand

Over the past year, Moisson Montréal increased its food distribution to partner organizations by **27%**. However, the **additional 3.9 million kilograms** were still not enough to meet the growing demand.

1 in 2 organizations
must reduce the contents of their food baskets in order to serve more households.

1 in 3 organizations
is forced to turn away people in need.

Volume of food distributed to organizations across Montreal

An empty basket, a future on hold

The numbers speak for themselves:

Demand has NEVER been this high.

Montreal is at the epicenter of the food crisis in Quebec. Its community organizations respond to **more than one million requests every month**, in a context of skyrocketing living costs.

Going to a food bank is often a difficult step to take — one made only when all other options have been exhausted. Before reaching that point, many people are already shrinking their grocery baskets, skipping meals, or giving up essential foods to cover other urgent expenses. According to the latest data from the *Vital Signs of Greater Montreal*[10]:

1 in 5 Montrealers lives in a situation of food insecurity. This statistic hides a more subtle reality: the silent deprivation that precedes turning to food assistance.

And behind these numbers lies one certainty — without an ambitious collective response, hunger will continue to spread.

THE CART OF INSECURITY

is not a metaphor. It is a reality. It's time to fill it — together.

[9] Porter, I. (2025, 4 avril). *Les lieux d'hébergement ont accueilli 15 % plus d'itinérants en deux ans au Québec.* Le Devoir. https://www.ledevoir.com/societe/863995/hausse-15-itinerance-deux-ans

[10] Indicateurs vitaux du Grand Montréal. *Part de la population en situation d'insécurité alimentaire.* Observatoire Grand Montréal. https://indicateurs-vitaux.cmm.qc.ca/developpement-social/part-de-la-population-en-situation-d-insecurite-alimentaire/

	2024		2025	
Number of Responding Community Organizations	282		291	
Total number of food assistance requests (all services combined)	999,455		1,101,876	
Total number of unique individuals helped (all services combined)	239,481		261,654	
Proportion of people helped who are children	36.0%		34.5%	
FOOD ASSISTANCE (FOOD BASKETS)				
Number of visits to food assistance services	**382,403**		**378,865**	
Unique individuals helped by food assistance services	157,746		168,952	
Adults helped	101,000	64.0%	110,597	65.5%
Children helped	56,746	36.0%	58,355	34.5%
MEALS AND SNACKS				
Total number of meals served	**440,719**		**497,320**	
Number of breakfasts served	86,830		93,716	
Number of lunches served	160,708		207,089	
Number of suppers served	111,443		113,460	
Number of portions from collective kitchens	15,643		15,529	
Number of portions from Meals on Wheels	66,095		67,526	
Total number of snacks served	**176,333**		**225,691**	
Number of snacks served to children	56,856	32.2%	113,369	50.2%
Total meals and snacks	**617,052**		**723,011**	
Unique individuals helped by meal and snack services	81,735		92,702	
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION (FOOD BASKETS ONLY)				
Two-parent families	19,014	33.4%	18,483	32.0%
Single adults	15,879	27.9%	15,931	27.6%
Single-parent families	11,991	21.1%	13,830	23.9%
Couples without children	6,650	11.7%	6,645	11.5%
Other	3,321	5.8%	2,859	5.0%
Total responding households	**56,855**		**57,748**	
MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME (FOOD BASKETS ONLY)				
Social assistance	20,782	38.8%	25,916	42.4%
Employment	9,774	18.2%	11,445	18.7%
No income	4,034	7.5%	5,849	9.6%
Old age security pension	4,643	8.7%	4,621	7.6%
Employment insurance (unemployment)	3,615	6.7%	3,507	5.7%
Student loans / bursaries	3,227	6.0%	2,873	4.7%
Family allowance	1,686	3.1%	1,951	3.2%
Pension income	928	1.7%	1,048	1.7%
Disability plan	918	1.7%	910	1.5%
CNESST (Quebec's labour standards, pay equity and occupational health and safety board)	473	0.9%	570	0.9%
Social Solidarity Program	573	1.1%	570	0.9%
Basic Income Program	645	1.2%	529	0.9%
Child support	571	1.1%	366	0.6%
Employment Assistance Program	564	1.1%	361	0.6%
Other	1,151	2.1%	636	1.0%
Total responding households	**53,584**		**61,152**	
TYPE OF HOUSING (FOOD BASKETS ONLY)				
Private rental housing	28,954	58.7%	28,893	54.4%
Social housing (public)	8,737	17.7%	9,845	18.5%
Rooming house	3,441	7.0%	5,767	10.9%
Staying with friends or family	2,524	5.1%	2,928	5.5%
Dwelling owned by the household	1,951	4.0%	2,240	4.2%
Emergency shelter	1,006	2.0%	758	1.4%
Group home or youth shelter / Homeless or temporary housing	400	0.8%	600	1.1%
Homeless	582	1.2%	468	0.9%
Housing owned by a First Nation band	843	1.7%	71	0.1%
Other	853	1.7%	1,512	2.8%
Total responding households	**49,291**		**53,082**	
DISTINCT GROUPS (ADULTS ONLY – MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)				
Women	34,968	45.8%	32,755	48.7%
Visible minorities	33,823	44.3%	30,383	45.1%
New immigrants or refugees (in Canada for less than 10 years)	31,318	41.0%	29,070	43.2%
Post-secondary students	10,780	14.1%	8,655	12.9%
Adults with special diets	9,994	13.1%	7,417	11.0%
Adults with disabilities	2,291	3.0%	2,326	3.5%
First Nations, Inuit or Métis	628	0.8%	602	0.9%
Total adult respondents	**76,359**		**67,306**	