

group accounted for 14% of the province's population in that year, compared with approximately 10% at the time of the last Census.

In Quebec, the proportion of Francophones changed little between 1981 and 1986. In the last Census, 5.3 million persons, or 81% of the population, reported that French was their only mother tongue.

In most provinces other than Quebec, there has been a downward trend in the proportion of the Francophone population since 1981, continuing a trend from previous Censuses. However, the proportion seems to have remained the same in New Brunswick, while rising in the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. In New Brunswick, when the multiple responses given in 1986 are allocated among the various languages as in 1981, the proportion of persons with French as their mother tongue shows little change. Francophones accounted for a third of the population of New Brunswick. Outside of Quebec, Ontario had the largest number of persons with French as their only mother tongue (425,000 in 1986). These persons accounted for a little less than 5% of the population of that province.

Overall, the size of French-language minorities in the country decreased between 1981 and 1986. In 1986, 843,000 persons living outside Quebec indicated French as their only mother tongue. During the same period, in Quebec, the number of persons with English as a mother tongue also fell, continuing the trend that began in the mid-1970s. In 1986, 580,000 persons reported English as their only mother tongue.

In the 1986 Census, 2.9 million persons, or a little more than 10% of the Canadian population, reported having a single mother tongue other than English or French. Of these persons, 2.1 million indicated a language of European origin, 634,000 a language of Asian or Middle Eastern origin, 138,000 an aboriginal language and 13,000 a language of another origin. (Origin means the geographical region where a language came into being. Persons who report that language may actually come from another region.)

Linguistic diversity in Canada is greater today than it was 25 years ago. Since then, the population whose mother tongue is of Asian or Middle Eastern origin — mainly Chinese, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu — has grown considerably. On the other hand, there was little change from 1961 to 1986 in the number of persons who indicated a language of European origin, although there have been changes within this group. For example, the number of persons with Spanish as their mother tongue is larger now than it was 25 years ago, while the number with German or Ukrainian as their

mother tongue has decreased. Overall, the proportion of the population reporting a mother tongue other than English and French has changed little in 25 years.

In 1986, the proportion of the population for which the only mother tongue was neither English nor French varied a great deal from one region of the country to another: this group made up less than 2% of the population in the Atlantic provinces, 6% in Quebec, 15% in Ontario, 19% in Manitoba, 13% in Saskatchewan, 13% in Alberta, 14% in British Columbia and 7% in the Yukon. The Northwest Territories reached 40%; most of these persons reported Inuktitut as their mother tongue.

Collection of data on mother tongue. The following is an overview of some changes made in data collection and a description of the analytical methods used to determine the trends.

Data collection. The question on mother tongue was the same in the last two Censuses, but the instructions to respondents were modified. In 1981, the respondents were asked to indicate only one language, nevertheless, 597,980 persons reported more than one. This instruction was dropped from the 1986 Census. Under the new instructions, people could indicate two mother tongues if they had learned them at the same time and had spoken one as frequently as the other when they were children.

The number of multiple responses given in the 1986 Census was significantly higher than the number given in the 1981 Census. This increase may have resulted from changes made in the questionnaire, changes in the way the population answers language questions or an increase in the number of persons who learned more than one language as a mother tongue. In 1986, 954,940 persons provided a multiple response.

When the 1981 data were processed, only one language was retained, even in cases where the respondent reported more than one. In 1986, responses indicating more than one language were accepted.

Comparison between 1981 and 1986. In order to facilitate the determination of the trends between 1981 and 1986, two methods of comparison were established. In the 1986-based method, the presentation of the data from the 1981 Census shows the multiple responses obtained at that time. In the 1981-based method, the results of the 1986 Census were adjusted, based upon the methods used in 1981; in cases where several languages were reported, the multiple responses were distributed among the component languages.

These adjustments make it easier to relate the 1986 data to the 1981 data, but do not make the results of the two Censuses entirely comparable.