

Home Language

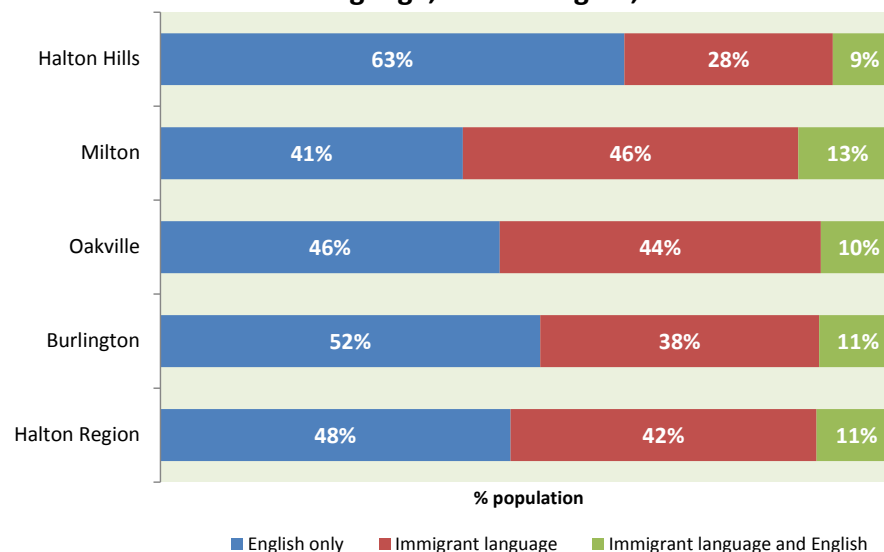
Home language refers to the language spoken most often or on a regular basis at home. In 2011, there were over 45,000 Halton residents speaking a home language other than English, French and over 16,000 speaking both English and an immigrant language.¹ Together they represent about 12.3% of the total population. This percentage is slightly below the national average of 13.7%.



Research has established the importance of home language in allophone² newcomer families. Their children’s knowledge of their home language will help them to learn English or French. Knowing and using a home language will develop children’s security and pride in identity and understanding of their roots and heritage.³

As reported in the 2011 Census, not all residents with a mother tongue other than English or French spoke an immigrant language at home. Nearly half (48%) of the 100,000 non-official mother tongue residents (see Community Lens #86 – Immigrant Language) only spoke English at home. About 42% spoke an immigrant language and 11% spoke both English and an immigrant language at home respectively.

Proportion of non-official mother tongue population by home language, Halton Region, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

¹ In order to reflect the growing complexity of the Canadian linguistic reality, Statistics Canada has also introduced the term “immigrant languages” to refer to languages (other than English, French and Aboriginal languages) whose presence in Canada is originally due to immigration.

² People whose mother tongue is neither English nor French
³ www.MyLanguage.ca

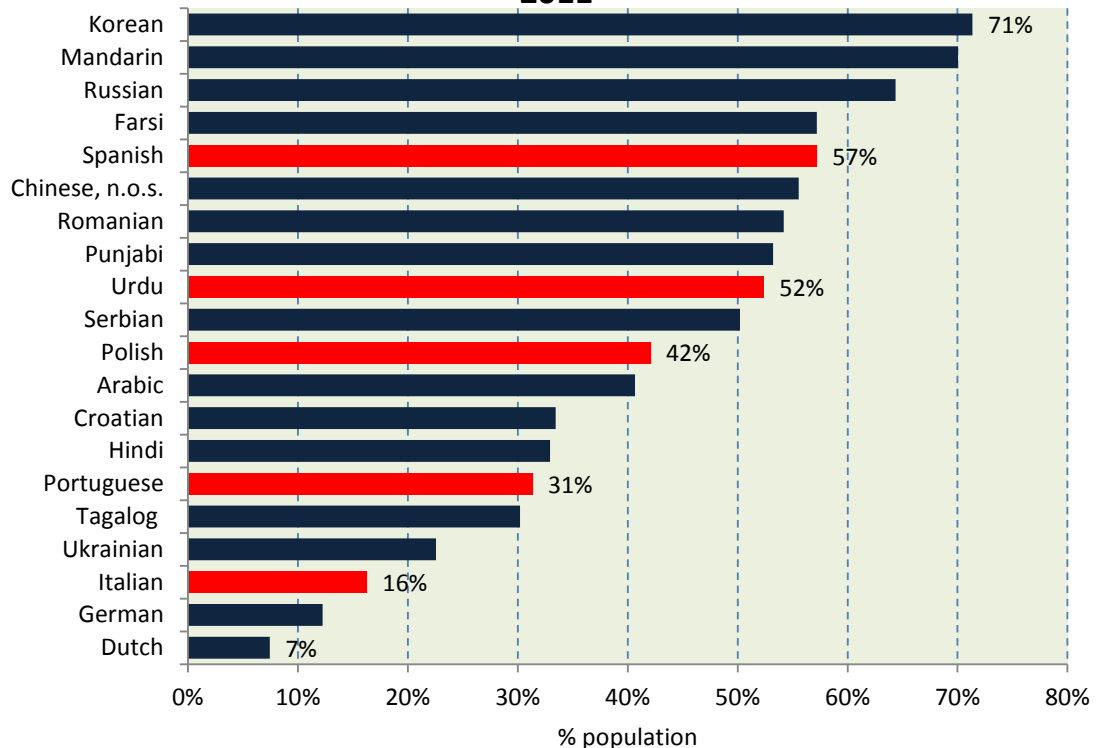
The percentage distribution of immigrant home language shows some variations among local municipalities in Halton. Over half (59%) of the non-official mother tongue population in the Town of Milton speak an immigrant language (immigrant language only or immigrant language and English) most often at home compared to 36% in the Town of Halton Hills. Almost two-thirds (63%) of the immigrants in Halton Hills speak only English at home.

The top five non-official mother tongues are: Polish, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Urdu. Collectively, they are spoken by 35% of the non-official mother tongue population in Halton.

The proportion of the non-official mother tongue population speaking an immigrant language most often at home varies among immigrant languages. The differences are significant. For example, over 70% of the Korean mother tongue population spoke an immigrant language (most likely Korean) at home. On the other hand, only 7% of the Dutch mother tongue population reported speaking an immigrant language (most likely Dutch) at home.

Although Polish is the most spoken non-official mother tongue in Halton, it was spoken by less than half (42%) of that language group at home. Similarly, Italian which ranks after Polish and Spanish as a non-official mother tongue, was spoken by 16% of the Italian mother tongue population at home.

Proportion of non-official mother tongue population speaking immigrant language at home, Halton Region, 2011



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 Census

■ top 5 non-official mother tongue

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Community Development Halton
 860 Harrington Court
 Burlington, ON L7N 3N4
 905-632-1975

www.cdhalton.ca