

Languages, 2001



Canada is becoming more and more a multilingual society in the wake of growing numbers of immigrants whose mother tongue is neither English nor French, according to new data from the 2001 Census. Mother tongue is defined as the first language a person learned at home in childhood and still understood at the time of the census.

Canadians reported more than 100 languages in completing the census question on mother tongue. The list includes (other than English and French) languages long associated with immigration to Canada: German, Italian, Ukrainian, Dutch, Polish, and so on. However, from 1996 to 2001, language groups from Asia and the Middle East recorded the largest gains.

About 5 231 500 people reported to the 2001 Census that they were bilingual (spoke both English and French), compared with 4 841 300 five years earlier, an 8.1% increase to represent 17.7% of the population.

The text was adapted from Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, Tuesday December 10, 2002. Statistics Canada information is used with the permission of Statistics Canada. Information on the availability of the wide range of data from Statistics Canada can be obtained from the Statistics Canada's Regional Offices, its World Wide Web site at: www.statcan.ca, and its toll-free access number 1-800-263-1136.

