



MOISSON
MONTREAL

REPORT ON FOOD
AID SERVICES
FOR THE ISLAND
OF MONTREAL

2017 MONTREAL HUNGER COUNT



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and the Hunger Count

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2017 Montreal Hunger Count

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2017 Montreal Hunger Count -
November 2017 version

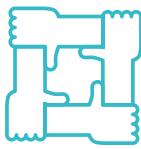
ABOUT MOISSON MONTRÉAL


**MOISSON MONTRÉAL IS THE BIGGEST FOOD BANK IN CANADA,
THANKS TO ITS FOOD RECOVERY AND DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS.**


MOISSON MONTRÉAL REPRESENTS:

241 
accredited organizations
across the Island of Montreal

 More than
300 agri-food
suppliers and
106 supermarkets

 **10,869**
volunteers during
the 2016-2017 year

 An answer to more than
650,000
requests for food aid
per month

 **14.4 million** kilos of food
distributed throughout the year. A value
of **\$80.3 million**.

ABOUT THE HUNGER COUNT

Conducted in March all across Canada, the Hunger Count is an annual survey completed by all food banks that are members of the Food Banks Canada (FBC) network. The purpose of this survey is to ascertain the extent of food assistance provided by community organizations all across Canada. Within this national framework, we at Moisson Montréal produce our very own Hunger Count based on data compiled from the community organizations we serve across the Island of Montreal.

- ▶ In March 2017, the majority of organizations surveyed as part of our Hunger Count responded, specifically **226 different organizations**.
- ▶ **14 organizations were closed** during the period of the Hunger Count survey.
- ▶ 1 accredited organization, receiving ad hoc assistance, did not qualify to participate in the survey because it did not receive any food in March 2017.
- ▶ The group consisting of the 40 organizations receiving ad hoc assistance throughout the year was not required to answer the survey.

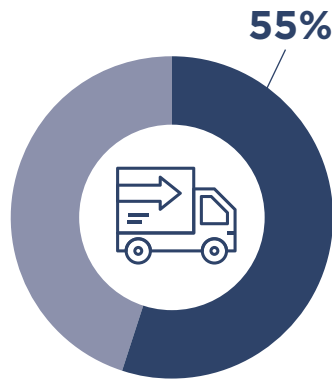
The statistical validity of the Hunger Count data for Quebec is supervised by the Université de Montréal Public Health Research Institute (IRSPUM).

2017 HUNGER COUNT:

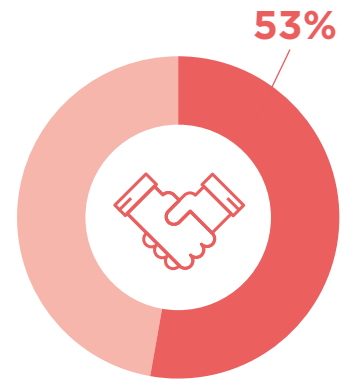
KEY RESULTS



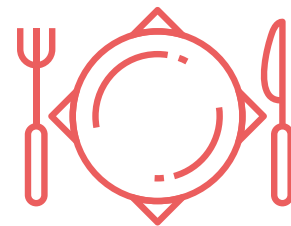
241 different organizations were assisted by Moisson Montréal. Among these, 226 answered the survey.



More than 55% of the accredited organizations surveyed, offer both Food Pantry and Meal programs.



53% of the work accomplished by the organizations is performed by volunteers.



654,277

requests for food aid were fulfilled by the accredited organizations of Moisson Montréal, a **decrease of 0.6%** as compared to 2016.



136,563
INDIVIDUALS PER MONTH RECEIVED AID, 0.6% LESS THAN THE PREVIOUS YEAR (137,387).



148,888
uses of Food Pantry Programs



505,389
meals and snacks served

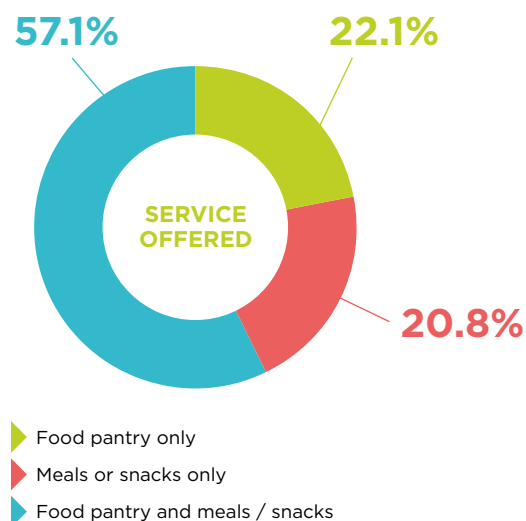
CHANGES IN RECIPIENTS BY AGE GROUP

AGE GROUP	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 2017	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 2016	CHANGE
Children (0-17 years old)	41,511 ▶ 30%	45,320 ▶ 33%	- 8.4%
Adults (18-64 years old)	80,176 ▶ 59%	78,168 ▶ 57%	2.6%
Seniors (65 and over)	14,876 ▶ 11%	13,889 ▶ 10%	7.1%
Total	136,563	137,387	- 0.6%

PRIMARY SERVICE OFFERED BY THE SURVEYED ORGANIZATIONS

PRIMARY SERVICE	ORGANIZATIONS	2017 DISTRIBUTION	2016 DISTRIBUTION
Food-related services (e.g. food counter/emergency food aid/food pantry, cooking collectives, soup kitchens, etc.) Moisson Montréal helps these organizations fulfill their primary goal to fight against food insecurity.	121/226	53.5%	58.6%
Non-food-related services (e.g. shelter, day center, other services, etc.) Moisson Montréal helps these organizations focus their resources on their different missions.	105/226	46.5%	41.4%

BREAKDOWN OF ORGANIZATIONS BASED ON SERVICES OFFERED, MARCH 2017



A large percentage of organizations choose to offer both programs in order to provide a service that is most adapted to the various needs of their recipients.



The face of hunger
has changed in
Montreal.

FOOD PANTRY PROGRAMS

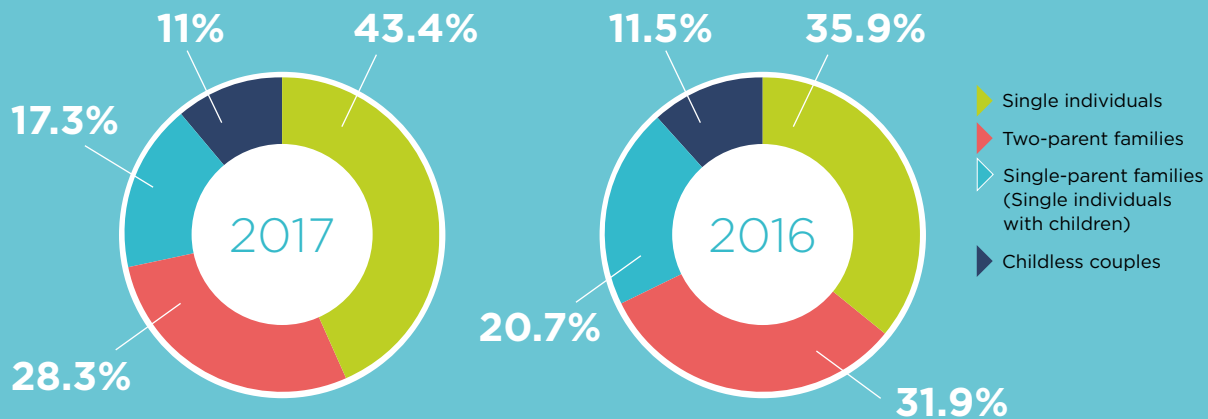


Food Pantry Programs mainly encompass food assistance in the form of food baskets, community grocery stores or provisions offered as emergency food aid.

AGE RANGE OF INDIVIDUALS USING THE FOOD PANTRY PROGRAMS IN 2016-2017

AGE GROUP	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 2017	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 2016	CHANGE
Children (0-17 years old)	25,401 ▶ 36.5%	24,649 ▶ 35.3%	3.1%
Adults (18-64 years old)	39,999 ▶ 57.4%	40,398 ▶ 58%	- 1%
Seniors (65 and over)	4,282 ▶ 6.1%	4,688 ▶ 6.7%	- 8.7%
Total	69,682 ▶ 100%	69,735 ▶ 100%	- 0.1%

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

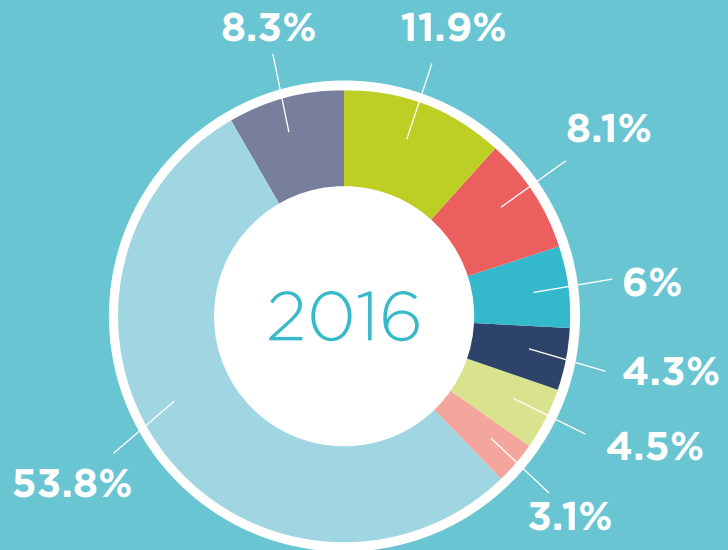
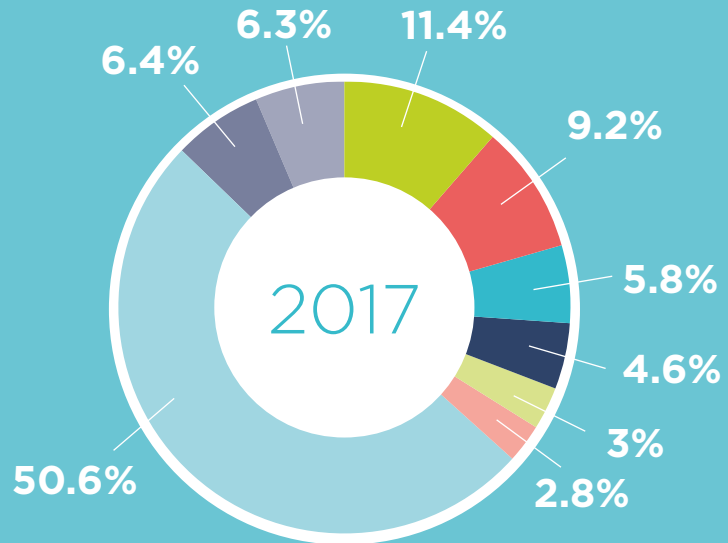


Significant changes were noted in the percentage of single recipients. Their distribution rose from 35.9% to 43.4%. This represents an 8 percentage point increase since 2016. Additionally, the single-individuals category (with or without children) remains the largest group of individuals seeking assistance in 2017. This tendency has been maintained since 2008.

Note: The total number of households surveyed is estimated at 26,869. Organizations whose questionnaires were incomplete were excluded, so as to present a more accurate picture of the actual situation. We are not in a position to confirm that this sample of 26,869 is representative of the overall target population.

SOURCES OF INCOME

- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Pension income
- ▶ Student loan and/or bursary
- ▶ Employment insurance
- ▶ Other income
- ▶ Private plan (disability insurance) or CNESST
- ▶ Social assistance
- ▶ No income
- ▶ Family allowances*



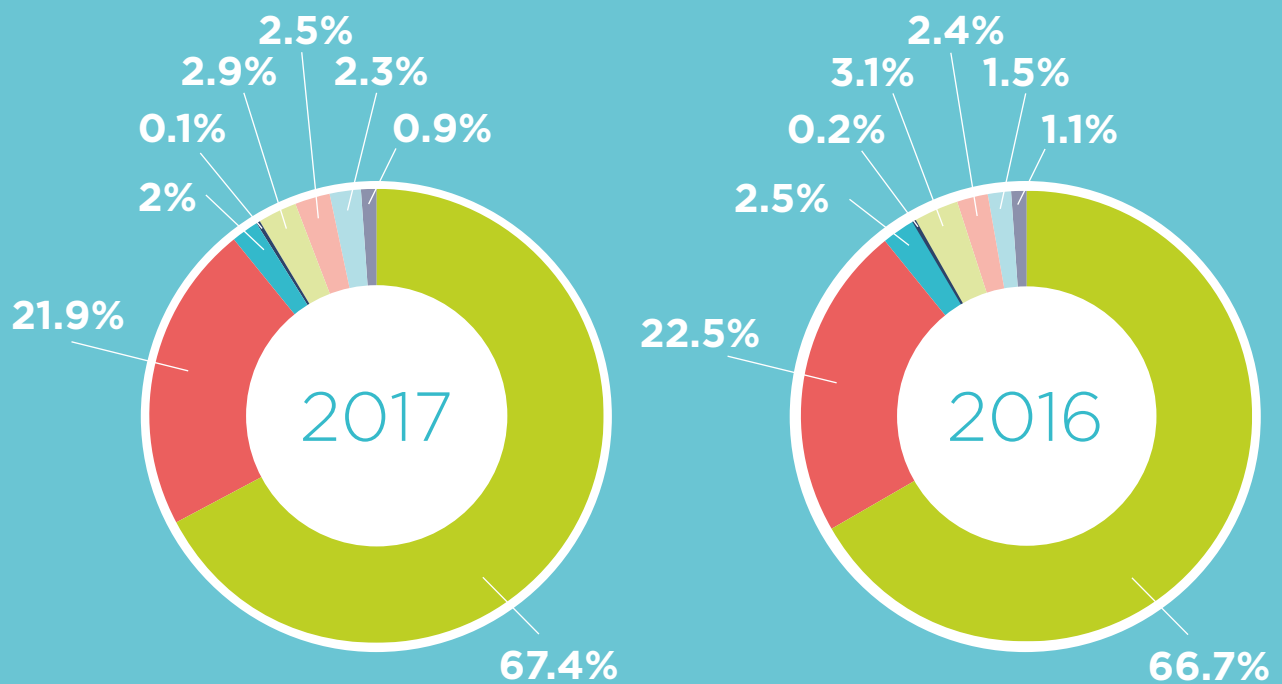
The face of hunger has changed in Montreal. In the past, food insecurity was primarily associated with homelessness. However, for the past few years, we clearly see that several other groups of the population are affected. More than 11.4% of food aid recipients are employed. Students whose main sources of revenue are loans and bursaries represent a more significant group in Montreal than in Quebec overall. 5.8% of recipients are students in Montreal, versus an average of 4% in Quebec. Once again this year, the group of individuals who receive social assistance are the highest percentage of individuals who benefit from Food Pantry Programs.

* Please note that the 'Family allowances' category has been added to the 2017 Hunger Count. This new variable, introduced this year, explains the spread of various percentages.

HOUSING SITUATION OF THE HOUSEHOLDS USING FOOD PANTRY PROGRAMS IN MARCH 2017

- ▶ Private-sector rental housing
- ▶ Social/subsidized social housing
- ▶ Homeowners
- ▶ Band-owned housing
- ▶ Temporarily staying with friends or family*
- ▶ Living on the street*
- ▶ Emergency shelter*
- ▶ Group home or youth centre*

The numbers reflect some stability as regards housing situation. A slight increase is observed as relates to more precarious housing situations* (marked with an asterisk), whose occupants benefited from the Food Pantry Programs in March 2017.



A black and white photograph of a man with short hair, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt, sitting at a table and eating. He is looking down at his plate, which contains a meal including what appears to be a hard-boiled egg and some dark-colored food. He is using a fork and a knife. In the foreground, there is a glass of water. The right side of the image is overlaid with a solid green color. The text is centered over the man's torso and the green overlay.

The share of
Meal Programs
beneficiaries
who are
employed has
doubled in 2017.

MEAL PROGRAMS



Meal Programs mainly encompass food assistance in the form of meals, snacks, cooking workshops and collectives and 'Meals on Wheels' programs.

AGE RANGE OF INDIVIDUALS USING MEAL PROGRAMS IN 2016-2017

AGE GROUP	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 2017	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS 2016	CHANGE
Children (0-17 years old)	16,110 ▶ 24.1%	20,671 ▶ 30.6%	- 22.1%
Adults (18-64 years old)	40,177 ▶ 60.1%	37,770 ▶ 55.8%	6.4%
Seniors (65 and over)	10,594 ▶ 15.8%	9,211 ▶ 13.6%	15%
Total	66,881 ▶ 100%	67,652 ▶ 100%	- 1.1%

A significant decrease is noted regarding the number of children who received meals. This could be explained by the fact that two organizations whose main recipients were children and teenagers closed in 2017. The results are not indicative that children were less affected by food insecurity in 2017. Rather, the data is due to the decrease in the services offered to this segment of the population.

NUMBER OF MEALS AND SNACKS SERVED IN MARCH 2017

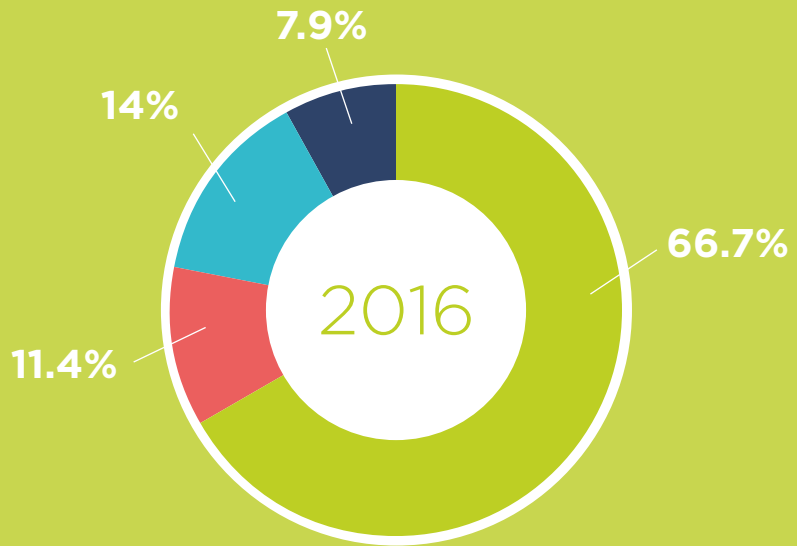
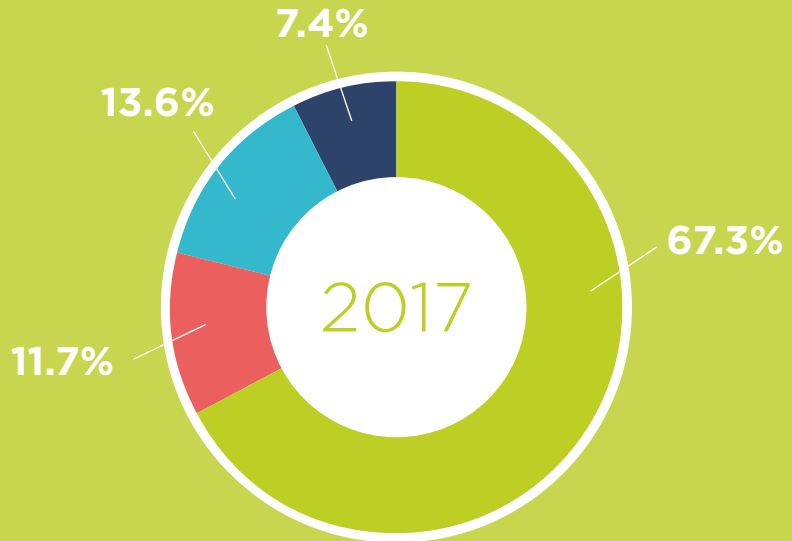
PORTIONS SERVED	NUMBER OF PORTIONS 2017	NUMBER OF PORTIONS 2016	SPREAD 2016-2017 (%)
Meals	323,458	334,923	- 3.4%
Snacks	121,820	124,602	- 2.2%
Cooking collectives	17,175	16,772	2.4%
Meals on wheels	42,935	17,577	144.3%
Total*	505,389	511,210	- 1.1%

* Several organizations only provided the total number of meal portions served, which explains why the amount of portions does not match the total.

A very significant increase was noted regarding the number of portions distributed through the Meals on Wheels programs, increasing from 17,577 to 42,935, which leads us to believe that demand for this service has grown. Beyond that, allocations in the other three meal categories remained stable.

COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS ACCESSING MEAL PROGRAMS

- ▷ Single individuals
- ▷ Two-parent families
- ▷ Single-parent families (Single individuals with children)
- ▷ Childless couples



Contrary to recipients of Food Pantry Programs, the composition of households who benefited from Meal Programs remained stable in 2017. This tendency is observed over the last three years. The households consisting of single individuals (with or without children) represent 80.9% of recipients of the various meals and snacks programs, a tendency that has been maintained since at least 2008.

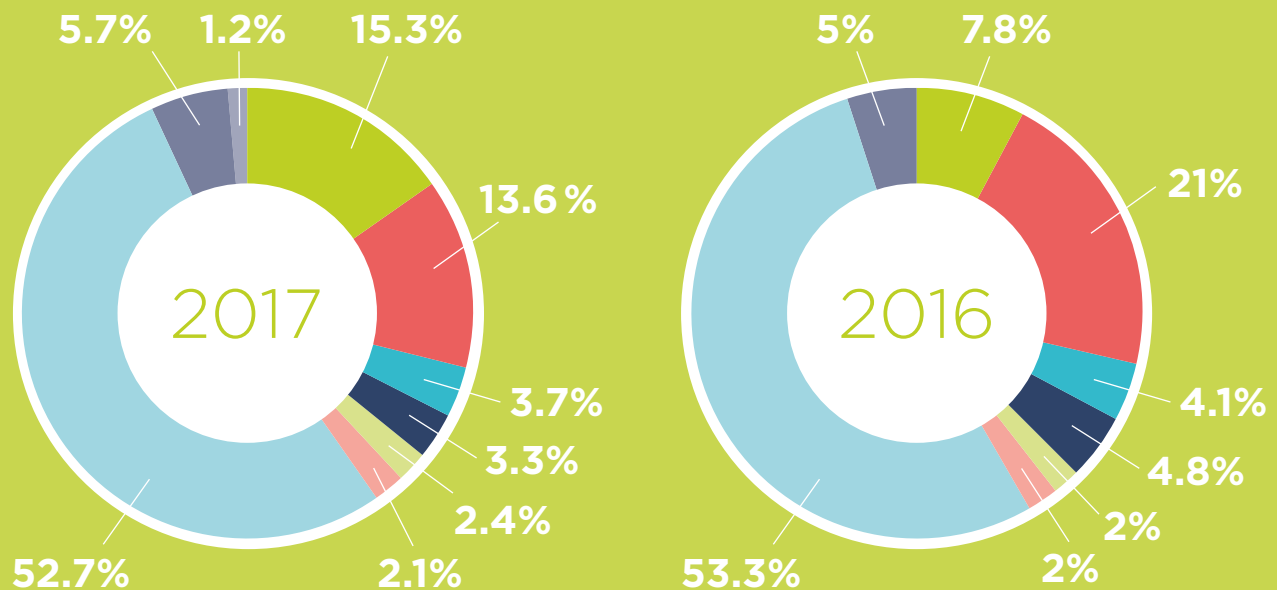
MAIN SOURCES OF INCOME FOR HOUSEHOLDS ACCESSING MEAL PROGRAMS IN MARCH 2017

- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Pension income
- ▶ Student loan and/or bursary
- ▶ Employment insurance
- ▶ Other income
- ▶ Private plan (disability insurance) or CNESST
- ▶ Social assistance
- ▶ No income
- ▶ Family allowance*

We see a significant increase in recipients with employment income, their number doubling in 2017. Beyond that, the percentage of Meal Programs recipients whose source of income is other than social assistance remained very significant once again this year, representing more than 40%.

We would also like to point out the notable decrease in recipients whose main source of income is a pension income, their percentage dropping from 21% to 13.6%.

*The variable measuring the number of households whose main source of income is a family allowance was also inserted in the Meal Programs. This measurement is significant in Food Pantry Programs, but only represents 1.2% of households benefiting from the Meal Programs.



The greatest issue mentioned is the need to reduce the cost of food.



RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ORGANIZATIONS

Every year, we collect feedback from our accredited community organizations about government initiatives and public policies that could greatly impact the fight against hunger in Montreal. The organizations have once again expressed their views on the subject and here are the six issues they consider a priority:

- ▶ Reduce the cost of food
- ▶ Develop a national strategy to reduce poverty
- ▶ Increase the amount of affordable housing
- ▶ Develop a national food strategy
- ▶ Increase the provincial minimum wage
- ▶ Increase support and services for the homeless



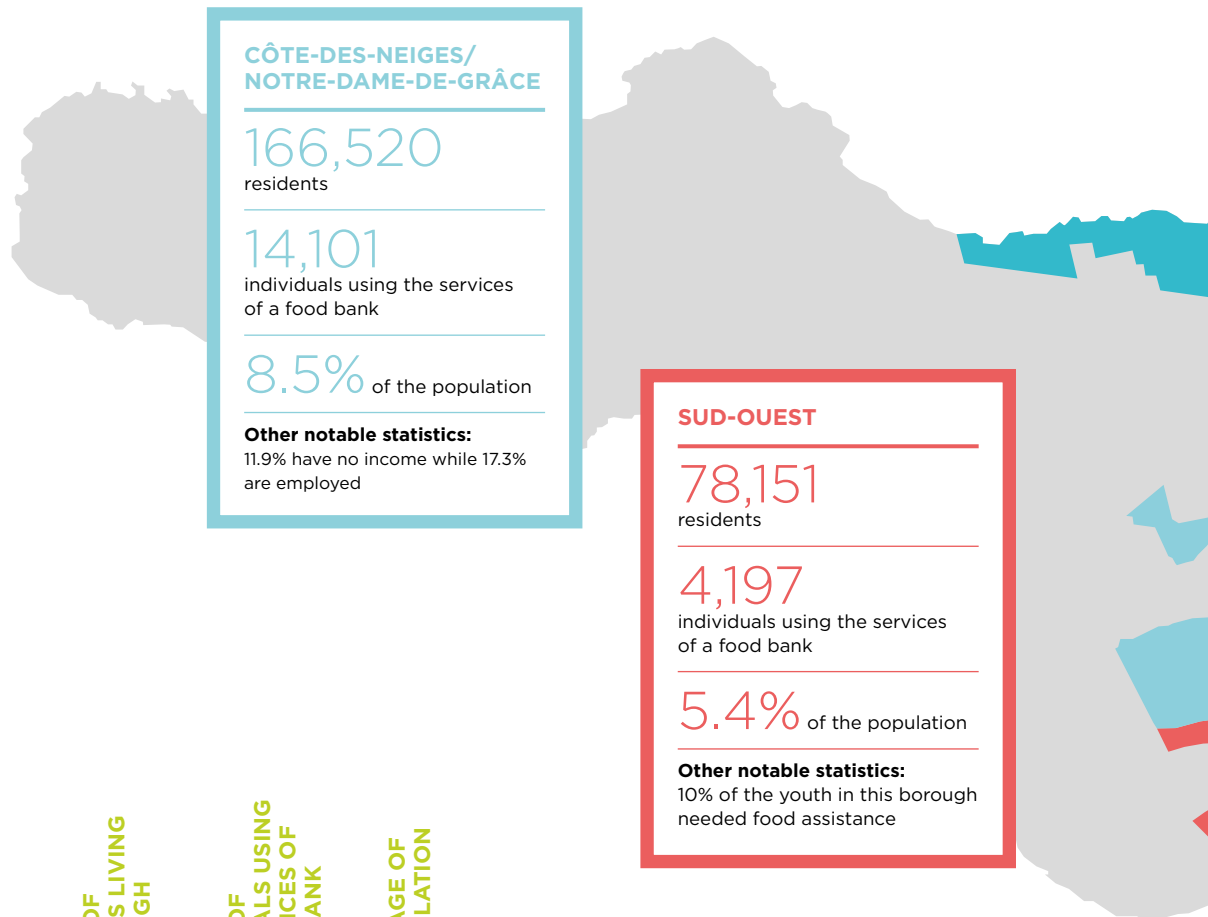
According to the 2017 Hunger Count, the greatest issue mentioned is the **need to reduce the cost of food**. The increase in the cost of living and especially of essential food items over these last few years could explain this need.

Moisson Montréal would like to emphasize that the priorities mentioned by the members belonging to their food assistance network focus on the cost of food and the lack of financial resources available to households. Food insecurity is not caused by the lack of food availability but rather the access to food, both physical and financial, as it pertains to a healthy and diverse food supply. In fact, this food supply is often too expensive for individuals with low income.

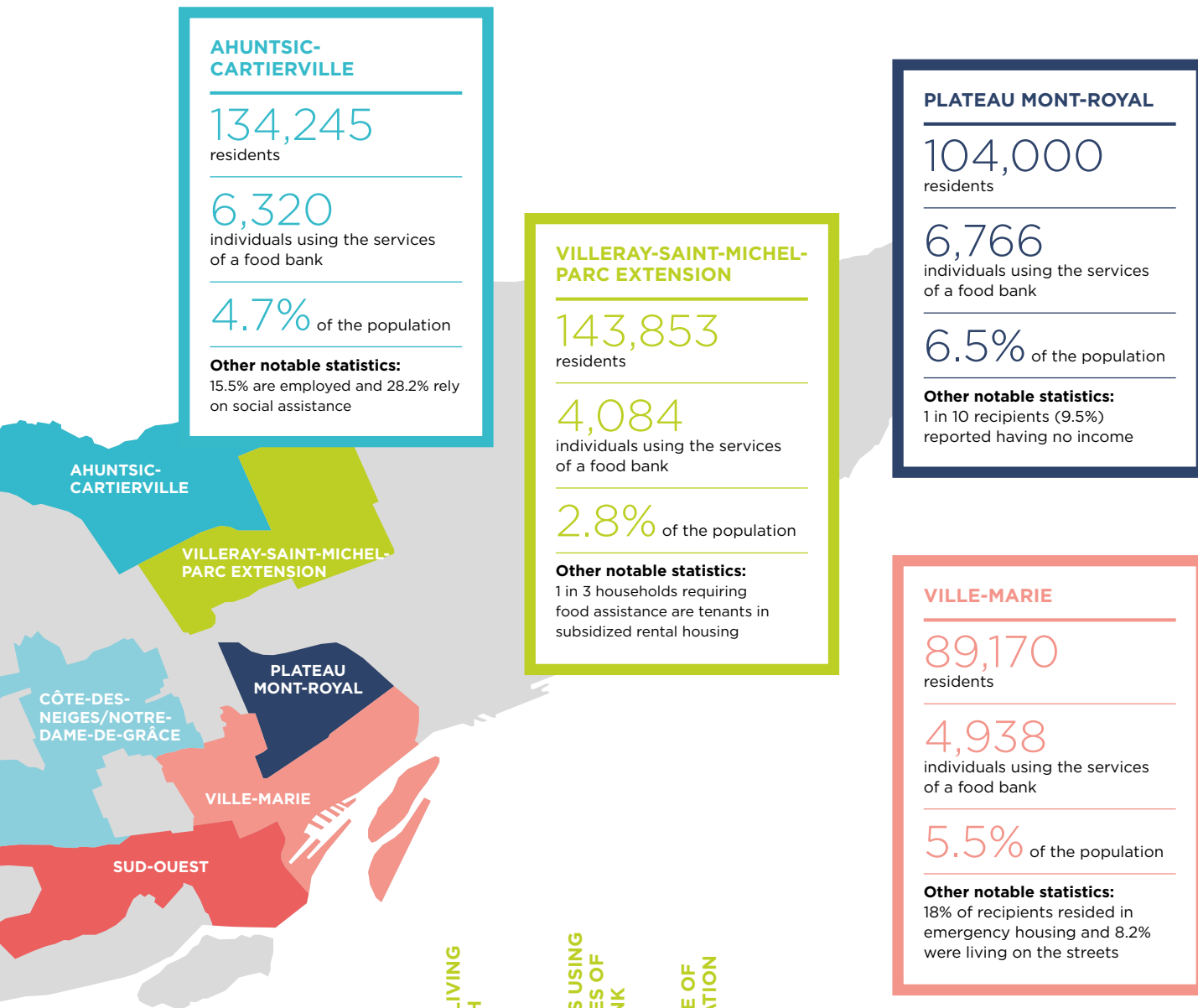
Food insecurity occurs when households are left with no other choice but to cut down their grocery bills because their income has been spent on all other necessities.

Ultimately, community organizations have voiced their desire to see an increase in the income of the most vulnerable individuals in society through a variety of initiatives in order to curb this already far-reaching reality in Montreal.

SUMMARY BY BOROUGH



BOROUGH	NUMBER OF RESIDENTS LIVING IN BOROUGH	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS USING THE SERVICES OF A FOOD BANK	PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION	OTHER NOTABLE STATISTICS
Anjou	42,796	1,557	3.6%	60% of individuals who benefited from the meals/snacks program receive old age pension
Lachine	44,489	1,236	2.8%	75.5% of recipients rely on social assistance
LaSalle	76,853	1,190	1.5%	54.8% of children receiving food aid are under the age of 5
Mercier Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	136,024	3,315	2.4%	78.5% of recipients rely on social assistance
Montréal-Nord	84,234	909	1.1%	59.2% of households receiving food aid are families
Pierrefonds-Roxboro	69,297	1,537	2.2%	90.1% of recipients required the services of a food bank only once during the month



BOROUGH	NUMBER OF RESIDENTS LIVING IN BOROUGH	NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS USING THE SERVICES OF A FOOD BANK	PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULATION	OTHER NOTABLE STATISTICS
Pointe-Claire	31,380	434	1.4%	21.3% of recipients are employed
Rivière-des-Prairies/ Pointe-aux-Trembles	106,743	1,952	1.8%	11.1% of recipients are aged 65 and over
Rosemont-La Petite Patrie	139,590	2,352	1.7%	33.9% of recipients are immigrants (arrival 10 years or less)
Saint-Laurent	98,828	3,458	3.5%	70% of recipients were families with children and 15% of recipients reported having no income
Saint-Léonard	78,305	1,886	2.4%	40% of recipients used the services 4 times during the month
Verdun	69,229	2,117	3%	60% of recipients rely on social assistance

CONCLUSIONS

ANOTHER YEAR OF STABILITY

The data collected in March 2017 suggests that the overall circumstances regarding hunger in Montreal remained stable. In fact, even though the total number of individuals who received assistance decreased slightly, the relative stability of various indicators, such as: the number of recipients in the Food Pantry or Meal programs, the composition of households or even the types of housing occupied, lead Moisson Montréal to the conclusion that the reaches of hunger have remained more or less stable throughout the city. It is however impossible to say if the various recipients of the Food Pantry or Meal programs are the same as last year.

Facing this stagnation of food insecurity in Montreal, it is easy for the organization to assess that the need for help in Montreal is still very dire. Moisson Montréal reiterates its commitment to the organizations served and towards their recipients in order to provide the greatest quality and the largest amount of food possible, while inviting the mission supporters from the public and private sphere to champion the cause of food insecurity, be it through financial donations, political support or the creation of projects.

FOOD INSECURITY IN MONTREAL: A SITUATION THAT IS NOT IMPROVING.

The Hunger Count conducted every year enables us to measure the scope of hunger in Montreal. Unfortunately, it also confirms that food insecurity is still very present on the island, despite the sustained efforts from community organizations. In fact, the number of organizations that are supplied by Moisson Montréal has increased over the past six years, as has the amount of food distributed: rising from 10.4 million kilos in 2012 to 14.4 million kilos in 2017.

During the past six years, Moisson Montréal has distributed 40% more food to a relatively stable number of individuals, for whom the amount of food assistance received has not stopped growing. Despite everything, the current Hunger Count survey has revealed that community organizations require more food. These organizations have determined that they are only partially able to meet the needs of this vulnerable segment of the population, even with the food assistance provided by Moisson Montréal.

It is easy for the organization to assess that the need for help in Montreal is still very dire.

Therefore, Moisson Montréal have determined that the issue of hunger has not improved in Montreal, but continues, year after year, despite best efforts to increase the amount of food assistance we provide. It is therefore critical that the food assistance network seeks out better initiatives to implement in order to resolve food insecurity in Montreal.

We will contemplate this issue throughout the coming year, particularly through a project assessing the current practices relating to food security in Montreal, set up with the financial support of the *Système alimentaire montréalais* [Montreal Food System].

**THE INCREASE IN NUMBER OF THE WORKING POOR:
A TENDENCY OBSERVED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS**

One noticeable trend remains of great concern to Moisson Montréal: the increase in the number of working individuals who find themselves living in poverty. In fact, this year employed individuals represented 15.3% of the recipients who benefited from the Meal Programs, a figure that almost doubled since last year, and represented 11.4% of the recipients who benefited from the Food Pantry Programs.

In addition, a recent study conducted by the INRS determined that 38% of individuals living in poverty in the Greater Montreal area were employed.¹ According to this study, the increase in insecure or contractual employment as well as the globalization of markets and production ultimately result in the loss of jobs or loss of revenue based on the inability for individuals to accumulate enough working hours or a sufficient hourly wage, all of which could explain this tendency.

Moisson Montréal is greatly concerned by the ever-increasing gap between the working poor and non-poor in Montreal and would like to bring it to the attention of our partners. The reality of this growing problem reinforces our conviction in the relevance of our actions in the fight against poverty across the Island of Montreal. Our role at Moisson Montréal rests on supporting a help network that allows community organizations to assist the most powerless individuals and ensure that they have enough to eat in order to meet the challenges that they face. It is this very mission that pushes us at Moisson Montréal to continue ahead with even more energy and drive.

¹ Leloup, X. et al., (2016). *Les travailleurs pauvres dans la RMR de Montréal*. Institut national de la recherche scientifique [National Institute of Scientific Research]. Montréal, Québec. Accessed in February 2018: <http://espace.inrs.ca/4803/1/leloup-centraide-2016.pdf>



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