



The Daily

Statistics Canada

Tuesday, December 2, 1997

For release at 8:30 a.m.

1996 CENSUS: MOTHER TONGUE, HOME LANGUAGE AND KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGES

2

HIGHLIGHTS

- The multilingual nature of Canada is growing as a result of increased immigration. In 1996, 4.7 million people reported a mother tongue other than English or French, up 15% from 1991. They accounted for nearly 17% of the total population in 1996.
- English was the mother tongue of about 60% of Canada's population in 1996, down slightly from the shares recorded since 1986. The proportion of the population whose mother tongue was French, about 24%, was also lower in 1996, continuing the gradual decline which has occurred since 1951.
- In Quebec, the share of French as home language declined slightly since 1991, but was still considerably higher than it was 25 years ago, 83% in 1996 compared with 81% in 1971. In contrast, the share of English as home language continued its long-term decline, from 15% in 1971 to 11% in 1996.
- Bilingualism gained ground across the country, the rate rising in every province except Saskatchewan where it remained the same as in 1991. In 1996, 17% of the population could speak English and French, compared with 13% in 1971.

Mother tongue, home language and knowledge of languages

The 1996 Census products released today for the above variables are:

The *The Nation* series: 12 tables, which provide data for Canada, provinces and territories, and census metropolitan areas (catalogue no. 93F0024XDB96000). The price for the set (or any subset) of tables is \$60. Extracts from three of these tables will be available free of charge on the Statistics Canada Internet site (www.statcan.ca) under **1996 Census**.

From the Area Profiles series: electronic area profiles for these variables at the census division and census subdivision level. Profiles for the remaining geographic levels — CMA/tracted CA/CT, CMA/CA, FED (1987 Representation Order)/EA, and FSA — will be released on January 2, 1998. Prices for area profiles vary depending on the format and geographic level required by the user.



Statistics
Canada

Statistique
Canada

Canada

1996 Census: Mother tongue, home language and knowledge of languages

Statistics Canada today releases data on mother tongue, home language and knowledge of languages from the 1996 Census, the fifth of 11 announcements that are painting a new statistical portrait of the nation. This release describes changes in the composition of Canada's language groups.

The data, collected on May 14, 1996, showed that the multilingual nature of Canada is growing as a result of increased immigration. In 1996, there were 4.7 million people who reported a mother tongue other than English or French, a 15.1% increase from 1991. This increase was $2\frac{1}{2}$ times faster than the overall growth rate of the Canadian population (5.7%). The number of people reporting English as mother tongue increased 4.7%, while those reporting French increased 2.3%.

Between 1971 and 1996, the proportion of people with a mother tongue other than English or French (allophones) increased from 13% of the overall population to nearly 17%. Mother tongue is defined as the first language a person learned at home in childhood and still understood at the time of the census.

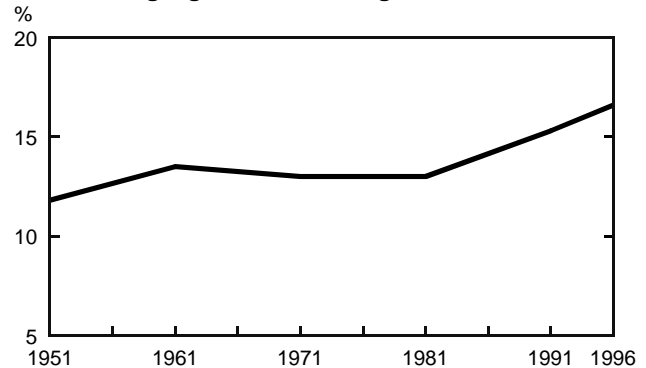
The growth in the proportion of allophones has been the result of increases in both the number of immigrants, and the proportion of immigrants whose mother tongue was neither English nor French. This dual trend gained momentum in the 1980s, and has continued steadily during the 1990s.

Persons whose mother tongue was English (anglophones) accounted for nearly 60% of Canada's population in 1996. Their share of the population increased from 1971 to 1986, then decreased over the next decade. The proportion of the population whose mother tongue was French (francophones) declined gradually between 1971 and 1996 to less than 24%.

Immigration has had a profound impact on languages spoken in Canadian homes. About 2.8 million people, almost one of every 10 in Canada, spoke a language other than English or French most often at home in 1996. Chinese consolidated its hold as Canada's most common language spoken at home, after English and French.

The census also showed that English-French bilingualism has gained ground across the country. Between 1991 and 1996, the rate increased in every province except Saskatchewan, where it remained unchanged. The proportion of francophones who were bilingual was almost five times that of anglophones.

Percentage of the population having a non-official language as mother tongue, 1951-1996¹



¹ For 1981, 1991 and 1996, multiple responses have been distributed equally among the languages reported.

MOTHER TONGUE: over three-quarters of recent immigrants had a mother tongue other than English or French

The presence of languages other than English or French in Canada reflects the ethnic and linguistic diversity that characterizes the nation. The proportion of people with a non-official language as mother tongue increased between 1991 and 1996 in every province except in the three Prairie provinces.

Almost 80% of the 1,039,000 immigrants who came to Canada between 1991 and 1996 reported a non-official language as mother tongue in the 1996 Census. More than half of them were from Asia and the Middle East. Chinese was the mother tongue of almost a quarter of these recent immigrants while Arabic, Punjabi, Tagalog, Tamil and Persian mother tongues together accounted for another one-fifth.

In contrast, among immigrants counted in the 1996 Census as having arrived in Canada between 1961 and 1970, only 54% had a non-official language as mother tongue. More than two-thirds of those immigrants were born in Europe, and almost a quarter of them reported Italian, German or Greek as mother tongue. Chinese accounted for only 4% of the immigrant population who arrived between 1961 and 1970.

Chinese as a mother tongue has been experiencing rapid growth since the 1980s due to increased immigration, particularly from Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China. Between 1991 and 1996, the number of people who reported Chinese as mother tongue increased 42% to 736,000.

As a result, Chinese moved from second place to first as the most frequently reported non-official mother tongue among Canadians, surpassing Italian. Chinese

mother tongue comprised 2.6% of the total population in 1996, followed by Italian, German and Spanish, in that order.

After Chinese, Punjabi, Arabic and Tagalog were the three other non-official language groups which had the strongest growth between 1991 and 1996, reflecting the increase in immigrants from Asia and the Middle East.

Twenty-five years ago, the top three non-official mother tongues were German, Italian and Ukrainian. Their number has been declining since 1971, due largely to significant declines in immigration from European countries and the increasing death rates associated with the aging of their population.

In 1996, 47% of people with Ukrainian mother tongue were aged 65 and over, as were 28% of people with German and 20% of those with Italian. In contrast, 12% of Canada's population was aged 65 and over.

Proportion of allophones surpasses anglophones in Quebec

In Quebec, the proportion of allophones has surpassed that of anglophones. In 1996, allophones represented 9.7% of the population, compared with 8.8% for anglophones. In 1971, the proportion of anglophones in Quebec (13%) was more than twice that of allophones (6%).

Between 1991 and 1996, the number of allophones in Quebec increased 14% to 682,000. In contrast, the number of anglophones in Quebec declined 0.7% to 622,000 in 1996. This rate of decline was a substantial deceleration from those recorded in previous five-year periods. Lower migration losses in comparison to the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s appear to be the main factor accounting for the slower recent decline.

Manitoba and Saskatchewan were the only provinces to record a decline in both the number and proportion of allophones since the 1991 Census. These two provinces had a large proportion of people with German and Ukrainian mother tongues, most of whom were aged 55 and over.

In contrast, Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec, where almost 90% of recent immigrants to Canada settled, recorded the highest increases in allophones. In 1996, allophones accounted for about 22% of the population in both Ontario and British Columbia. This was an increase from about 16% in both provinces in 1971.

Definitions

Mother tongue: the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual at the time of the census.

Home language: the language spoken most often at home by the individual at the time of the census.

Non-official language: any language other than the two official languages of Canada: English and French.

Anglophone: the population with English as mother tongue.

Francophone: the population with French as mother tongue.

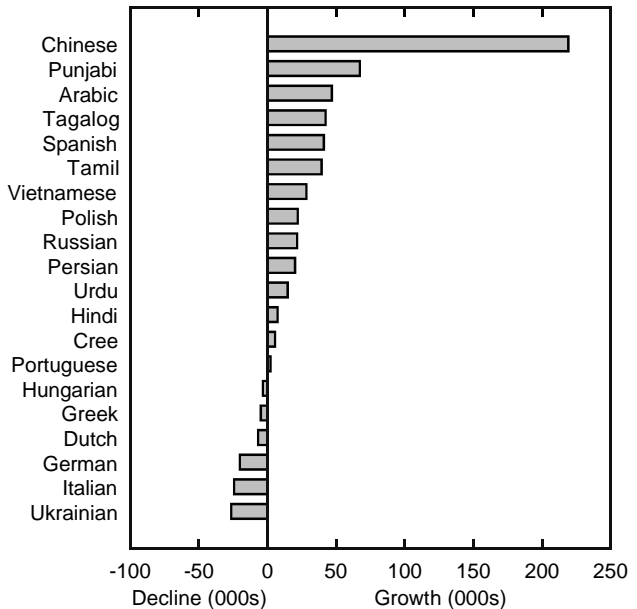
Allophone: the population with a non-official language as mother tongue.

Bilingualism: the ability to speak both English and French, based on the self-assessment of respondents.

Single response: When the respondent reports only one language as mother tongue or home language.

Multiple response: When the respondent reports more than one language as mother tongue or home language. To simplify the analysis, in most of the statistics used in the text, the multiple responses were equally distributed among the languages reported.

Change in size of the 20 largest non-official mother tongue groups, 1991-1996¹



¹ Single and multiple responses are combined.

The ten largest groups with a mother tongue other than English or French, and all Aboriginal languages¹

| | 1971 | |
|----------------------|---------|-----|
| | Number | % |
| Mother tongue | | |
| German | 558,965 | 2.6 |
| Italian | 538,765 | 2.5 |
| Ukrainian | 309,890 | 1.4 |
| Netherlands (Dutch) | 146,690 | 0.7 |
| Polish | 136,540 | 0.6 |
| Greek | 103,725 | 0.5 |
| Chinese | 95,910 | 0.4 |
| Magyar (Hungarian) | 87,465 | 0.4 |
| Portuguese | 85,845 | 0.4 |
| Yiddish | 50,320 | 0.2 |
| Aboriginal languages | 178,545 | 0.8 |

| | 1991 | |
|----------------------|---------|-----|
| | Number | % |
| Mother tongue | | |
| Italian | 538,695 | 2.0 |
| Chinese | 516,875 | 1.9 |
| German | 490,650 | 1.8 |
| Portuguese | 220,630 | 0.8 |
| Ukrainian | 201,320 | 0.7 |
| Polish | 200,395 | 0.7 |
| Spanish | 187,615 | 0.7 |
| Punjabi | 147,260 | 0.5 |
| Netherlands (Dutch) | 146,425 | 0.5 |
| Greek | 132,980 | 0.5 |
| Aboriginal Languages | 190,160 | 0.7 |

| | 1996 | |
|----------------------|---------|-----|
| | Number | % |
| Mother tongue | | |
| Chinese | 736,015 | 2.6 |
| Italian | 514,410 | 1.8 |
| German | 470,505 | 1.6 |
| Spanish | 228,580 | 0.8 |
| Portuguese | 222,870 | 0.8 |
| Polish | 222,355 | 0.8 |
| Punjabi | 214,530 | 0.8 |
| Ukrainian | 174,830 | 0.6 |
| Arabic | 166,150 | 0.6 |
| Tagalog (Pilipino) | 158,210 | 0.6 |
| Aboriginal Languages | 208,610 | 0.7 |

¹ For 1991 and 1996, single and multiple responses have been combined.

Anglophones: increasing numbers, declining share of the population

In 1996, 17.1 million individuals reported English as mother tongue, an increase of almost a third since 1971.

Anglophones accounted for about 60% of the population in 1996. Their share increased from 60% in 1971 to 62% in 1986, then decreased over the next decade, due to a higher level of immigration which resulted in an increase in the proportion of allophones.

Four provinces and one territory recorded an increase in the proportion of anglophones during the last five years. They were New Brunswick, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

The increase in New Brunswick was due to the favourable impact of net migration on the anglophone population and to their higher fertility. In the three Prairie provinces, it was due in large measure to the fact that francophones and allophones often pass English as mother tongue to their children. This results in an increase in the number of young anglophones. It also slows the aging process in the anglophone population, reducing their mortality rate.

Francophones: numbers also on the rise, but share continues to decline

The number of people with French as mother tongue continues to increase. In 1996, the francophone population in Canada reached 6.7 million, up 2% from 1991 and 16% from 1971.

However, between 1951 and 1996 the proportion of francophones in the population declined from 29% to less than 24%. This continuing proportional decline is largely due to two factors — first and foremost, the large number of immigrants whose mother tongue was other than French, and second, the declining fertility rate among francophones since the mid-1960s.

In 1996, 86% of francophones in Canada lived in Quebec. They accounted for 81.5% of its population, down from 82.0% in 1991 despite a 2.8% increase in Quebec's francophone population to 5.7 million. The slight decrease in their proportion was due primarily to a growing number of immigrants with a mother tongue other than French.

Outside Quebec, the francophone population declined 0.6% to 970,000 between 1991 and 1996. More than three-quarters (76%) of francophones outside Quebec lived in New Brunswick and Ontario. In both provinces, the proportion of francophones declined during the last five years.

New Brunswick had 242,000 francophones in 1996, representing 33.2% of its population, compared with 34.0% in 1991 and 33.8% in 1971. In Ontario, there were about 500,000 francophones, accounting for 4.7% of its population, down from 5.0% in 1991 and 6.3% in 1971.

Population distribution by mother tongue¹

| | English | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1971 | 1991 | 1996 |
| | % | | |
| Canada | 60.1 | 60.4 | 59.8 |
| Newfoundland | 98.5 | 98.6 | 98.5 |
| Prince Edward Island | 92.4 | 94.3 | 94.1 |
| Nova Scotia | 92.9 | 93.3 | 93.2 |
| New Brunswick | 64.8 | 64.6 | 65.3 |
| Quebec | 13.1 | 9.2 | 8.8 |
| Ontario | 77.5 | 74.6 | 73.1 |
| Manitoba | 67.0 | 73.5 | 74.7 |
| Saskatchewan | 74.0 | 83.3 | 84.4 |
| Alberta | 77.6 | 81.2 | 81.5 |
| British Columbia | 82.7 | 78.9 | 76.1 |
| Yukon | 83.4 | 88.8 | 86.8 |
| Northwest Territories | 46.8 | 55.2 | 56.7 |
| Canada less Quebec | 78.4 | 77.7 | 76.6 |

| | French | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1971 | 1991 | 1996 |
| | % | | |
| Canada | 26.9 | 24.3 | 23.5 |
| Newfoundland | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Prince Edward Island | 6.6 | 4.5 | 4.3 |
| Nova Scotia | 5.0 | 4.2 | 4.0 |
| New Brunswick | 33.8 | 34.0 | 33.2 |
| Quebec | 80.7 | 82.0 | 81.5 |
| Ontario | 6.3 | 5.0 | 4.7 |
| Manitoba | 6.1 | 4.7 | 4.5 |
| Saskatchewan | 3.4 | 2.2 | 2.0 |
| Alberta | 2.9 | 2.3 | 2.1 |
| British Columbia | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.5 |
| Yukon | 2.4 | 3.3 | 3.8 |
| Northwest Territories | 3.3 | 2.5 | 2.2 |
| Canada less Quebec | 6.0 | 4.8 | 4.5 |

| | Non-official language | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1971 | 1991 | 1996 |
| | % | | |
| Canada | 13.0 | 15.3 | 16.6 |
| Newfoundland | 0.8 | 0.9 | 1.0 |
| Prince Edward Island | 1.0 | 1.2 | 1.6 |
| Nova Scotia | 2.1 | 2.5 | 2.8 |
| New Brunswick | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.5 |
| Quebec | 6.2 | 8.8 | 9.7 |
| Ontario | 16.3 | 20.4 | 22.2 |
| Manitoba | 26.9 | 21.8 | 20.8 |
| Saskatchewan | 22.6 | 14.5 | 13.6 |
| Alberta | 19.6 | 16.5 | 16.4 |
| British Columbia | 15.5 | 19.5 | 22.3 |
| Yukon | 14.1 | 8.0 | 9.4 |
| Northwest Territories | 49.8 | 42.3 | 41.1 |
| Canada less Quebec | 15.7 | 17.5 | 18.9 |

¹ For 1991 and 1996, multiple responses have been distributed equally among the languages reported.

Aboriginal languages: Cree the largest language group

In 1996, among Aboriginal languages reported as mother tongue, the three largest groups were Cree (87,500 people), Inuktitut (27,800) and Ojibway (25,900). These three groups were in the same order in the 1991 Census.

However, comparisons among these Aboriginal language groups from one census to another should be made with caution, since incomplete enumeration of some Indian reserves resulted in under-reporting of Aboriginal language data.

More complete information on Aboriginal language groups will be released on January 13, 1998, along with Aboriginal data on age, sex and geographical distribution.

HOME LANGUAGE: one in 10 persons spoke a non-official language at home

Even though 4.7 million people reported a mother tongue other than English or French in 1996, only 2.8 million spoke a non-official language most often at home. They represented nearly 10% of the population, compared with 7% in 1971.

This increase was due to the heavy influx of immigration into Ontario and British Columbia between 1986 and 1996. The proportion of the population which spoke a non-official language at home almost doubled between 1971 and 1996 in British Columbia, to 13%. In Ontario, it increased from 10% to almost 14%.

Twenty-five years ago, Italian was the leading home language after English and French, followed by German and Ukrainian. In 1996, however, Chinese headed the list, followed by Italian and Punjabi.

Immigrants who arrived between 1991 and 1996 were especially attracted to Canada's three largest census metropolitan areas — Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. Toronto had the highest proportion of individuals (25%) who spoke a non-official language at home in 1996, followed by Vancouver (22%) and Montreal (12%).

Almost one-fifth of young people aged less than 15 in Toronto and Vancouver spoke a non-official language most often at home, nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ times higher than the national average (8%). In Montreal, the proportion was 11%.

Proportion of English and French as home language has declined

Although the number of individuals who spoke either official language at home increased between

1991 and 1996, their relative share of the Canadian population declined.

In 1996, 19.3 million individuals in Canada spoke English most often at home, up 4.6% from 1991. Their proportion of the population fell slightly during the last five years, although since 1971 it has increased from 67% to 68%.

Similarly, the number of people who spoke French at home in Canada increased 2.5% to 6.4 million in 1996. However, the relative share of French home language in the country as a whole declined from 26% in 1971 to 23% in 1996. Between 1991 and 1996, the proportion declined in all provinces except in British Columbia and Newfoundland, where it remained stable at a very low level.

In Quebec, almost 5.8 million people spoke French at home in 1996, a 3.2% increase from 1991. They accounted for 82.8% of the province's population, a slight decrease from 83.0% in 1991, but up from 80.8% in 1971. About 762,000 people spoke English at home in Quebec in 1996. This number has not changed since 1991. These people comprised 11% of the population in 1996, a decrease from 15% in 1971.

Outside Quebec, the population speaking French at home declined from 637,000 in 1991 to 619,000 in 1996. These individuals comprised 3% of the population outside Quebec in 1996, down from 4% in 1971.

Language shifts increased among English and French minorities

Many individuals speak a language at home that differs from their mother tongue. This is referred to as a language shift.

The proportion of francophones outside Quebec who were using a language other than French most often at home, mainly English, rose to 37% in 1996 from 35% in 1991. In Quebec, 10.2% of anglophones in 1996 spoke another language at home, mainly French, up from 9.9% in 1991.

Population distribution by home language¹

| | English | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1971 | 1991 | 1996 |
| | % | | |
| Canada | 67.0 | 68.3 | 67.6 |
| Newfoundland | 99.1 | 99.2 | 99.2 |
| Prince Edward Island | 95.7 | 97.3 | 97.2 |
| Nova Scotia | 95.5 | 96.3 | 96.3 |
| New Brunswick | 67.9 | 68.2 | 68.9 |
| Quebec | 14.7 | 11.2 | 10.8 |
| Ontario | 85.1 | 85.2 | 83.6 |
| Manitoba | 82.6 | 87.7 | 88.3 |
| Saskatchewan | 89.9 | 94.4 | 94.6 |
| Alberta | 90.8 | 91.5 | 91.1 |
| British Columbia | 92.8 | 89.6 | 86.5 |
| Yukon | 95.0 | 96.7 | 95.4 |
| Northwest Territories | 58.1 | 66.8 | 68.8 |
| Canada less Quebec | 87.3 | 87.6 | 86.3 |

| | French | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 1971 | 1991 | 1996 |
| | % | | |
| Canada | 25.7 | 23.3 | 22.6 |
| Newfoundland | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Prince Edward Island | 4.0 | 2.4 | 2.3 |
| Nova Scotia | 3.5 | 2.5 | 2.3 |
| New Brunswick | 31.4 | 31.2 | 30.5 |
| Quebec | 80.8 | 83.0 | 82.8 |
| Ontario | 4.6 | 3.2 | 2.9 |
| Manitoba | 4.0 | 2.3 | 2.1 |
| Saskatchewan | 1.7 | 0.7 | 0.6 |
| Alberta | 1.4 | 0.8 | 0.7 |
| British Columbia | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Yukon | 0.7 | 1.4 | 1.8 |
| Northwest Territories | 1.7 | 1.2 | 1.0 |
| Canada less Quebec | 4.4 | 3.2 | 2.9 |

| | Non-official language | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| | 1971 | 1991 | 1996 |
| | % | | |
| Canada | 7.3 | 8.4 | 9.8 |
| Newfoundland | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Prince Edward Island | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| Nova Scotia | 1.0 | 1.2 | 1.4 |
| New Brunswick | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.6 |
| Quebec | 4.5 | 5.8 | 6.4 |
| Ontario | 10.3 | 11.6 | 13.5 |
| Manitoba | 13.4 | 9.9 | 9.6 |
| Saskatchewan | 8.4 | 4.9 | 4.9 |
| Alberta | 7.8 | 7.7 | 8.2 |
| British Columbia | 6.7 | 10.0 | 13.1 |
| Yukon | 4.3 | 1.9 | 2.9 |
| Northwest Territories | 40.2 | 32.0 | 30.3 |
| Canada less Quebec | 8.4 | 9.3 | 10.9 |

¹ For 1991 and 1996, multiple responses have been distributed equally among the languages reported.

Rate of language shift by mother tongue¹

| | Canada | | Quebec | | Other provinces and territories | |
|-----------------------|--------|------|--------|------|---------------------------------|------|
| | 1991 | 1996 | 1991 | 1996 | 1991 | 1996 |
| | % | | | | | |
| English | 0.7 | 0.7 | 9.9 | 10.2 | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| French | 6.2 | 6.2 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 35.3 | 36.7 |
| Non-official language | 43.8 | 39.7 | 33.1 | 32.3 | 45.6 | 40.9 |

¹ Based on single responses to the mother tongue question.

In Quebec, language shifts were more favourable to French than in the past

The difference between the number of people using a language at home and the number of those who have it as mother tongue is an indicator of the net impact of language shifts.

English and French groups both benefit from the net impact of language shifts in Quebec. For example, in 1996, the number of people who spoke French at home was 89,000 higher than the number of those who had French as mother tongue. The net gains for the English group were 140,000. Language shifts from allophones explained most of the net gains of both English and French groups.

The net gains of the French group have increased more than those of the English group over the past 25 years. In 1996, 39% of the overall net gains were to French, compared with 33% in 1991 and only 4% in 1971.

Language shifts from English to French and from French to English were comparable in 1996. About 55,000 anglophones spoke French as their home language in 1996, about the same number as francophones who spoke English (56,000). In 1971, the number was smaller for anglophones who spoke French at home (49,000), but higher for francophones who spoke English (74,000).

French is becoming more attractive for allophones. Among those who did shift to either English or French, an increasing proportion were shifting to French: 39% in 1996, compared with 37% in 1991 and 29% in 1971.

Allophones less likely to speak English or French at home

The proportion of allophones who spoke English or French at home instead of their mother tongue declined in Canada during the past five years. In 1991, 44% of allophones were speaking either English or French at home. By 1996, that had dropped to about 40%. This decline was mainly due to the higher

level of immigration during the five-year period. For any language group, the shorter the stay of individuals in Canada, the lower the rate of shift to English or French.

The ten most frequently used home languages other than English or French and all Aboriginal languages

| Home Language | 1971 | |
|----------------------|---------|-----|
| | Number | % |
| Italian | 425,230 | 2.0 |
| German | 213,350 | 1.0 |
| Ukrainian | 144,755 | 0.7 |
| Greek | 86,825 | 0.4 |
| Chinese | 77,890 | 0.4 |
| Portuguese | 74,760 | 0.3 |
| Polish | 70,960 | 0.3 |
| Magyar (Hungarian) | 50,670 | 0.2 |
| Netherlands (Dutch) | 36,170 | 0.2 |
| Yiddish | 26,330 | 0.1 |
| Aboriginal languages | 122,205 | 0.6 |

| Home Language | 1991 | |
|----------------------|---------|-----|
| | Number | % |
| Chinese | 430,085 | 1.6 |
| Italian | 288,290 | 1.1 |
| Portuguese | 152,530 | 0.6 |
| Spanish | 145,040 | 0.5 |
| German | 134,465 | 0.5 |
| Punjabi | 123,780 | 0.4 |
| Polish | 117,150 | 0.4 |
| Greek | 93,165 | 0.3 |
| Arabic | 82,445 | 0.3 |
| Vietnamese | 79,585 | 0.3 |
| Aboriginal languages | 138,110 | 0.5 |

| Home Language | 1996 | |
|----------------------|---------|-----|
| | Number | % |
| Chinese | 630,520 | 2.2 |
| Italian | 258,050 | 0.9 |
| Punjabi | 182,895 | 0.6 |
| Spanish | 173,040 | 0.6 |
| Portuguese | 142,975 | 0.5 |
| Polish | 137,330 | 0.5 |
| German | 134,615 | 0.5 |
| Arabic | 118,605 | 0.4 |
| Tagalog (Pilipino) | 111,865 | 0.4 |
| Vietnamese | 102,905 | 0.4 |
| Aboriginal languages | 146,120 | 0.5 |

¹ For 1991 and 1996, single and multiple responses have been combined.

People in language groups with many recent immigrants to Canada had a far greater tendency to use their mother tongue at home than people in language groups in which immigration has declined during the past 25 years.

Rate of language shift¹, main mother tongue groups other than English or French, Canada 1996

| Mother tongue | Rate of language shift |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Chinese | 15.5 |
| Italian | 50.6 |
| German | 71.2 |
| Spanish | 27.4 |
| Portuguese | 36.8 |
| Polish | 37.9 |
| Punjabi | 15.6 |
| Arabic | 30.9 |
| Ukrainian | 76.5 |
| Tagalog (Pilipino) | 36.2 |
| Dutch | 87.2 |
| Greek | 36.0 |

¹ The rate is based on single responses to the mother tongue question.

For example, in 1996, only 16% of people with Chinese as mother tongue and 16% with Punjabi spoke English or French most often at home. In contrast, 87% of people with Dutch mother tongue were using English or French at home, as were 76% of people with Ukrainian and 71% of those with German. Most of them were born in Canada or immigrated many years ago.

In Quebec, the situation differed somewhat from the rest of the country. A higher proportion of allophones (68%) were speaking their mother tongue at home, compared with the other provinces and territories (59%).

BILINGUALISM: English-French bilingualism gaining ground

English-French bilingualism gained ground in Canada during the last five years.

In 1996, 17% of the population, or 4.8 million people, could speak both official languages, compared with slightly over 16%, or 4.4 million, in 1991 and 13%, or 2.9 million, in 1971.

Except for Saskatchewan, where the proportion of the bilingual population remained stable, all provinces and territories recorded an increase from 1991 to 1996.

Quebec was still the province with the highest rate of bilingualism. Between 1971 and 1996, the proportion of bilingual people in Quebec increased from 28% to 38%. In second place was New Brunswick where 33% of the population was bilingual in 1996, compared with 22% in 1971.

In Ontario, which had the third-highest rate, the percentage of the population which was bilingual increased over the 25-year period, from 9% to 12%.

English-French bilingualism rate

| | 1971 | 1981 | 1991 | 1996 |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | % | | | |
| Canada | 13.5 | 15.3 | 16.3 | 17.0 |
| Newfoundland | 1.8 | 2.3 | 3.3 | 3.9 |
| Prince Edward Island | 8.2 | 8.1 | 10.1 | 11.0 |
| Nova Scotia | 6.7 | 7.4 | 8.6 | 9.3 |
| New Brunswick | 21.5 | 26.5 | 29.5 | 32.6 |
| Quebec | 27.6 | 32.4 | 35.4 | 37.8 |
| Ontario | 9.3 | 10.8 | 11.4 | 11.6 |
| Manitoba | 8.2 | 7.9 | 9.2 | 9.4 |
| Saskatchewan | 5.0 | 4.6 | 5.2 | 5.2 |
| Alberta | 5.0 | 6.4 | 6.6 | 6.7 |
| British Columbia | 4.6 | 5.7 | 6.4 | 6.7 |
| Yukon | 6.6 | 7.9 | 9.3 | 10.5 |
| Northwest Territories | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.3 |

The percentage of bilingual people differed considerably from one census metropolitan area to another. In general, the census metropolitan areas in Quebec had a higher percentage of bilingual people.

Half of Montreal's population was bilingual, the highest percentage among the 25 census metropolitan areas. It was followed by Ottawa-Hull (44%), where there was a marked difference between the Quebec part (62%) and the Ontario part (38%). The census metropolitan area outside Quebec with the highest rate of bilingualism was Sudbury, 40% of whose population was bilingual.

Four of every 10 francophones bilingual

Across the country, 41% of francophones were bilingual, almost five times higher than the proportion of anglophones (9%). The rate of bilingualism of francophones living outside Quebec was even higher (84%) compared to 7% for anglophones. In contrast, the proportion of bilingual anglophones living in Quebec (62%) was almost twice that of francophones in that province (34%).

The rate of bilingualism varied considerably by age group for anglophones and francophones. The difference reflects the manner in which the two populations learn a second language.

In the case of Quebec francophones, the job market plays an important role in learning English as a second language. Hence, the rate of bilingualism reached a peak (48%) in the age group 20 to 24, ages corresponding to high labour market participation. The rate stayed high in subsequent age groups.

For anglophones outside Quebec, school is the main place for learning French as a second language. Consequently, the highest rate of bilingualism (16%) was in the age group 15 to 19, the secondary school years. The rate was lower in older age groups, as

French immersion was less popular or non-existent during their school years.

In the case of persons whose mother tongue was neither English nor French, their rate of English-French bilingualism remained almost the same between 1991 and 1996. About 47% of allophones who lived in Quebec were bilingual in 1996, almost nine times higher than the rate among allophones in the other provinces and territories.

English-French bilingualism rate, census metropolitan areas

| | 1991 ¹ | 1996 |
|----------------------------|-------------------|------|
| | % | |
| St. John's, Nfld. | 4.7 | 5.4 |
| Halifax | 9.6 | 10.7 |
| Saint John, N.B. | 10.6 | 12.3 |
| Chicoutimi-Jonquière | 15.1 | 17.4 |
| Montréal | 47.7 | 49.7 |
| Québec | 27.7 | 30.0 |
| Sherbrooke | 36.4 | 39.1 |
| Trois-Rivières | 21.6 | 24.4 |
| Hamilton | 6.6 | 6.8 |
| Kitchener | 6.7 | 6.9 |
| London | 6.4 | 6.6 |
| Oshawa | 6.6 | 6.7 |
| Ottawa-Hull | 42.8 | 44.0 |
| Ottawa-Hull - Quebec Part | 59.8 | 62.1 |
| Ottawa-Hull - Ontario Part | 37.4 | 38.2 |
| St. Catharines-Niagara | 8.0 | 8.3 |
| Sudbury | 38.5 | 40.1 |
| Thunder Bay | 6.8 | 7.4 |
| Toronto | 8.0 | 8.0 |
| Windsor | 10.7 | 10.5 |
| Winnipeg | 10.4 | 10.9 |
| Regina | 5.6 | 5.6 |
| Saskatoon | 6.3 | 6.5 |
| Calgary | 7.0 | 7.3 |
| Edmonton | 7.7 | 7.5 |
| Vancouver | 7.2 | 7.4 |
| Victoria | 7.7 | 8.6 |

¹ The data for the CMAs for 1991 are based on the 1996 geographic boundaries.

English-French bilingualism rate by mother tongue¹

| | 1971 | 1991 | 1996 |
|--|------|------|------|
| | % | | |
| Canada | | | |
| Anglophones | 5.5 | 8.2 | 8.8 |
| Francophones | 34.0 | 38.6 | 40.8 |
| Allophones | 7.8 | 11.3 | 11.2 |
| Quebec | | | |
| Anglophones | 36.7 | 58.4 | 61.7 |
| Francophones | 25.7 | 31.3 | 33.7 |
| Allophones | 33.1 | 46.5 | 46.7 |
| Other provinces and territories | | | |
| Anglophones | 3.4 | 6.3 | 6.9 |
| Francophones | 77.8 | 81.2 | 83.8 |
| Allophones | 3.9 | 5.3 | 5.3 |

¹ For 1991 and 1996, the rate was based on single responses to the mother tongue question.

About 69% of Quebec allophones were able to speak French in 1996. This was a slightly higher proportion than those who were able to speak English (66%), and represents a significant change from 1971 when 47% of allophones were able to speak French and 69% were able to speak English. Outside Quebec, 90% of allophones were able to speak English in 1996, compared with 5% who were able to speak French.

For further information on this release, contact Media Relations at (613) 951-4636.




Statistics Canada has started consultations on 2001 Census content and post-censal survey topics. For information write : 2001 Census Content Determination Project, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0T6. Internet : consultation2001@statcan.ca

1996 Census of Population Release Dates

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| January 13, 1998 | Aboriginal |
| February 17, 1998 | Ethnic origin, visible minorities |
| March 17, 1998 | Labour activities, occupation and industry, household activities, place of work, mode of transportation |
| April 14, 1998 | Education, mobility and migration |
| May 12, 1998 | Sources of income, family and household income |
| June 9, 1998 | Families: social and economic characteristics, occupied private dwellings, housing costs |

Catalogue 11-001E (F) English 11-001E/11-001E-001E



Statistics Canada

Thursday, June 3, 1997
For release at 8:30 a.m.



MAJOR RELEASES

- **Urban transit, 1995** 2
Changes in expenditures on taking urban transit: Canadians are riding less and less. In 1996, each Canadian took an average of about 4.5 trips on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.
- **Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1996** 4
Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was noticeably weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.

OTHER RELEASES

- **High-waged Index, May 1997** 3
- **Structural Dislocation Survey** 3
- **Steel primary forms, week ending May 31, 1997** 10
- **Egg production, April 1997** 10

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED 11



Statistics Canada's official release bulletin

Catalogue 11-001E.

Published each working day by the Communications Division, Statistics Canada, 10-H, R.H. Coats Bldg., Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6.

To access *The Daily* on the Internet, visit our site at <http://www.statcan.ca>. To receive *The Daily* each morning by E-mail, send an E-mail message to lstproc@statcan.ca. Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message, type "subscribe daily firstname lastname".

Editor: John Flanders (613-951-8292, flanjoh@statcan.ca)

Head of Official Release: Chantal Prévost (613-951-1088, prevcha@statcan.ca)

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada. © Minister of Industry, 1997. Citation in newsprint, magazine, radio, and television reporting is permitted subject to the requirement that Statistics Canada is acknowledged as the source. Any other reproduction is permitted subject to the requirement that Statistics Canada is acknowledged as the source on all copies as follows: Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, catalogue 11-001E, along with date and page references.