

Person—main language other than English spoken at home, code (ASCL 1997) NN{NN}

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Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Element
Short name:	Main language other than English spoken at home
METEOR identifier:	270175
Registration status:	Health , Superseded 08/02/2006 Community Services (retired) , Superseded 29/04/2006
Definition:	The language reported by a person as the main language other than English spoken by that person in his/her home (or most recent private residential setting occupied by the person) to communicate with other residents of the home or setting and regular visitors, as represented by a code.

Data element concept attributes

Identifying and definitional attributes

Data element concept:	Person—main language other than English spoken at home
METEOR identifier:	269642
Registration status:	Health , Standard 01/03/2005 Community Services (retired) , Standard 01/03/2005 Housing assistance , Standard 10/02/2006 Homelessness , Standard 13/10/2011 Disability , Standard 13/08/2015 Children and Families , Standard 22/11/2016
Definition:	The language reported by a person as the main language other than English spoken by that person in his/her home (or most recent private residential setting occupied by the person) to communicate with other residents of the home or setting and regular visitors.
Object class:	Person
Property:	Main language other than English spoken at home

Value domain attributes

Identifying and definitional attributes

Value domain:	Language code (ASCL 1997) NN{NN}
METEOR identifier:	270752
Registration status:	Health , Superseded 08/02/2006 Community Services (retired) , Superseded 04/04/2006
Definition:	The ASCL (1997) code set representing a language spoken by a person.

Representational attributes

Classification scheme:	Australian Standard Classification of Languages 1997
Representation class:	Code
Data type:	Number
Format:	NN{NN}
Maximum character length:	4

	Value	Meaning
Supplementary values:	9900	Not stated/inadequately described

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use:

The ASCL has a three-level hierarchical structure. The most detailed level of the classification consists of base units (languages) which are represented by 4-digit codes. The second level of the classification comprises narrow groups of languages (the Narrow Group level), identified by the first two digits. The most general level of the classification consists of broad groups of languages (the Broad Group level) and is identified by the first digit. The classification includes Indigenous Australian languages and sign languages.

For example, the Lithuanian language has a code of 3102. In this case 3 denotes that it is an Eastern European language, while 31 denotes that it is a Baltic language.

The Pintupi Aboriginal language has a code of 8217. In this case 8 denotes that it is an Australian Indigenous language and 82 denotes that the language is Central Aboriginal.

Language data may be output at the Broad Group level, Narrow Group level or base level of the classification. If necessary significant Languages within a Narrow Group can be presented separately while the remaining Languages in the Narrow Group are aggregated. The same principle can be adopted to highlight significant Narrow Groups within a Broad Group.

Persons not in private residential settings should respond for at home as the most recent private residential setting in which that person has resided.

The reference in the title to at home may cause offence to homeless persons and should be shortened to main language other than English spoken where applicable.

CODE 9900 Not stated/inadequately described

This code is not for use on primary collection forms. It is primarily for use in administrative collections when transferring data from data sets where the item has not been collected.

Collection methods:

Data collected at the 4-digit level (specific language) will provide more detailed information than that collected at the 2-digit level. It is recommended that data be collected at the 4-digit level however where this is not possible data should be collected at the 2-digit level.

Data element attributes

Collection and usage attributes

Collection methods:

Recommended question:

Do you/Does the person/Does (name) speak a language other than English at home? (If more than one language, indicate the one that is spoken most often.)

No (English only) _____

Yes, Italian _____

Yes, Greek _____

Yes, Cantonese _____

Yes, Mandarin _____

Yes, Arabic _____

Yes, Vietnamese _____

Yes, German _____

Yes, Spanish _____

Yes, Tagalog (Filipino) _____

Yes, Other (please specify) _____

This list reflects the nine most common languages spoken in Australia.

Languages may be added or deleted from the above short list to reflect characteristics of the population of interest.

Alternatively a tick box for 'English' and an 'Other - please specify' response category could be used.

Comments:

This metadata item is consistent with that used in the Australian Census of Population and Housing and is recommended for use whenever there is a requirement for comparison with Census data.

This metadata item is important in identifying those people most likely to suffer disadvantage in terms of their ability to access services due to language and/or cultural difficulties. In conjunction with Indigenous status, Proficiency in spoken English and Country of birth, this metadata item forms the minimum core set of cultural and language indicators recommended by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Data on main language other than English spoken at home are regarded as an indicator of 'active' ethnicity and also as useful for the study of inter-generational language retention. The availability of such data may help providers of health and community services to effectively target the geographic areas or population groups that need those services. It may be used for the investigation and development of language services such as interpreter/translation services.

Source and reference attributes**Origin:**

National Health Data Committee

National Community Services Data Committee

Reference documents:

[Australian Standard Classification of Languages \(ASCL\) 1997. Cat. no. 1267.0.](#)
Canberra: ABS. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra. Viewed 3 August 2005.

Relational attributes


**Related metadata
references:**

Has been superseded by [Person—main language other than English spoken at home, code \(ASCL 2005\) NN{NN}](#)

[Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 13/10/2011

[Health](#), Superseded 13/10/2011

[Housing assistance](#), Superseded 30/05/2013

Is re-engineered from  [Main language other than English spoken at home, version 3, DE, Int. NCSDD & NHDD, NCSIMG & NHIMG, Superseded 01/03/2005.pdf](#) (21.4 KB)

No registration status