

# Person—preferred spoken language, code (ASCL 2016) N[NNN]

## Identifying and definitional attributes

<b>Metadata item type:</b>	Data Element
<b>Short name:</b>	Preferred spoken language
<b>METEOR identifier:</b>	666375
<b>Registration status:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Commonwealth Department of Social Services (retired)</a>, Standard 20/06/2018</li></ul>

**Definition:** The language (including sign language) most preferred by the person for communication, as represented by a code.

**Context:** Health and welfare services:

An important indicator of ethnicity, especially for persons born in non-English-speaking countries. Its collection will assist in the planning and provision of multilingual services and facilitate program and service delivery for migrants and other non-English speakers.

**Data Element Concept:** [Person—preferred spoken language](#)

## Value domain attributes

### Representational attributes

<b>Classification scheme:</b>	<a href="#">Australian Standard Classification of Languages 2016</a>
<b>Representation class:</b>	Code
<b>Data type:</b>	Number
<b>Format:</b>	N[NNN]
<b>Maximum character length:</b>	4

### Collection and usage attributes

**Guide for use:**

The ASCL has a three-level hierarchical structure. The most detailed level of the classification consists of languages which are represented by four-digit codes. The second level of the classification comprises narrow groups of languages (the Narrow group level), identified by two-digit and three-digit codes. The most general level of the classification consists of broad groups of languages (the Broad group level) and is identified by one-digit codes. The classification includes Australian Indigenous 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 is coded as 8713. In this case 8 denotes that it is an Australian Indigenous language and 87 denotes that the language is a Western Desert language.

Language data may be output at the Broad group level, Narrow group level or the language level of the classification. Also, significant languages within a Narrow group can be presented separately with the remaining languages of the Narrow group aggregated. The same principle can be adopted to highlight significant Narrow groups within a Broad group.

## Source and reference attributes

**Submitting organisation:** Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

## Data element attributes

## Collection and usage attributes

**Guide for use:** This may be a language other than English even where the person can speak fluent English.

## Source and reference attributes

**Submitting organisation:** Australian Government Department of Social Services

## Relational attributes

**Implementation in Data Set Specifications:**

[Demographics Cluster](#)  
[Commonwealth Department of Social Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 20/06/2018

***DSS specific information:***

Preferred spoken language refers to the variables LANG\_CODE in the PIA research data set.