

Linguistic Characteristics of New Brunswickers

For the first time in 2011, three language questions were included on the short census questionnaire.

The first question was on [knowledge of official languages](#); that is, the ability to conduct a conversation in either or both of Canada's two official languages. The second question asked about [home language](#) and the language(s) spoken most often or on a regular basis at home. The third question asked about [mother tongue](#); that is, the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood at the time of the census.

Information on [first official language spoken](#) is not collected directly from respondents; it is derived from the above three language variables.

Most respondents report only one language (single response) on their questionnaire. However, some report more than one language (multiple responses).

- More than 100 different mother tongues were reported in New Brunswick at the time of the 2011 Census.
- A non-official language was indicated by 18,395 people in the province as their only mother tongue in 2011. The three most common mother tongues registered (based on single responses) were Mi'kmaq (2,115 responses), Korean (1,810 responses) and German (1,805 responses).
- Of all people reporting an Aboriginal mother tongue in Canada (both single and multiple responses), the highest proportion lived in Quebec (20.9%). Only a small percentage (1.3%) of the population reporting an Aboriginal language as mother tongue lived in New Brunswick.
- Considering both single and multiple responses, French was the first official language spoken by 235,700 New Brunswickers or 31.9% of the population in 2011, while English was the first official language spoken by 503,330 or 68.0%.
- In 2011, 245,885 people in the province reported being able to conduct a conversation in both official languages, an increase of about 5,800 from 2006. These bilingual individuals represented 33.2% of the total population, down slightly from the 33.4% share in 2006.

Knowledge of official languages, N. B., 2011 and 2006				
	2011		2006	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total	739,900	100.0	719,650	100.0
English only	426,670	57.7	405,045	56.3
French only	66,375	9.0	73,755	10.2
Both English and French	245,885	33.2	240,085	33.4
Neither English nor French	955	0.1	770	0.1

Sources: Statistics Canada, censuses of population, 2006 and 2011.