

Top Languages for Interpretation and Translation in Waterloo Region (2017)

There are over 120,000 residents of Waterloo Region whose first language is not English or French. Some of them are not yet comfortable understanding either of Canada's official languages or able to provide informed consent in English. According to the 2016 census there are over 9,000 residents who do not know English or French. There is a significant need for translation and interpretation in sectors and situations with legal or health implications or where information needs to be fully understood to avoid negative outcomes.

Top Languages for Interpretation and Translation

The following list of top languages for Waterloo Region is provided as a starting point for organizations to better serve the diverse local population. It is not an exhaustive list.

The list compiles the most common requests for interpretation and service in other languages from local agencies serving newcomers. It also aligns with data from the 2016 census by Statistics Canada on the first languages of individuals in Waterloo Region who do not know English or French.

The following languages are requested or serviced most often by newcomer settlement organizations in Waterloo Region:

1. Arabic
2. Tigrinya
3. Spanish
4. Somali
5. Farsi
6. Mandarin



Additional languages frequently requested or serviced by at least one newcomer-serving organization in Waterloo Region include: Nepali, Rohingya, Vietnamese, Serbo-Croatian, Chin, Chinese, Amharic, Dari, Oromo, Portuguese and Urdu. Many other languages may be needed in Waterloo Region.

According to the 2016 census, additional languages with significant numbers of individuals in Waterloo Region who also do not speak English or French are: Portuguese, German, Punjabi, Vietnamese, Serbian, Romanian, Gujarati, Cantonese, Polish, Korean, Urdu, Russian and Albanian.

Notes:

Newcomer-serving organizations consulted for this list of top languages include: YMCA Immigrant Services, K-W Multicultural Centre, Mennonite Coalition for Refugee Support, Reception House Waterloo Region and Sanctuary Refugee Health Centre.

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