



## Limited English Proficient Population in Region 1-B

The American Community Survey 5-year estimates (2020-2024) indicate that 5.2% (29,032) of older adults aged 65+ in Region 1-B are Limited English Proficient (LEP). Limited English Proficiency is defined as speaking English less than ‘very well’, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Ninety-seven percent of older adults in Region 1-B who are LEP live in Oakland, Macomb, and Washtenaw Counties. Oakland County has the largest population of LEP older adults, with 5.8% (13,552) speaking English less than very well, followed by Macomb County at 7.7% (12,333) and Washtenaw County at 4.1% (2,409). The three smallest counties in the region - Livingston, St. Clair, and Monroe – have 1% or less of their population reported to be Limited English Proficient.

Region 1-B has the largest population of LEP older adults when compared to other areas of the state. Statewide 3.3% (62,506) of Michigan older adults are LEP; Slightly less than half (46.4%) of the state’s entire LEP older adult population live in Region 1-B. Wayne County has the second largest population of LEP older adults, at 6.3% of the county and 29.6% of the state (18,507). Combined, the counties of Southeast Michigan are home to over three-quarters (76%) of all LEP older adults in the state.

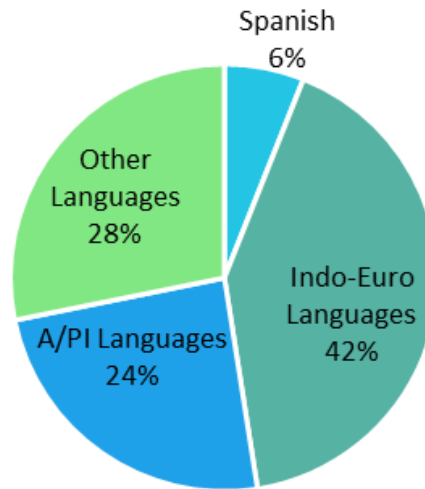
**Table 1: Limited English Proficient Population in Southeast Michigan by County**

County	Total 65+ Population	65+ Speaks Only English	% 65+ Speaks Only English	65+ LEP Population	% 65+ Population that is LEP
Livingston	38,667	37,607	97.3%	242	0.6%
Macomb	160,868	140,125	87.1%	12,333	7.7%
Monroe	30,930	29,667	95.9%	294	1.0%
Oakland	235,056	208,095	88.5%	13,552	5.8%
St. Clair	32,649	31,924	97.8%	202	0.6%
Washtenaw	58,242	52,775	90.6%	2,409	4.1%
<b>1-B TOTAL</b>	<b>556,412</b>	<b>500,193</b>	<b>89.9%</b>	<b>29,032</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
Wayne	293,523	262,523	89.4%	18,507	6.3%
<b>SE MI TOTAL</b>	<b>849,935</b>	<b>762,716</b>	<b>89.7%</b>	<b>47,539</b>	<b>5.6%</b>

## Languages Spoken by Limited English Proficient Older Adults

The majority (42%) of LEP older adults in Region 1-B speak an Indo-European\* language, while 28% speak “other languages” such as Arabic or Amharic. In Southeast Michigan, the most common languages other than English spoken by people of all ages are Arabic, Spanish, Bengali, Afro-Asiatic languages like Amharic and Somali, Chinese, Ukrainian and other Slavic languages, Polish, Telugu, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Dravidian languages like Tamil and Malayam, and Japanese.

**Figure 1: Limited English Proficient Older Adults by Language Spoken in Region 1-B**



**Table 2: Language Spoken by Limited English Proficient Older Adults 65+ by County**

County	Spanish	Indo-European Languages*	Asian/Pacific Island Languages	Other Languages
Livingston	42	124	45	31
Macomb	473	6,108	1,647	4,105
Monroe	21	164	46	63
Oakland	912	4,902	4,017	3,721
St. Clair	61	88	12	41
Washtenaw	238	665	1,287	219
<b>1-B TOTAL</b>	<b>1,747</b>	<b>12,051</b>	<b>7,054</b>	<b>8,180</b>
Wayne	3,254	5,760	2,207	7,286
<b>SE MI TOTAL</b>	<b>5,001</b>	<b>17,811</b>	<b>9,261</b>	<b>15,466</b>

**Table 3: Household Language by Households who have Limited English Proficiency**

	Livingston County	Macomb County	Monroe County	Oakland County	St. Clair County	Washtenaw County	Region 1-B Total	Wayne County	SE MI Total
<b>Spanish</b>	26	576	102	2,165	66	909	3,844	5745	9,589
<b>French, Haitian, Cajun</b>	0	133	0	107	0	47	287	127	414
<b>German, West Germanic (other)</b>	8	124	0	159	10	12	313	31	344
<b>Russian, Polish, Slavic (other)</b>	8	1,848	46	1,584	24	254	3,764	1,041	4,805
<b>Indo-European* (other)</b>	57	3,265	25	2,097	28	469	5,881	3,297	9,178
<b>Korean</b>	0	304	0	1,002	0	283	1,589	270	1,859
<b>Chinese, Mandarin, Cantonese</b>	25	414	0	2,038	25	1,505	4,007	677	4,684
<b>Vietnamese</b>	0	284	0	238	15	111	648	276	924
<b>Tagalog, Filipino</b>	0	225	0	82	0	18	325	84	409
<b>Asian and Pacific Island (other)</b>	10	358	54	2,419	36	412	3,289	376	3,665
<b>Arabic</b>	32	2,780	14	1,628	39	130	4,623	10,881	15,504
<b>Other/ Unspecified</b>	18	1,506	0	815	0	292	2,631	209	2,840

## Comparing Limited English Proficient Older Adults from 2015-2019 and 2020-2024

A comparison between the 2019 and 2024 American Community Survey five-year estimates indicates that the older adult population grew by 13.3% in Southeast Michigan (approximately 100,000 people) and 14.6% in Region 1-B (approximately 71,000 people). Region 1-B also saw an increase in LEP older adults, with 3,420 more people reported to speak English less than “very well.” This represents a 13.4% increase in the 65+ LEP population in Region 1-B.

Four out of the six counties in Region 1-B showed an increase in the number of LEP older adults, with Oakland showing the largest increase (1,957 people) followed by Macomb (1,685) and Monroe (102). Three out of six counties in Region 1-B saw an LEP population loss. Monroe County had the largest percentage growth of LEP older adults, at 53.1%. Overall, there was an increase of 3,420 LEP older adults in Region 1-B.

Wayne County alone saw an increase of 4,247 older adults (29.8%) who speak English less than “very well”, contributing to Southeast Michigan’s overall 65+ LEP population growth of 13.3%.

**Table 4: Limited English Speaking Population Change in Southeast Michigan by County**

County	Change in Total 65+ Population	Change in 65+ Speaks Only English	Change in 65+ LEP Population	Change in 65+ LEP Population as a Percentage of Total Population	Total 65+ Population Growth	% Growth/Decline of 65+ LEP Population
<b>Livingston</b>	7,295	7,244	-172	0.5%	23.3%	- 41.5%
<b>Macomb</b>	16,478	14,000	1,685	-0.2%	11.4%	15.8%
<b>Monroe</b>	4,726	4,305	102	-0.9%	18.0%	53.1%
<b>Oakland</b>	30,004	26,786	1,957	0.1%	14.6%	16.9%
<b>St. Clair</b>	3,613	3,832	-81	1.0%	12.4%	- 28.6%
<b>Washtenaw</b>	8,934	8,400	-71	0.6%	18.1%	- 2.9%
<b>1-B TOTAL</b>	<b>71,050</b>	<b>88,175</b>	<b>3,420</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>+ 13.4%</b>
<b>Wayne</b>	29,036	23,911	4,247	-0.8%	11.0%	29.8%
<b>SE MI TOTAL</b>	<b>100,086</b>	<b>112,086</b>	<b>7,667</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>+ 19.2%</b>

Southeast Michigan saw a population increase in all language categories spoken by older adults, with Spanish being the largest overall increase at 30.8%; This change took place largely in Wayne County, where there was a significant difference in increase from Region 1-B. Wayne County saw an increase of 49.3% Spanish-speaking LEP older adults compared to Region 1-B’s overall increase of 6.4%. Asian & Pacific Island languages had the largest increase in Region 1-B (24.8%) within the overall LEP older adult population, particularly in Monroe, Oakland, and Macomb counties.

**Table 5: Change in Language Spoken by Limited English Proficient Older Adults 65+ by County**

County	Spanish	% change	Indo-European Languages*	% change	Asian/Pacific Island Languages	% change	Other Languages	% change
Livingston	11	35.5%	-59	-32.2%	-75	-62.5%	-49	-61.3%
Macomb	31	7.0%	314	5.4%	316	23.7%	1,024	33.2%
Monroe	-14	-40.0%	71	76.3%	21	84.0%	24	61.5%
Oakland	82	9.9%	370	8.2%	1,158	40.5%	347	10.3%
St. Clair	8	15.1%	-23	-20.7%	-50	-80.6%	-16	-28.1%
Washtenaw	-13	-5.2%	-31	-4.5%	34	2.7%	-61	-21.8%
<b>1-B TOTAL</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	<b>1,269</b>	<b>18.4%</b>
Wayne	1,074	49.3%	685	13.5%	226	11.4%	2,262	45.0%
<b>SE MI TOTAL</b>	<b>1,179</b>	<b>30.8%</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>1,630</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>3,531</b>	<b>29.6%</b>

\*The Indo-European category of Languages includes languages from India, Europe and some Middle Eastern regions such as Iran.

### Sources

Five-Year American Community Survey 2020-2024; Tables B16001, B16002, B16004  
<http://data.census.gov>

To learn more about the needs of LEP older adults, view this Justice in Aging Fact Sheet:  
<http://www.justiceinaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/LEP-10-Things-You-Should-Know.pdf>



*AgeWays, the Area Agency on Aging 1-B, is a nonprofit agency serving the needs of older adults in Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, and Washtenaw counties. For more information contact Katie Scharf, Planning & Grants Specialist, at [kscharf@ageways.org](mailto:kscharf@ageways.org) or (248) 724-8624*