

Bilingualism, 2006

Abstract

Canada has two official languages, English and French. In 2006, about 17.4% of the population were bilingual, as they were able to conduct a conversation in both official languages. People living in Quebec reported the highest percentage of being bilingual. New Brunswick, the only officially bilingual province in Canada, had the highest bilingualism rate among Anglophones (16.0%) outside Quebec. People living in Eastern Ontario and in the Greater Sudbury area also reported a higher rate of bilingualism compared to the other parts of Canada. For the rest of Canada, the rate of bilingualism varied among the provinces and territories. In some regions, the rate of bilingualism reached as high as 15%.

People living in Quebec had the highest percentage of the Canadian population who were able to conduct a conversation in both official languages of Canada. About 35.8% of Francophones in Quebec reported being bilingual. For Anglophones, it was about 68.9% whereas it was 50.2% for Allophones, whose mother tongue is neither English nor French. In Montréal, 53.8% of the people reported that they can carry on a conversation in both English and French, while in Gatineau, it was 63.0%.

In Ottawa, 37.2% of its population were bilingual. Cornwall in Eastern Ontario also showed a relatively high rate of bilingualism at 46.1%. About 14.0% of the residents in Kingston reported being bilingual, while the rate of bilingualism was around 9.3% in Toronto. The 2006 Census data showed that the majority of Francophones living outside of Quebec were bilingual. In the regions where Francophones tend to reside, the rate of bilingualism was also higher, for example, close to two-fifth (38.9%) and slightly over one-fourth (26.4%) of the population in Greater Sudbury and North Bay, respectively, reported being able to conduct a conversation in both English and French.

In New Brunswick, where Francophones made up 32.7% of the population, the rate of bilingualism was also high in the north-eastern region and in the two major cities: 48.1% in Moncton and 22.6% in Fredericton.

For the provinces, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the three territories, the rate of bilingualism varied and reached as high as 15% in some areas. In Manitoba, the rate of bilingualism in a few municipalities reached as high as 50%.

The Daily is Statistics Canada's official release bulletin. The Daily for December 4, 2007 (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/071204/dq071204a-eng.htm>), marked the public release of this census variable. Highlight tables allowing users to perform simple rank and sort functions with the data at various levels of geography

are available for this variable here: Language Highlight Tables, 2006 Census (<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/hlt/97-555/Index-eng.cfm>). Technical notes for this variable can be found at Languages Reference Guide, 2006 Census (<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/ref/rp-guides/lang-eng.cfm>).

More information on bilingualism could be found in the following publication: Statistics Canada, The Evolving Linguistic Portrait, 2006 Census (<http://www80.statcan.gc.ca/wes-esw/page1-eng.htm>), Catalogue no. 97-555-X2006001. 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.gc.ca, or its toll-free access number 1-800-263-1136.

Map Sources

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Statistics Canada. Profile of Language, Immigration, Citizenship, Mobility and Migration for Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Divisions and Census Subdivisions, 2006 Census, Catalogue No. 94-577-X2006004.

References

Statistics Canada. 2007. 2006 Census Dictionary. (<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/ref/dict/index-eng.cfm>)

Weiss, Carolyn; Cillis, Patricia; Rothwell, Neil. 2008. The Population Ecumene of Canada: Exploring the Past and Present. Geography Working Paper Series. Catalogue no. 92F0138M, No. 2008003. Geography Division, Statistics Canada. (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/92f0138m/92f0138m2008003-eng.pdf>)

Related Web sites (1999 – 2009)

Federal Government

Statistics Canada. 2006 Census. Analysis Series
<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/index-eng.cfm>

This series, launched via The Daily for each of the eight major releases, includes a number of comprehensive analytical articles which will supplement day of release information. These catalogued articles provide an analytical perspective on 2006 Census topics.

Statistics Canada. 2006 Census Highlight Tables

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/highlights/index.cfm>

This page provides tables for population and dwelling counts; age and sex; families and households; languages, immigration and citizenship; Aboriginal peoples; labour, language used at work, place of work, commuting to work, education; ethnic origin and visible minorities; income, and earnings, and shelter costs. Available on each official day of release, the tables will present information highlights by topic via key indicators for various levels of geography.

Statistics Canada. 2006 Census Trends

<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/92-596/index.cfm?Lang=eng>

This product presents a series of summary data trends spanning three censuses: 2006, 2001 and 1996. The product is designed to facilitate the analysis and comparison of the changing demographic and socio-economic composition of selected geographic areas across Canada.

Statistics Canada. 2006 Community Profiles

<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E>

These profiles present community-level information from the 2006 Census of Population. Users can search for an area of interest using the search engine provided in this site. Users can access data on population and dwellings, age, marital status, families, income, languages, immigration, education, labour force, income, and more.

Statistics Canada. Census Tract (CT) Profiles, 2006 Census

<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-597/index.cfm?Lang=E>

Census tracts are small, relatively stable geographic areas that usually have a population of 2,500 to 8,000. They are identified using seven-character numeric 'names' (e.g., 0005.00) and are located in census metropolitan areas (CMAs) and larger census agglomerations (CAs). From this page you can visualize each census tract via a map and/or retrieve profile data for the census tract.

Statistics Canada. Learning Resources

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/edu/index-eng.htm>

This page gives support material, such as data, reference material and lesson plans, for teaching and learning in schools at elementary, secondary and postsecondary levels.

