

## Mother Tongue and Home Language in Ontario

### Ontario More Multilingual

- According to the 2001 Census, Ontario is becoming more multilingual. This is attributable to the growing number of immigrants whose mother tongue is neither English nor French. Those language groups who reported a non-official language as mother tongue (allophones) represented 24.2% of Ontario's population in 2001, up from 22.2% in 1996.
- Those who reported English as their mother tongue still represented the majority of Ontarians. Although their numbers rose, their share of population declined to 71.3% in 2001 from 73.1% in 1996. The same was true of those who reported French as their mother tongue. Their numbers rose but their share declined to 4.5% in 2001 from 4.7% in 1996.
- Overall, Ontarians reported more than 100 languages in completing the Census question on mother tongue. The list includes languages long associated with immigration to Ontario: German, Italian, Ukrainian, Dutch and Polish. However, between 1996 and 2001, language groups from Asia and the Middle East recorded the largest gains.
- These language groups include Chinese, Punjabi, Arabic, Urdu, Tagalog and Tamil.

### Toronto CMA: 40% Reported a Non-Official Language as Mother Tongue

- Those language groups who reported a non-official language as mother tongue represented 40% of the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area's (CMA) population in 2001, the highest proportion of any Canadian CMA.
- Chinese remained the leading non-official mother tongue in the Toronto CMA. A total of 355,270 people reported Chinese as mother tongue, a 20.5% increase from 1996. This accounted for 7.6% of the population.
- In the Ontario part of Ottawa-Gatineau CMA, Chinese replaced Arabic as the leading mother tongue other than English or French.
- European languages remained the leading non-official language groups in the Hamilton and Kitchener CMAs.
- Among Ontario CMAs, the London CMA had the highest proportion of the population with English as mother tongue (82%) and Greater Sudbury the highest proportion with French as mother tongue (29%).

### Mother Tongue and Home Language, Ontario

	Mother Tongue		Home Language	
	1996	2001	1996	2001
<b>Number</b>				
English	7,777,735	8,041,995	8,900,845	9,337,615
French	499,687	509,265	306,790	307,295
Other	2,365,370	2,734,280	1,435,160	1,640,640
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,642,792</b>	<b>11,285,540</b>	<b>10,642,795</b>	<b>11,285,550</b>
<b>Per Cent</b>				
English	73.1	71.3	83.6	82.7
French	4.7	4.5	2.9	2.7
Other	22.2	24.2	13.5	14.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Mother tongue is first language learned at home while home language is language spoken most at home.

Source: Statistics Canada, *Census of Canada, 2001*.

### Top 3 Non-official Mother Tongue Languages in Selected Ontario CMAs\*

CMA	1996		2001		
	Number	% Share**	Number	% Share**	
<b>Toronto</b>					
Chinese	294,875	7.0	355,270	7.6	
Italian	215,755	5.1	206,325	4.4	
Portuguese	113,865	2.7	113,355	2.4	
<b>Ottawa-Gatineau (Ontario part)</b>					
Arabic	17,270	2.3	23,785	3.0	
Chinese	15,850	2.1	22,735	2.9	
Italian	11,760	1.6	11,215	1.4	
<b>Hamilton</b>					
Italian	24,755	4.0	24,050	3.7	
Polish	11,780	1.9	11,970	1.8	
German	9,250	1.5	Portuguese	9,160	1.4
<b>Kitchener</b>					
German	16,620	4.4	German	15,550	3.8
Portuguese	12,355	3.3	Portuguese	11,525	2.8
Polish	5680	1.5	Polish	5,800	1.4

\*Census Metropolitan Area

\*\*Percent share of population.

Source: Statistics Canada, *Census of Canada, 2001*.

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