Canadian Megatrends: The evolution of language populations in Canada, by mother tongue

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This month's issue of *Canadian Megatrends*, "The evolution of language populations in Canada, by mother tongue, from 1901 to 2016," examines the makeup of the country's population by mother tongue, which has undergone significant change since 1901. In the early 1900s, nearly 90% of the Canadian population spoke either French or English as their mother tongue. The remainder had either an Aboriginal or immigrant language as their mother tongue.

However, successive waves of immigrants brought different languages to Canadian shores. The prevalence of English and French has declined, albeit to different extents. The proportion of people who speak English as their mother tongue edged down from 61.0% (or 3,272,700) in 1901 to 57.0% (or 19,821,445) in 2016, while the share of people who speak French as their mother tongue fell from 30.5% (or 1,646,540) in 1901 to 21.0% (or 7,303,740) in 2016.

The proportion of people who speak either an Aboriginal or immigrant language as their mother tongue rose from 8.4% (or 452,065) in 1901 to 22.0% (or 7,642,075) in 2016. This population is highly heterogeneous; some 70 Aboriginal languages and more than 130 immigrant languages were recorded in the 2016 Census.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3901.

The article "The evolution of language populations in Canada, by mother tongue, from 1901 to 2016" is now available as part of *Canadian Megatrends* (**11-630-X**).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; **STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca**) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; **STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca**).