

By mother tongue is meant the language first spoken in childhood, if still understood by the person; for infants it is taken to be the language commonly spoken in the home.

There was a marked decrease in the numbers reporting a foreign mother tongue between 1936 and 1946. The one significant exception was Netherlandish, which showed a pronounced increase, especially in Manitoba. These statistics should be interpreted with some reserve, however, owing to the apparent tendency during and immediately after the War for people of German origin to report Netherlandish rather than German as their mother tongue.

28.—Mother Tongues of the Population of the Prairie Provinces, by Sex, 1946

Mother Tongue	MANITOBA			SASKATCHEWAN			ALBERTA		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
English.....	223,754	218,744	442,498	270,939	246,119	517,058	288,410	269,102	557,512
French.....	25,329	24,499	49,828	19,673	17,354	37,027	14,776	13,439	28,215
German.....	17,478	16,233	33,711	49,403	43,347	92,750	25,667	22,040	47,707
Indian.....	9,251	8,703	17,954	9,565	9,386	18,951	9,727	9,435	19,162
Magyar.....	723	538	1,261	5,187	4,256	9,443	3,447	2,236	5,683
Netherlandish.....	14,179	13,598	27,777	7,964	7,374	15,338	2,551	2,125	4,676
Norwegian.....	1,211	887	2,098	8,910	6,051	14,961	6,693	4,359	11,052
Polish.....	12,503	10,896	23,399	8,531	6,764	15,295	8,449	6,654	15,103
Russian.....	1,737	1,311	3,048	6,697	5,551	12,248	3,918	2,867	6,785
Swedish.....	2,244	1,669	3,913	4,708	3,163	7,871	4,593	2,612	7,205
Ukrainian.....	45,246	40,260	85,506	38,394	33,370	71,764	37,699	33,390	71,089
Yiddish.....	6,638	6,862	13,500	803	672	1,475	834	731	1,565
Other.....	12,642	9,788	22,430	11,393	7,114	18,507	17,233	10,343	27,576
Totals.....	372,935	353,988	726,923	442,167	390,521	832,688	423,997	379,333	803,330

Years of Schooling.—Table 29 presents information on years of schooling for the population of the Prairie Provinces according to the Census of 1946. Since this includes children attending school as well as persons no longer of school age, such information is of no great value unless it is classified by age. For that reason the schooling data in this table are presented for three broad age groupings, the last of which gives a good indication of the schooling attained by the adult population.

Years of schooling is probably the best available yard-stick for measuring educational attainment which is defined as the total number of school years a person attended any kind of educational institution. Persons attending night school or other part-time school, or receiving private tuition, were credited with the number of academic years equivalent to the work done. For children still at school the current school year was counted.