



City of Toronto Language Survey Results

Overview

The City of Toronto undertook a staff review of its *Multilingual Services Policy*. As part of this review, the City sought feedback from Toronto residents about how and when the City makes information available in other languages. City staff developed the survey drawing upon the experiences and feedback from Divisions and other jurisdictions, input of external stakeholders and the most recent available language data for Toronto – Statistics Canada 2011 Census language data.

The survey was open from February 22 to March 10, 2017 and was translated into 13 languages (Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Tamil, Tagalog, Italian, Portuguese, Farsi, Russian, Urdu, Korean, French, Bengali/Bangla and Somali) for online user feedback. In addition, residents had the option to call 311 Toronto and complete the survey with a 311 operator in one of more than 180 languages using 311 Toronto's Language Line Services.

The survey was promoted at Toronto Public Library branches, through the City's community partner and services provider networks and promoted on social media, primarily on its @TorontoComms and @GetInvolvedTO Twitter accounts. A number of Members of Council and the Mayor also promoted the survey.

This report summarizes input received to the survey and was used to help inform the development of the City's *Multilingual Information Provisions Policy*. The data received through this survey will be posted to the City's Open Data webpage.

Summary

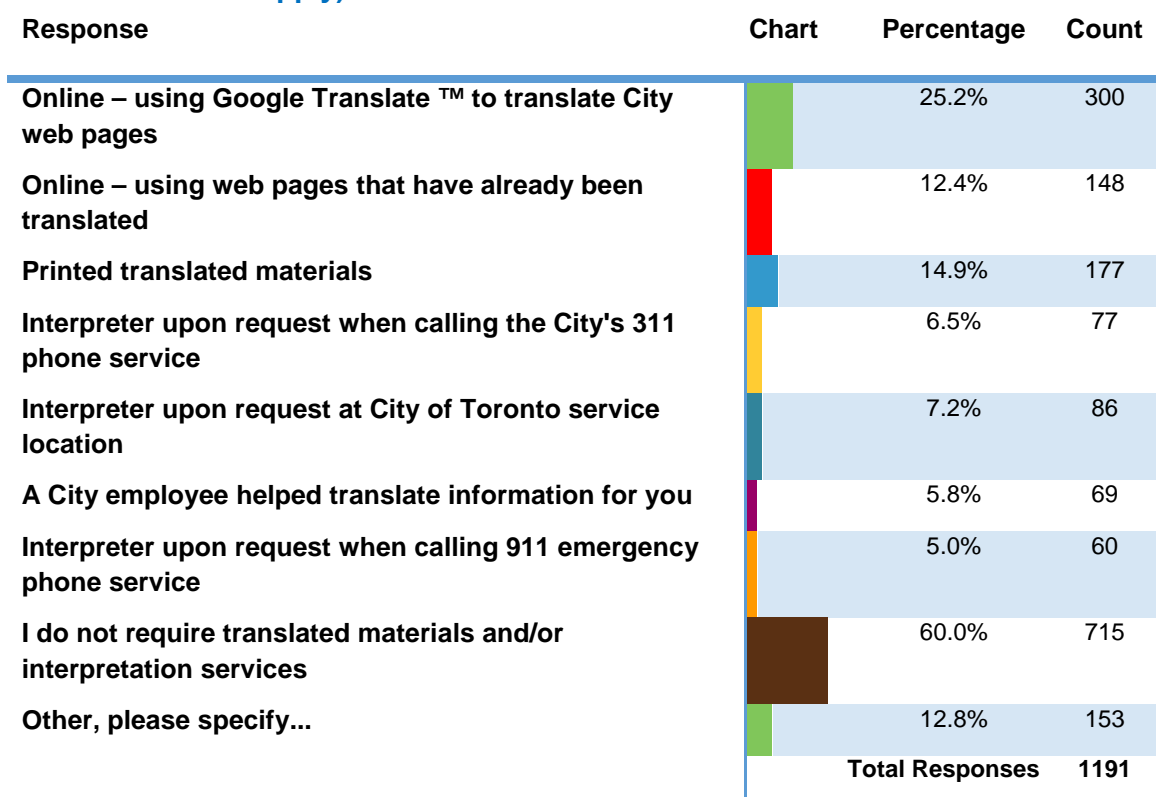
In total, 2,372 people responded to the survey, with 1,228 respondents choosing to submit completed surveys for staff consideration. The survey provides valuable feedback about how residents access City information in other languages and the factors that the City should consider when considering translation and interpretation of

City information. Due to the nature and response rate, the results are not statistically representative of Toronto's residents.

Types of translation services used to access City information

Respondents were asked about their use of different types of translation services that are available to residents when accessing City information (n=1191). The following chart summarizes the responses.

Q1: What types of translation services have you used to find out about City information? (Please select all that apply)



Accessing City information in another language

Respondents were also asked about their experiences trying to access City of Toronto information in another language in the last 12 months.

- A majority (70.4%) of respondents have not tried to access City information in another language within the past 12 months. (n=1228)
- Of these respondents, 79.2% indicated that they did not require this service. A smaller number of respondents indicated they didn't try to access City information in another language in the last 12 months because they :
 - Didn't know translation services were available (5%);
 - Didn't use translation services due to prior difficulties (0.5%);

- Didn't know how to find or request translations (1.7%); or
- Didn't believe their language was available for City information (3.7%). (n=859)
- Of those respondents that did try to access City information in another language in the past 12 months:
 - 70.9% were not successful in their attempts to get information (n=368)
 - Yet, when asked to assess their satisfaction level with their experience in getting information in another language from the City, a majority of respondents chose either "Somewhat Satisfied" (55.3%) or "Very Satisfied" (34.0%). It must be noted that a limited number of respondents chose to provide input on this optional question. (n=103)
- Survey respondents were also asked about their specific experiences in requesting the City provide translations of information.
 - The majority (90.2%) of respondents did not report ever having made a direct translation request to the City. (n=1224)
 - However, among those respondents that had made requests for translation, a majority (55.4%) reported the City did not translate the information requested. (n=121)

Emerging Issues and Themes: Accessing City information in another language

While a majority of respondents indicated that they did not require translation services to find out about City information, there were numerous respondents that relied on a variety of translation services, most notably using existing online translation tools on City webpages and acquiring printed materials that have been translated.

In-person/live interpretation services are used by a minority of residents to access City information. Some respondents noted the need for the interpreter services offered through the City's 311 service, at a City of Toronto service location and when calling the 911 emergency service. Translation services are also provided informally amongst families and community groups.















When asked what would have improved their experience in getting information in another language, respondents expressed challenges related to online translation tools and the occasional technical difficulties that can be experienced when navigating websites. Other respondents felt their experience would be improved by having faster and easier access to materials printed in their language.

While those respondents who reported a competency in English did not appear to experience any problems accessing information from the City, those respondents who had tried to access City information in another language indicated concern that a specific language translation was not available and in some cases, specific information (i.e. recycling and recreation programs, newcomer initiatives, employment information) was not available in specific languages.

City considerations for determining translation

Respondents were asked their opinion of what factors, other than Statistics Canada data, the City consider when deciding when to translate information. Respondents were provided a range of options to choose from and the option to suggest their own, but were requested to limit their responses to their top five factors (without being asked to assign rank or preference) (n=1198). The responses are summarized below.

Q4: Other than Statistics Canada data, what should the City consider when deciding when to translate information? (Please select up to five considerations)

| Response | Chart | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|------------|-------------|
| Age of audience |  | 13.9% | 166 |
| If language is a significant barrier to participation in City programs or to access City services |  | 33.9% | 406 |
| Percentage of multilingual language population who also speak English |  | 19.2% | 230 |
| Cost of translation |  | 24.5% | 293 |
| Number of previous requests for translation |  | 15.1% | 181 |
| Canada's official languages (English & French) |  | 32.8% | 393 |
| New information about language needs not yet reflected in Statistics Canada data |  | 18.4% | 220 |
| Languages in which City services are most often accessed |  | 25.5% | 306 |
| Adequate time to translate information |  | 10.8% | 129 |
| Language composition of audience |  | 19.1% | 229 |
| If information is critical for residents' health and safety |  | 35.9% | 430 |
| If Google Translate™ can meet residents' needs to understand the information |  | 16.4% | 196 |
| If a translated summary of the information is enough to provide the necessary information |  | 13.2% | 158 |
| Other, please specify... |  | 24.8% | 297 |
| Total Responses | | | 1198 |

- Responses in the "other" section suggested that feedback from not-for-profit organizations could provide additional information for the City when considering translation services, and that demographic patterns in local neighbourhoods and communities should be explored to ensure that translation services are used efficiently.

Use of Automatic Translation / Google Translate™ on the City's website

Respondents were asked about their experiences using the Google Translate™ feature on the City's website to automatically translate information into one of 52 available languages.

- A majority of respondents (82%) reported that they had never previously used the Google Translate™ feature. (n=1228)
- Of those that had used the Google Translate™ feature on the City's website, a majority of respondents reported that they were either very satisfied (21%) or somewhat satisfied (36.1%) with the translated information, versus those who were somewhat dissatisfied (22.4%) or very dissatisfied (20.5%) (n=219).
- Of those respondents who had never used the Google Translate™ feature on the City's website to automatically translate information, a majority cited a lack of necessity for translation as their primary reason (63.2%). An additional 14% of respondents noted that they were not aware that the Google Translate™ option was available on the City's website. (n=990)

Additional Considerations








Respondents were asked to provide the City with any additional comments or ideas about the provision of City of Toronto multilingual information.

- Many respondents expressed concerns about the potential costs associated with translation services and requested that the City base the extent of translation services on the needs of the communities being served and where feasible to use free online translation services. Correspondingly, it was suggested that an advertising campaign be considered to advise that Google Translate tools are readily available for most City websites as a cost-effective tool for translation.
- Respondents noted that translation services should continually evolve based on shifting local demographic information and as such, to ensure that translation services are equitable wherever possible.
- Respondents repeatedly raised the question of processes of the dissemination of information to both residents and communities working with new Canadians, with an emphasis on ensuring that all parties are aware that translation services are available when requested. Similarly, many respondents indicated that translation services be essential for all emergency-related materials.
- Respondents also encouraged the City to continue to find ways to provide ongoing support for newcomers in terms of language training opportunities, incorporating alternative methods of conveying information (i.e. photos and diagrams) and to stay connected to community agencies working with newcomers in order to remain at the forefront of shifts in the language services landscape.

- Respondents expressed a strong interest in ensuring accessibility of City information in a variety of languages, including Canada's official languages, as reflective of Toronto's diverse population.




Demographics

Respondent Age Breakdown

| Response | Chart | Percentage | Count |
|------------------------|---|------------|-------------|
| Under 15 years old | | 0.2% | 2 |
| 15 - 24 years old |  | 9.6% | 117 |
| 25 - 34 years old |  | 18.2% | 222 |
| 35 - 44 years old |  | 26.8% | 327 |
| 45 - 54 years old |  | 23.5% | 286 |
| 55 - 64 years old |  | 12.2% | 148 |
| 65 - 74 years old |  | 3.5% | 43 |
| 75 - 84 years old | | 0.7% | 8 |
| 85 years or older |  | 4.6% | 56 |
| I prefer not to say | | 0.7% | 9 |
| Total Responses | | | 1218 |

Respondent Spoken Language(s)

Respondents were asked what language(s) they knew enough to comfortably speak at home or work. The results are summarized below.

| Response | Chart | Percentage | Count |
|---|---|------------|-------------|
| English only |  | 33.5% | 408 |
| English & another language, please specify: |  | 59.2% | 721 |
| Another language only, please specify: |  | 7.3% | 89 |
| Total Responses | | | 1218 |

- Of the respondents who selected "English and another language", the most common languages indicated were Bengali, French, and Spanish.
- Of those that indicated speaking "Another language only", the majority of respondents indicated speaking Bengali.