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by Feng Hou and Anh Ngo

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Differences in living arrangements of older seniors by mother tongue

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Abstract

This article provides an overview of the living arrangements of Canadians aged 75 and older across mother tongue groups. Analysis is based on the 2016 Census of Population short-form questionnaire and includes older seniors in both private and collective residences. Among the 2.5 million Canadians aged 75 and older in 2016, 15% lived in collective dwellings, while the others lived in private dwellings, that is, 43% lived with a spouse but not in a multigenerational household, 6% lived in a multigenerational household, 8% lived with other family or non-family individuals, and 28% lived alone. This pattern of living arrangements varied considerably across mother tongue groups. In particular, the share of seniors aged 75 and older living in a multigenerational household ranged from 2% to 68%, while the share living in collective dwellings ranged from 3% to 22%. Among older seniors living in collective dwellings (nursing homes and seniors' residences), there were large group differences in official language ability and income.

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Introduction

Canada's senior population is becoming more diverse, ethnically and linguistically. Among individuals aged 75 and older in 2016, 34% were foreign-born and 27% had a mother tongue other than English or French, compared with 29% and 21%, respectively, in 1991.¹ There is a pressing need for a better understanding of the living arrangements of immigrant and ethnic minority seniors in response to shifting demographics.

One issue specific to the living arrangements of older seniors is access to nursing homes and seniors' residences. Um (2016) examined provincial government data on wait times for long-term care facilities and found that seniors with the lowest income, and those from ethnically and linguistically diverse populations were among those who waited the longest for their site of choice. For low-income seniors, the wait time for basic accommodation was nearly three months longer than that of those seeking more costly semi-private or private accommodation. Seniors who applied for ethno-specific long-term care homes waited nearly six months longer than those who applied for mainstream homes (Um 2016). Furthermore, older immigrants may face more difficulties with mainstream aging services than Canadian-born seniors, in part because of cultural barriers, cost of personal care and language accessibility to health care practitioners (Asanin and Wilson 2008; Um 2016).

Some immigrant seniors reside in multigenerational homes with their kin out of necessity or because of cultural preferences, particularly those who immigrated as sponsored parents or grandparents (Gubernskaya and Tang 2017). More attention is needed on the sustainability of these arrangements. For example, Um and Lightman (2017) found that immigrants were more than twice as likely to indicate that they had unmet needs for home care services, compared with Canadian-born seniors. Relative to Canadian-born family caregivers of seniors, there is an added burden on immigrant families in caring for their aging relatives: "Family caregivers often suffer from burnout in their efforts to provide care to their senior family members while they themselves struggle to 'make it' in a new country" (Luhtanen 2009, 18). At the same time, multigenerational living is highly valued in some immigrant groups. It has rewarding consequences, such as providing a positive influence on the younger generation; providing childcare; having family nearby; and passing on cultural traditions, which are very important to many immigrant seniors (Johnson et al. 2019; Sadarangani and Jun 2015).

Knowledge gaps in the living arrangements of seniors with diverse linguistic backgrounds can be filled, in part, with information collected in the 2016 Census of Population short-form questionnaire, which covered the entire population of Canada, including residents in collective dwellings. It collected information on age, sex, relationships between household members, knowledge of Canada's official languages, language spoken at home, and mother tongue. Income data were also obtained from personal income tax and benefits files (Statistics Canada 2018). While some measures of social diversity are not available in the short-form census, such as immigration status, ethnic origins and visible minority status, mother tongue can be used to identify diverse population groups. In the census, mother tongue refers to the first language an individual learned at home in childhood that is still understood at the time of census data collection. Based on information about immigration status collected in the long-form census (which was not collected for residents in collective dwellings), about 87% of seniors aged 75 years and older whose mother tongue was neither English nor French were immigrants.

1. Authors calculated from 1991 and 2016 Census microdata files.

This article provides an overview of living arrangements among seniors aged 75 and older² in diverse linguistic groups, with a focus on those living in nursing homes and seniors' residences. The analysis first describes the shares of seniors aged 75 and older living in private households and in collective dwellings,³ by mother tongue. Then, the analysis further distinguishes between types of households for these seniors living in private households, and types of facilities for those living in collective dwellings. Finally, the article presents the sociodemographic characteristics of those living in nursing homes and seniors' residences.

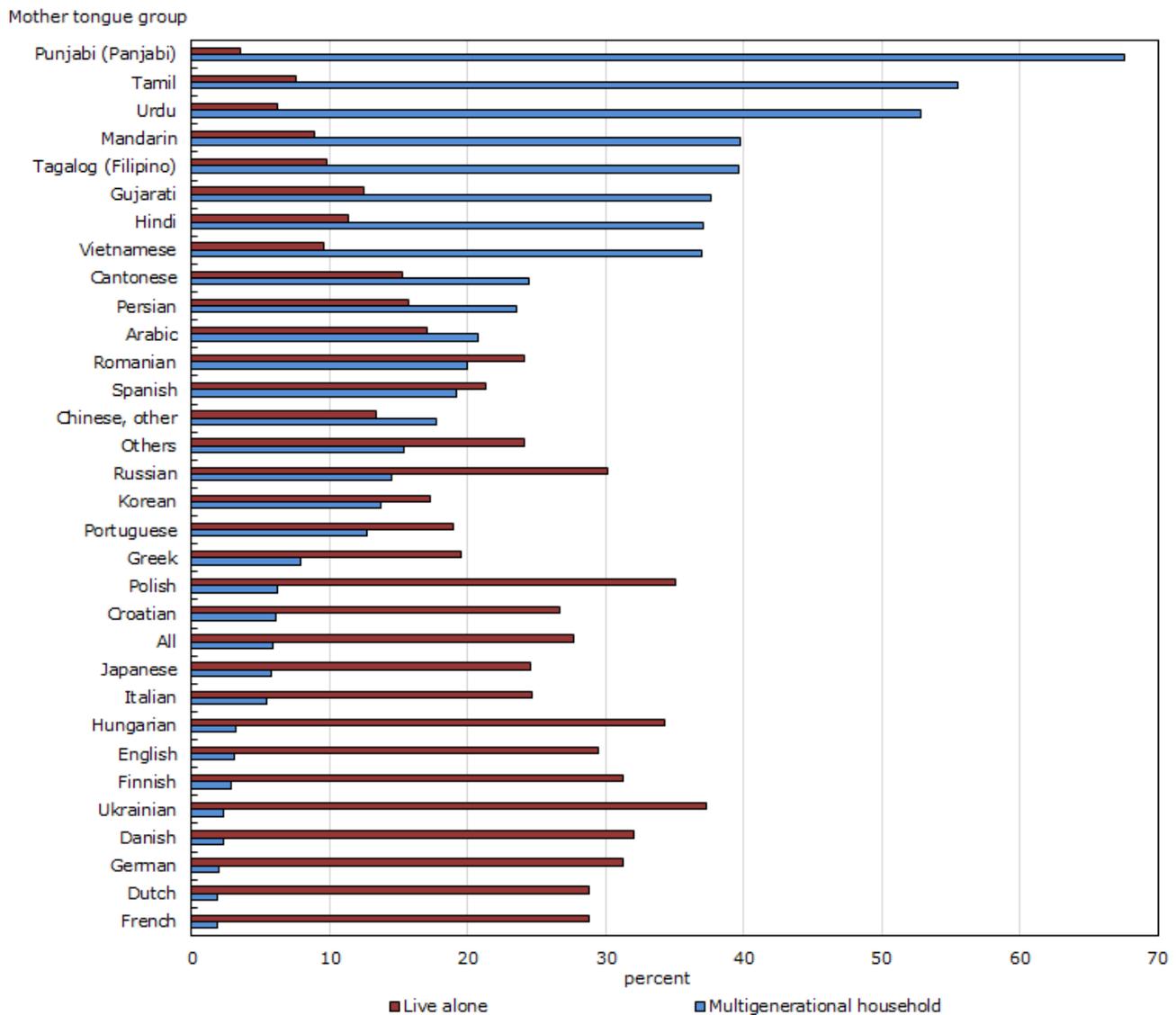
Large group differences in the share of older seniors living in multigenerational households and collective dwellings

In 2016, there were over 2.5 million Canadians aged 75 and older, accounting for 7.2% of the national population. These seniors spoke over 200 different mother tongues between them, and about 25% spoke a mother tongue other than English or French. To ensure reliable estimates, this article focuses on 30 large mother tongue groups among seniors aged 75 and older (Table 1). To provide a more complete picture, the appendix provides statistics on living arrangements according to language families—a higher level of aggregation of world languages.

Living arrangements among seniors aged 75 and older varied considerably among the major mother tongue groups (Table 1). In all groups, the vast majority lived in private households. Among those living in private households, groups differed greatly regarding the likelihood of living in multigenerational households that included their adult children and grandchildren (Chart 1). About two-thirds of those with Punjabi as their mother tongue lived in multigenerational households. This was in sharp contrast with less than 5% of seniors in some groups with European-origin mother tongues. Other groups with a high prevalence of multigenerational co-residence included those who reported Tamil and Urdu (over 50%), Mandarin, Tagalog, Gujarati, Hindi, and Vietnamese mother tongues. These groups consist mostly of immigrants from Southern, Eastern and Southeastern Asia.

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2. In most industrialized countries, individuals aged 75 and older are considered “middle-old” (ages 75 to 84) and “old-old” (age 85 and older) (Little 2016). Relative to the “young-old” (ages 65 to 74), seniors aged 75 and older are more likely, on average, to have chronic illness and to need assistance with daily activities.
 3. In the census, collective dwellings refer to those of a commercial, institutional or communal nature. The 2016 Census identified the following 10 types of collective dwellings based on services provided: hospital, nursing home, residence for senior citizens, residential care facility such as a group home for persons with disabilities or addictions, shelter, correctional or custodial facility, lodging or rooming house, religious establishment, establishment with temporary accommodation services, and other establishment (Statistics Canada 2017).

Chart 1
Percentage of seniors aged 75 and older residing in selected household types, by mother tongue, Canada, 2016



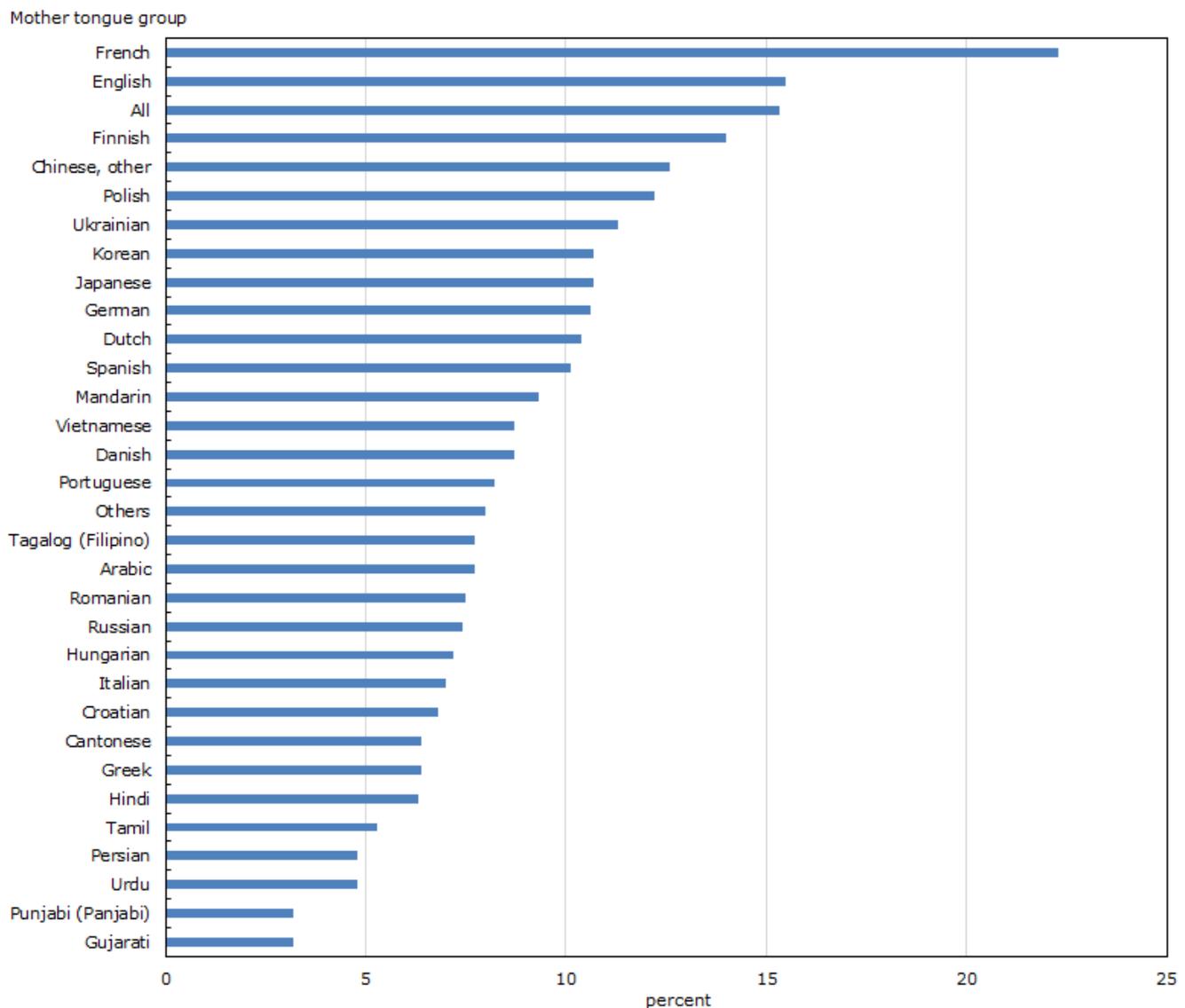
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

Related to the group differences in multigenerational co-residence, seniors in some European-origin groups were much more likely to live alone than their counterparts in some Asian mother tongue groups (Chart 1). Over 30% of seniors in seven European-origin groups lived alone, compared with less than 10% of seniors in five Asian-origin groups.

Furthermore, some groups were much less likely to live in collective dwellings than others. The share living in collective dwellings was as low as 3% for seniors aged 75 and older whose mother tongues were Punjabi or Gujarati—two Indo-Aryan languages spoken by some Southern Asian immigrants (Table 1 and Chart 2). At the upper end, 16% of those with English as their mother tongue and 22% of those with French as their mother tongue were living in collective dwellings.

Some of these group differences were related to differences in age, income, province of residence and ability to speak an official language. For example, about 43% of those with Punjabi as their mother tongue and 69% of those with Gujarati as their mother tongue did not speak either official language. Both groups were about one year younger, on average, than those with English as a mother tongue. Multivariate analyses (table not shown) revealed that being able to speak an official language and older age were associated with a higher likelihood of living in collective dwellings. Those with moderate annual personal incomes (\$10,000 to \$50,000) were more likely to live in collective dwellings than those with lower or higher incomes. Residents of Quebec (21.2%), Alberta (18.5%) and Manitoba (17.2%) had higher rates of living in collective dwellings than those in other provinces (Chart 3). Group differences in these characteristics together accounted for about 40% to 45% of differences in the rate of living in collective dwellings between older seniors reporting Punjabi or Gujarati mother tongues and those with English as their mother tongue. Other possible factors affecting group differences in the likelihood of living in collective dwellings, including immigration status, are not available for this analysis.

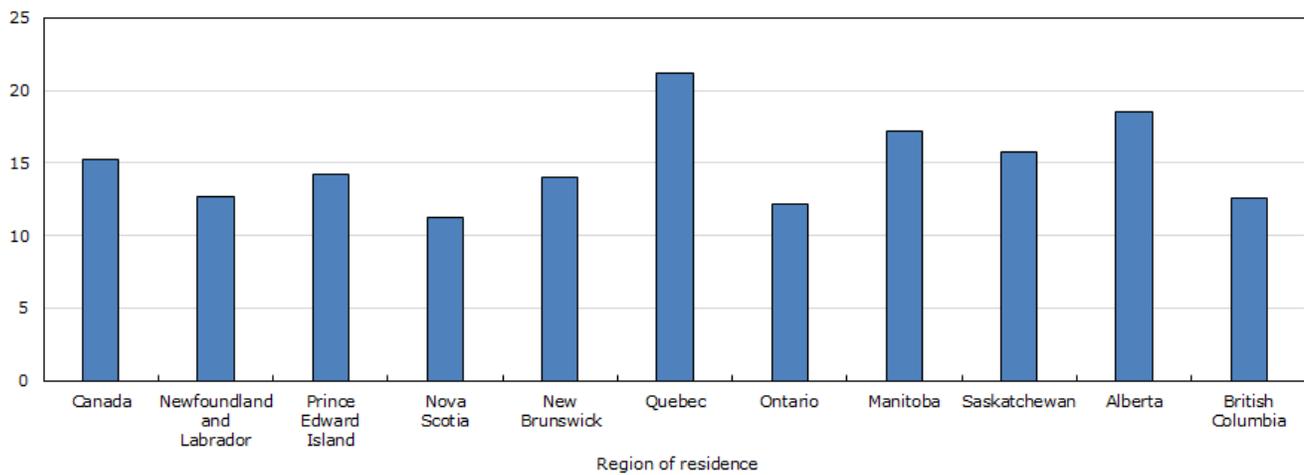
Chart 2
Percentage of seniors aged 75 and older residing in collective dwellings, by mother tongue, Canada, 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

Chart 3
Percentage of seniors aged 75 and older residing in collective dwellings, by region of residence, Canada, 2016

percent



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

Table 1
Living arrangements of seniors aged 75 and older, by major mother tongue group

| Group | Population number | Private dwellings | | | | Collective dwellings |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| | | Live alone | With spouse, not in multi- generational household | In multi-generational household | With others | |
| All | 2,542,280 | 27.7 | 43.2 | 5.9 | 7.9 | 15.3 |
| English | 1,298,900 | 29.5 | 44.3 | 3.1 | 7.6 | 15.5 |
| French | 604,690 | 28.8 | 39.9 | 1.8 | 7.2 | 22.3 |
| Italian | 96,630 | 24.6 | 53.7 | 5.4 | 9.3 | 7.0 |
| German | 91,550 | 31.3 | 50.0 | 2.0 | 6.1 | 10.6 |
| Cantonese | 57,170 | 15.3 | 41.6 | 24.4 | 12.4 | 6.4 |
| Dutch | 31,140 | 28.8 | 54.0 | 1.9 | 4.8 | 10.4 |
| Ukrainian | 31,080 | 37.3 | 41.0 | 2.3 | 8.2 | 11.3 |
| Punjabi (Panjabi) | 27,310 | 3.5 | 19.1 | 67.6 | 6.5 | 3.2 |
| Portuguese | 22,450 | 19.0 | 49.4 | 12.7 | 10.7 | 8.2 |
| Greek | 21,540 | 19.5 | 55.7 | 7.9 | 10.5 | 6.4 |
| Mandarin | 19,500 | 8.9 | 33.9 | 39.7 | 8.2 | 9.3 |
| Polish | 19,400 | 35.1 | 36.5 | 6.2 | 10.1 | 12.2 |
| Hungarian | 14,970 | 34.3 | 47.2 | 3.2 | 8.0 | 7.2 |
| Spanish | 14,770 | 21.3 | 37.3 | 19.2 | 12.1 | 10.1 |
| Tagalog (Filipino) | 14,390 | 9.8 | 29.3 | 39.6 | 13.5 | 7.7 |
| Chinese, other | 13,080 | 13.4 | 44.3 | 17.7 | 12.0 | 12.6 |
| Arabic | 12,950 | 17.0 | 43.1 | 20.7 | 11.4 | 7.7 |
| Russian | 11,410 | 30.1 | 39.7 | 14.5 | 8.3 | 7.4 |
| Croatian | 8,050 | 26.7 | 51.4 | 6.1 | 9.0 | 6.8 |
| Vietnamese | 7,110 | 9.6 | 29.8 | 36.9 | 15.0 | 8.7 |
| Tamil | 6,800 | 7.5 | 23.4 | 55.5 | 8.4 | 5.3 |
| Gujarati | 6,770 | 12.5 | 37.5 | 37.6 | 9.2 | 3.2 |
| Persian (Farsi) | 6,760 | 15.7 | 42.8 | 23.5 | 13.3 | 4.8 |
| Korean | 6,220 | 17.3 | 52.0 | 13.7 | 6.4 | 10.7 |
| Hindi | 4,920 | 11.3 | 37.6 | 37.1 | 7.8 | 6.3 |
| Urdu | 4,610 | 6.2 | 29.4 | 52.8 | 6.8 | 4.8 |
| Romanian | 4,480 | 24.1 | 38.6 | 20.0 | 9.8 | 7.5 |
| Japanese | 4,450 | 24.5 | 47.8 | 5.8 | 11.1 | 10.7 |
| Finnish | 4,340 | 31.2 | 44.2 | 2.8 | 7.9 | 14.0 |
| Danish | 4,330 | 32.0 | 50.9 | 2.3 | 6.1 | 8.7 |

Note: Population counts are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

Nursing homes and seniors' residences were the main residential facilities among seniors living in collective dwellings

Among all senior residents in collective dwellings, 92% lived in nursing homes, seniors' residences, or a mix of the two types (Table 2). Nursing homes are long-term care facilities that provide a range of health care services. This includes professional health monitoring, and skilled nursing care and supervision 24 hours per day for people who are not independent in most activities of daily living. Seniors' residences provide support or assisted-living services (such as meals, housekeeping, medication supervision and assistance in personal hygiene care) and supervision, but no extended health care services for residents who are independent in most activities of daily living. Some facilities are both a nursing home and a seniors' residence that extends health care services to some residents, but only support services or assisted-living services to other residents (Statistics Canada 2017). In addition to nursing homes and seniors' residences, 2% of seniors lived in religious establishments, 1.6% stayed in hospitals that provide short- and long-term care, and 1.5% stayed in residential care facilities, such as group homes for persons with disabilities or addictions. The remainder were housed in correctional or custodial facilities, shelters, rooming houses and other forms of accommodation.

Over one in three adults (35.6%) aged 75 and older living in collective dwellings were residents of nursing homes, with a slightly larger proportion living in seniors' residences (37.4%). Among seniors living in these types of collective dwellings, nursing homes tended to be more prevalent for most mother tongue groups. In particular, seniors with Urdu or Punjabi mother tongues were at least three times more likely to live in nursing homes than in seniors' residences. Seniors with Mandarin, Hindi, Vietnamese, Croatian or Portuguese mother tongues were twice as likely to live in nursing homes than in seniors' residences. By comparison, those with French, Ukrainian or Romanian mother tongues were more likely to live in seniors' residences than in nursing homes.

Table 2
Types of collective dwelling among senior residents aged 75 and older, by major mother tongue group

| Group | Population number | Nursing homes | Seniors' residences | Mixed nursing homes and seniors' residences | | Other facilities |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------------|--|------|---------------------|
| | | | | percent | | |
| All | 389,610 | 35.6 | 37.4 | 19.1 | 7.9 | |
| English | 201,870 | 39.8 | 32.3 | 21.0 | 6.9 | |
| French | 134,720 | 25.7 | 48.3 | 16.6 | 9.4 | |
| Italian | 6,760 | 49.8 | 26.0 | 20.7 | 3.5 | |
| German | 9,690 | 34.1 | 30.6 | 18.8 | 16.5 | |
| Cantonese | 3,650 | 51.8 | 28.1 | 15.4 | 4.7 | |
| Dutch | 3,220 | 38.8 | 29.3 | 25.2 | 6.7 | |
| Ukrainian | 3,510 | 34.9 | 42.1 | 17.5 | 5.6 | |
| Punjabi (Panjabi) | 890 | 58.1 | 16.1 | 13.4 | 12.3 | |
| Portuguese | 1,830 | 54.2 | 24.6 | 15.0 | 6.1 | |
| Greek | 1,390 | 45.7 | 30.4 | 18.3 | 5.5 | |
| Mandarin | 1,810 | 60.9 | 22.4 | 12.2 | 4.5 | |
| Polish | 2,360 | 41.8 | 27.9 | 23.2 | 7.1 | |
| Hungarian | 1,080 | 45.2 | 31.4 | 16.8 | 6.5 | |
| Spanish | 1,500 | 48.2 | 26.4 | 13.2 | 12.2 | |
| Tagalog (Filipino) | 1,120 | 44.7 | 24.1 | 23.9 | 7.4 | |
| Chinese, other | 1,640 | 54.3 | 32.1 | 6.6 | 7.0 | |
| Arabic | 1,000 | 45.1 | 28.4 | 18.4 | 8.1 | |
| Russian | 850 | 46.8 | 25.0 | 23.6 | 4.6 | |
| Croatian | 550 | 58.9 | 25.4 | 11.9 | 3.9 | |
| Vietnamese | 620 | 52.9 | 23.5 | 17.6 | 6.0 | |
| Tamil | 360 | 42.5 | 39.7 | 14.2 | 3.7 | |
| Gujarati | 220 | 46.8 | 32.6 | 9.6 | 11.0 | |
| Persian (Farsi) | 320 | 52.2 | 21.1 | 19.3 | 7.5 | |
| Korean | 660 | 50.7 | 31.2 | 10.0 | 8.1 | |
| Hindi | 310 | 51.5 | 20.4 | 16.8 | 11.4 | |
| Urdu | 220 | 57.4 | 11.2 | 24.7 | 6.7 | |
| Romanian | 340 | 36.5 | 40.7 | 17.2 | 5.6 | |
| Japanese | 480 | 49.5 | 31.2 | 14.1 | 5.3 | |
| Finnish | 610 | 38.9 | 25.5 | 33.4 | 2.2 | |
| Danish | 380 | 33.0 | 31.4 | 27.7 | 8.0 | |

Note: Population counts are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

Sociodemographic characteristics among senior residents in nursing homes and seniors' residences varied considerably across mother tongue groups

About 65% of seniors living in nursing homes and seniors' residences were aged 85 and older (Table 3), compared with 24% of seniors living in private households (table not presented). Since women dominate in the oldest age groups, seniors living in nursing homes and seniors' residences were much more likely to be women (72%) than seniors living in private households (58%). Seniors living in nursing homes and seniors' residences were less likely to be married or in a common-law union (24%) than their counterparts living in private households (54%).

Across mother tongue groups, seniors living in nursing homes and seniors' residences differed in age, sex and marital status. The group with Japanese as their mother tongue had both the highest share aged 85 and older (73%) and the highest share of women (77%). The group with Tamil as their mother tongue had the smallest share aged 85 and older (47%) and, perhaps as a result, the highest share who were married or in a common-law union (37%).

Some mother tongue groups had a very low share who were able to speak an official language. In particular, less than half of senior residents in nursing homes and seniors' residences with Cantonese or other Chinese (except Mandarin) mother tongues were able to speak an official language well enough to conduct a conversation. In seven Asian language groups, between 30% and 40% of senior residents could not converse in either official language.

Income was another characteristic that differentiated the mother tongue groups of seniors living in nursing homes and seniors' residences. Overall, the median annual income among senior residents in nursing homes and seniors' residences was \$24,400 (in 2015 dollars). Groups with Japanese or English mother tongues had the highest median incomes, \$27,600 and \$26,700, respectively. In five groups, the median income was below \$20,000. In particular, groups with Tamil, Cantonese or other Chinese mother tongues had median incomes of about one-third less than that of the group with English as their mother tongue.

Table 3
Sociodemographic characteristics of senior residents in nursing homes and seniors' residences, aged 75 and older

| Group | Population number | Aged 85 and older | Female percent | Married or common- law | Speaking an official language | Median income 2015 dollars |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | | | | |
| All | 358,780 | 64.5 | 71.6 | 24.3 | 97.6 | 24,400 |
| English | 188,030 | 67.8 | 71.9 | 23.3 | 100.0 | 26,700 |
| French | 122,040 | 58.4 | 71.7 | 25.6 | 100.0 | 22,200 |
| Italian | 6,520 | 65.8 | 67.5 | 26.5 | 82.8 | 25,400 |
| German | 8,090 | 69.0 | 68.6 | 26.8 | 97.7 | 26,400 |
| Cantonese | 3,480 | 68.4 | 71.1 | 30.6 | 44.3 | 18,000 |
| Dutch | 3,010 | 70.8 | 68.8 | 27.5 | 99.2 | 26,300 |
| Ukrainian | 3,320 | 69.2 | 73.7 | 19.8 | 95.5 | 25,100 |
| Punjabi (Panjabi) | 780 | 65.1 | 69.2 | 25.1 | 66.8 | 22,200 |
| Portuguese | 1,720 | 60.4 | 71.0 | 27.4 | 74.2 | 23,000 |
| Greek | 1,310 | 64.2 | 69.8 | 23.9 | 79.4 | 23,400 |
| Mandarin | 1,730 | 68.6 | 69.3 | 27.3 | 59.8 | 20,300 |
| Polish | 2,190 | 70.9 | 73.9 | 19.2 | 90.0 | 24,600 |
| Hungarian | 1,010 | 70.9 | 66.9 | 24.3 | 92.8 | 26,400 |
| Spanish | 1,310 | 61.4 | 71.0 | 21.5 | 84.5 | 22,400 |
| Tagalog (Filipino) | 1,030 | 62.6 | 72.2 | 23.7 | 85.3 | 22,600 |
| Chinese, other | 1,530 | 68.7 | 71.5 | 27.6 | 41.8 | 18,100 |
| Arabic | 920 | 63.6 | 71.4 | 23.8 | 84.6 | 22,800 |
| Russian | 810 | 67.5 | 74.5 | 21.3 | 85.2 | 20,700 |
| Croatian | 530 | 62.6 | 67.4 | 20.7 | 84.3 | 24,900 |
| Vietnamese | 580 | 64.8 | 72.7 | 25.6 | 65.7 | 19,800 |
| Tamil | 350 | 46.7 | 67.2 | 37.1 | 63.2 | 17,700 |
| Gujarati | 190 | 61.9 | 67.0 | 20.1 | 69.1 | 22,200 |
| Persian (Farsi) | 300 | 65.4 | 68.8 | 25.8 | 69.8 | 18,900 |
| Korean | 610 | 71.3 | 72.9 | 22.7 | 69.0 | 20,400 |
| Hindi | 270 | 59.1 | 63.9 | 27.7 | 83.2 | 21,400 |
| Urdu | 210 | 67.8 | 68.8 | 21.2 | 79.8 | 24,900 |
| Romanian | 320 | 68.2 | 71.1 | 21.7 | 87.4 | 22,400 |
| Japanese | 450 | 72.7 | 76.7 | 21.3 | 86.2 | 27,600 |
| Finnish | 590 | 65.5 | 72.9 | 23.2 | 95.6 | 25,600 |
| Danish | 350 | 68.5 | 62.4 | 22.8 | 98.6 | 26,400 |

Note: Population counts are rounded to the nearest 10. Median incomes are rounded to the nearest \$100.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

Summary

This article presented a broad picture of the living arrangements among seniors aged 75 and older and examined the differences across large mother tongue groups. The analysis was based on data from the 2016 Census of Population short-form questionnaire. Among the 2.5 million individuals aged 75 and older in 2016, 15% lived in a collective dwelling, while the others lived in a private dwelling, that is, 43% lived with a spouse but not in a multigenerational household, 6% resided in a multigenerational household, 8% lived with other family or non-family individuals, and 28% lived alone.

The pattern of living arrangements varied considerably across large mother tongue groups. Over one-half of seniors with Punjabi, Tamil or Urdu mother tongues lived in multigenerational households, compared with less than 5% of seniors in some groups with European-origin mother tongues. The share of seniors living in collective dwellings ranged from 3% for groups with Punjabi or Gujarati mother tongues to 16% among the group with English as their mother tongue, and 22% among those with French as their mother tongue. These group differences in living arrangements were partly related to differences in income, age, official language ability and province of residence.

Among all senior residents in collective dwellings, 92% lived in nursing homes, seniors' residences, or in a mix of the two types. Across mother tongue groups, senior residents in nursing homes and seniors' residences differed in some sociodemographic characteristics. In nine large Asian language groups, between 30% and 50% of senior residents could not speak an official language well enough to conduct a conversation. Furthermore, in five groups, the median annual income of senior residents was 26% to 34% lower than that of senior residents with English as their mother tongue.

Appendix Table 1

Living arrangements of seniors aged 75 and older, by language family of mother tongue, among individuals with a mother tongue other than English or French

| Language families | Population number | Private dwellings | | | | Collective dwellings |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| | | Live alone | With spouse, not in multi-generational household | In multi-generational household | With others | |
| | | | | percent | | |
| Aboriginal languages | 8,440 | 21.8 | 26.6 | 17.6 | 23.3 | 10.7 |
| Afro-Asiatic languages | 17,530 | 18.0 | 42.7 | 19.7 | 12.3 | 7.2 |
| Austro-Asiatic languages | 7,800 | 9.4 | 29.6 | 37.9 | 14.9 | 8.3 |
| Austronesian languages | 17,590 | 9.6 | 29.5 | 39.7 | 13.7 | 7.4 |
| Creole languages | 4,240 | 18.7 | 23.8 | 31.4 | 15.3 | 10.8 |
| Dravidian languages | 8,140 | 8.0 | 28.8 | 49.8 | 8.0 | 5.4 |
| European languages | 394,680 | 28.0 | 48.9 | 5.8 | 8.3 | 9.0 |
| Indo-Iranian languages | 55,160 | 7.8 | 28.8 | 51.4 | 8.1 | 3.9 |
| Japanese | 4,450 | 24.5 | 47.8 | 5.8 | 11.1 | 10.7 |
| Korean | 6,220 | 17.3 | 52.0 | 13.7 | 6.4 | 10.7 |
| Niger-Congo languages | 980 | 15.9 | 30.9 | 25.4 | 10.3 | 17.4 |
| Sino-Tibetan languages | 90,190 | 13.6 | 40.3 | 26.8 | 11.4 | 7.9 |
| Tai-Kadai languages | 550 | 8.2 | 30.3 | 40.4 | 16.1 | 5.1 |
| Turkic languages | 1,350 | 19.0 | 45.5 | 17.3 | 12.2 | 6.0 |
| Uralic languages | 20,910 | 33.9 | 45.9 | 3.1 | 8.0 | 9.0 |

Note: Population counts are rounded to the nearest 10. Language families are based on the four-digit codes of Statistics Canada's 2016 classification of languages. The Indo-European language family is split into European and Indo-Iranian languages because of its large population counts. Language families with a population count lower than 100 are not presented in the table.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

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