

2020 Census Support for Languages

Over 99 percent of all U.S. households will be able to respond to the census in their language.



Over 99% of the nation's households speak English or one of these 12 languages:

- Spanish
- Chinese¹
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Russian
- Arabic
- Tagalog
- Polish
- French
- Haitian Creole
- Portuguese
- Japanese

The U.S. Census Bureau is providing multiple ways to respond and reaching out through advertising, outreach materials, and web content in each of these languages.



ONLINE

The census questionnaire will be available online in English and these 12 languages.



PHONE

Call centers will be able to answer questions and take census responses in English and these 12 languages. Each language will have a dedicated phone number.



MAIL

The census materials arriving by mail will include a short phrase in English and these 12 languages inviting people to respond online or by phone in their language.



IN PERSON

The Census Bureau is hiring census takers who speak the language(s) of their community. Census takers will follow up in person with households that don't respond on their own.

BEYOND THE 12 LANGUAGES

The Census Bureau will help people respond in 59 non-English languages by providing:

- Video language guides that are narrated in 59 non-English languages to help people respond online.
- Print language guides that are written in 59 non-English languages to help people complete the English paper questionnaire.
- Census takers with a Language Identification Card that features a brief statement in the 59 non-English languages. If the census taker encounters a language barrier at the door, they can request that a census taker who speaks the household's language returns to complete the interview.
- Glossaries with translations of key words related to the 2020 Census to help communities create additional materials.

¹ Simplified Chinese for online questionnaire; both Mandarin and Cantonese for phone support/response and advertising; and Simplified and Traditional Chinese for promotional materials and print ads.

2020 Census Support for 59 Non-English Languages

Spoken languages are listed in order of need (top to bottom, left to right).

Spanish	Portuguese	Amharic	Punjabi	Malayalam	Twi
Chinese ²	Japanese	Somali	Lao	Swahili	Lithuanian
Vietnamese	Italian	Thai	Hmong	Yiddish	Yoruba
Korean	Farsi	Gujarati	Albanian	Indonesian	Czech
Russian	German	Khmer	Turkish	Serbian	Igbo
Arabic	Armenian	Nepali	Bosnian	Tigrinya	Marathi
Tagalog	Hindi	Urdu	Tamil	Ilocano	Sinhala
Polish	Ukrainian	Romanian	Navajo	Dutch	Slovak
French	Bengali	Telugu	Hungarian	Croatian	American Sign Language (ASL) ³
Haitian Creole	Greek	Burmese	Hebrew	Bulgarian	

A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO LANGUAGE SELECTION FOR THE 2020 CENSUS

The Census Bureau selected these languages using data⁴ about the number of “limited-English-speaking households”⁵ in the United States that speak that language at home:

Description of Support	Criteria	Number of Non-English Languages That Meet Criteria
Language guides that help respondents complete the questionnaire online or on paper. Language glossaries that provide translations of terms commonly used in the 2020 Census.	At least 2,000 households that speak that language.	59 non-English languages.
The support described above plus online response, phone response, phone support, short phrases on English materials inviting response, and advertising.	At least 60,000 households that speak that language.	12 non-English languages.

Bilingual English/Spanish invitations and paper questionnaires will be sent to select areas of the country. The census taker instrument and accompanying materials will also be available in Spanish.

A MULTIFACETED OUTREACH STRATEGY

The Census Bureau is reaching out in multiple languages by:

- Advertising and providing outreach materials in English and the 12 additional languages.
- Partnering bilingual staff with community organizations to explain how easy, safe, and important it is to respond to the census. Our local partnership staff speak more than 50 languages in total.
- Hiring census takers locally who speak the languages of the community.
- Providing information online in 59 languages to help people respond to the English paper questionnaire using language guides available at <<https://2020census.gov/en/languages.html>>.

² Simplified Chinese for online questionnaire; both Mandarin and Cantonese for phone support/response and advertising; and Simplified and Traditional Chinese for promotional materials and print ads.

³ ASL was added to meet accessibility standards (Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973).

⁴ Based on 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates of languages spoken for all households.

⁵ A “Limited-English-speaking household” is one in which no one 14 years old or over speaks only English or speaks English “very well.”