

HAMILTON FOR ALL

FACTSHEETS



FACTSHEET 3: LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME

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The Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council and the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion are launching a new public education campaign, #HamiltonForAll, that aims to stimulate dialogue and open minds by encouraging Hamiltonians to stand up against prejudice, exclusion and discrimination based on ethnicity, race, religion, country of origin, disability, sexual orientation or other differences.

Recently, in response to the hate-motivated deaths of six Canadian men at a Quebec City mosque, the Hamilton and District Labour Council (HDLC) has released a Shut Down Hate pledge asking labour and community groups to band together to commit to anti-racism and anti-fascism through words and deeds. The HDLC connects the rise in precarious employment and economic insecurity to a troubling response by some to blame immigration for these trends. "If left unchallenged, racist rhetoric and actions can stir up anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim and anti-Indigenous sentiment. In times of economic downturn and diminishing opportunity, the seeds of division are fertilized by the same sections of the corporate elite who seek to divide working people. We have seen how right-wing populism can take hold, especially when people are frustrated with economic injustice. History shows us that at its extreme, such populism can be incredibly destructive. Today, challenging this situation is more important than ever for working people." (HDLC's Shut Down Hate Pledge: www.shutdownhate.ca)

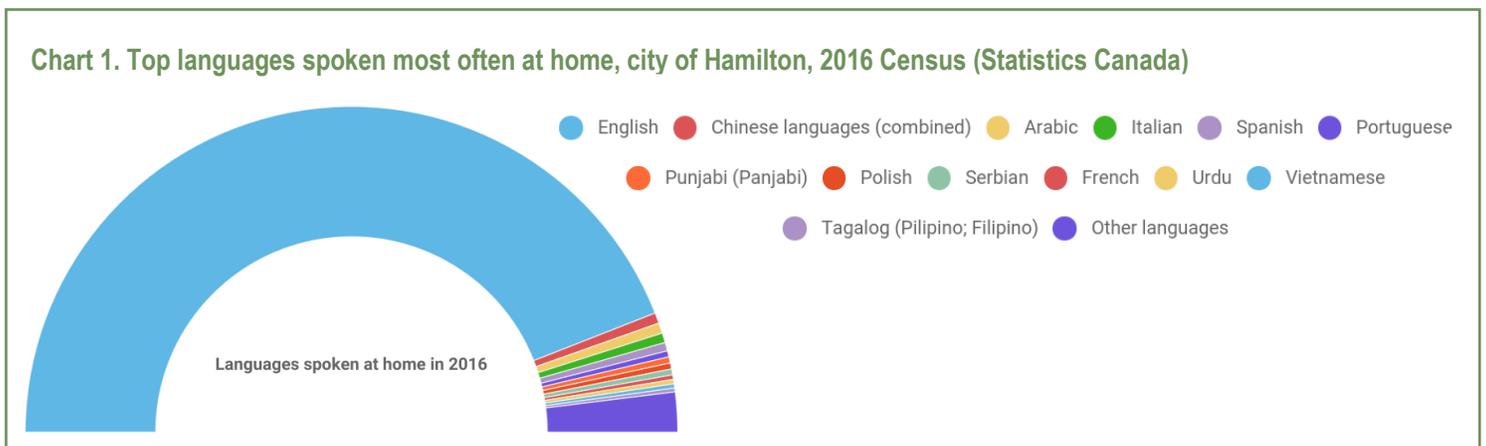
The Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton is publishing this series of Hamilton For All factsheets to improve understanding of Hamilton's changing racialized, immigrant and linguistic communities and better support community dialogue around deconstructing misconceptions so that everyone in Hamilton feels welcome in our city.

INTRODUCTION

As immigrants have settled in the city of Hamilton over the decades, English has become more dominant as a spoken language within families and the number of languages spoken across Hamilton has also grown. Knowledge of multiple languages improves cognitive skills, is a vital connection to heritage and history of cultures around the globe, and is an asset on the job market. This factsheet highlights some of the trends in Hamilton's home languages, including top non-English languages.

KEY TREND: ENGLISH CONTINUES TO GROW AS HAMILTON'S TOP HOME LANGUAGE

Immigration rates to Hamilton are currently relatively low and English has grown from being spoken at home by 85% of households in 2006 to 88% in 2016. In 2016, 12% of households spoke one of over 100 languages other than English at home. The most common are Chinese languages combined (with Mandarin being the most common, followed by Cantonese and then Chinese language not specified in third place). The most common non-English home languages are each only spoken by about 1% of Hamilton's households.



KEY TREND: TAGALOG, ARABIC, FRENCH, SPANISH, AND URDU EACH GREW BY OVER 50% AMONG HAMILTON'S HOME LANGUAGES

As the countries of birth of immigrants change over the decades, so do Hamilton's non-English home languages. Italian has declined from the first to the third most common non-English home language among all residents, while Chinese is now first, followed closely by Arabic and Spanish.

Chart 2. Growth and decline in the City of Hamilton's top 12 non-English home languages, 2006-2016 , 2006 and 2016 Census (Statistics Canada)

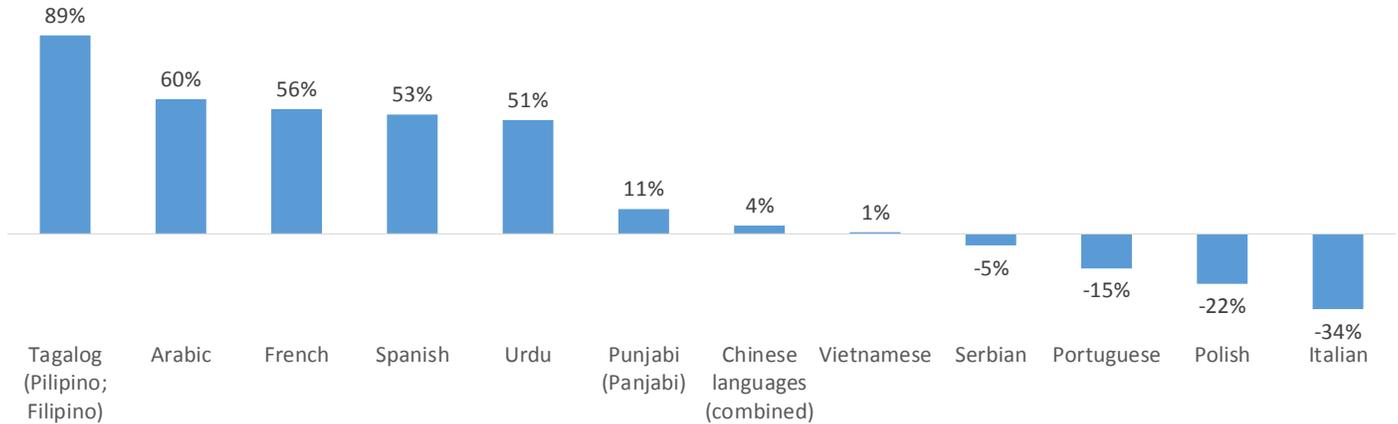


Chart 3. Top 12 non-English home languages, city of Hamilton, 2006 compared to 2016, 2006 and 2016 Census (Statistics Canada)

