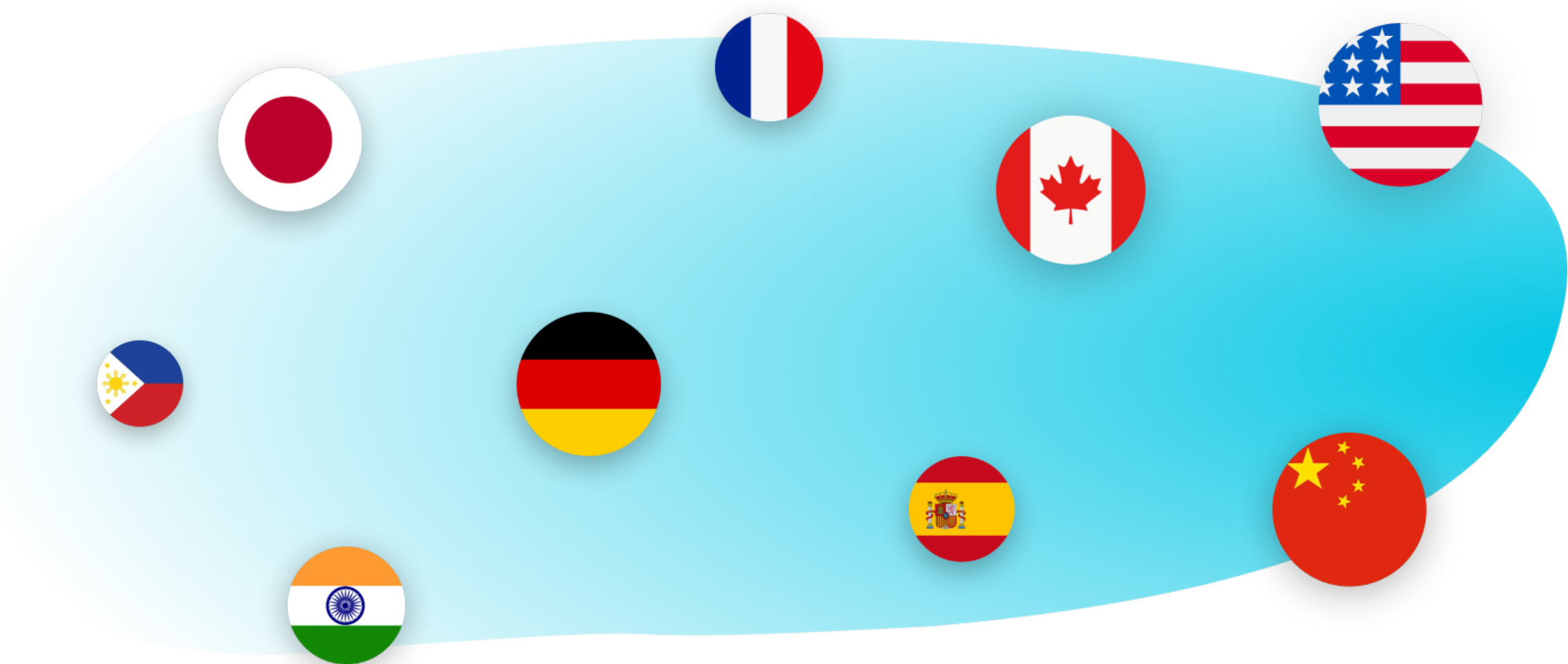


2025

State of Language Access in Government Agencies

Emerging strategies and challenges shaping language access



KEY FINDINGS

Expected Benefits of Language Access

Respondents identified several key outcomes they expect from more inclusive communication efforts:



Fostering Community Collaboration: 83% believe better language access will strengthen collaboration between local government and residents.



Improving Regulatory Compliance: 79% expect that clear, accessible communication will help meet legal and regulatory obligations more effectively.



Growing a Skilled Workforce: 70% see language inclusivity as a way to attract and retain a more diverse, skilled workforce.

Why Language Access Can't Wait

- Millions of residents don't speak the local language, yet still rely on government services.
- Agencies are under growing pressure to communicate clearly and equitably, even as budgets shrink and staff are stretched thin.
- Emergencies, public meetings, and essential updates all require fast, inclusive communication.

Wordly helps public agencies meet rising demands — without breaking their budgets.

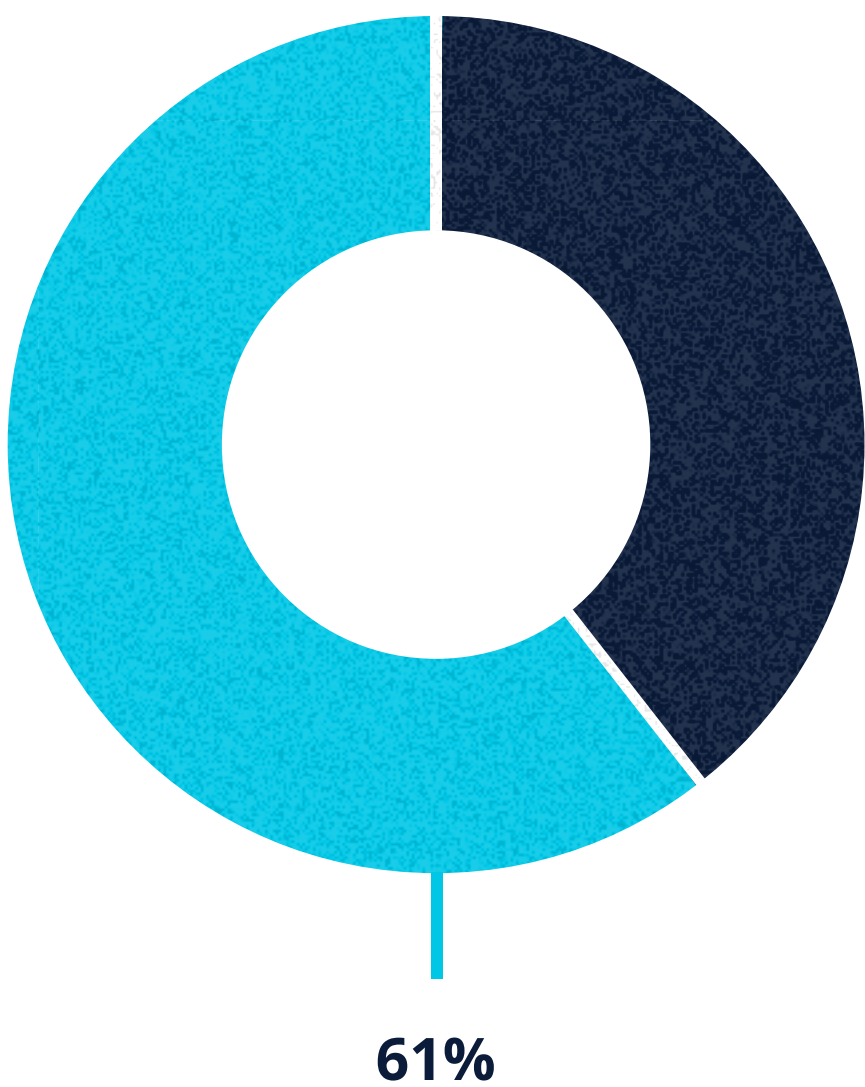
KEY FINDINGS

Language Access Demand

The number of non-native English speakers is increasing in most municipalities and language access is a clear priority for the majority.

Trends and Priorities

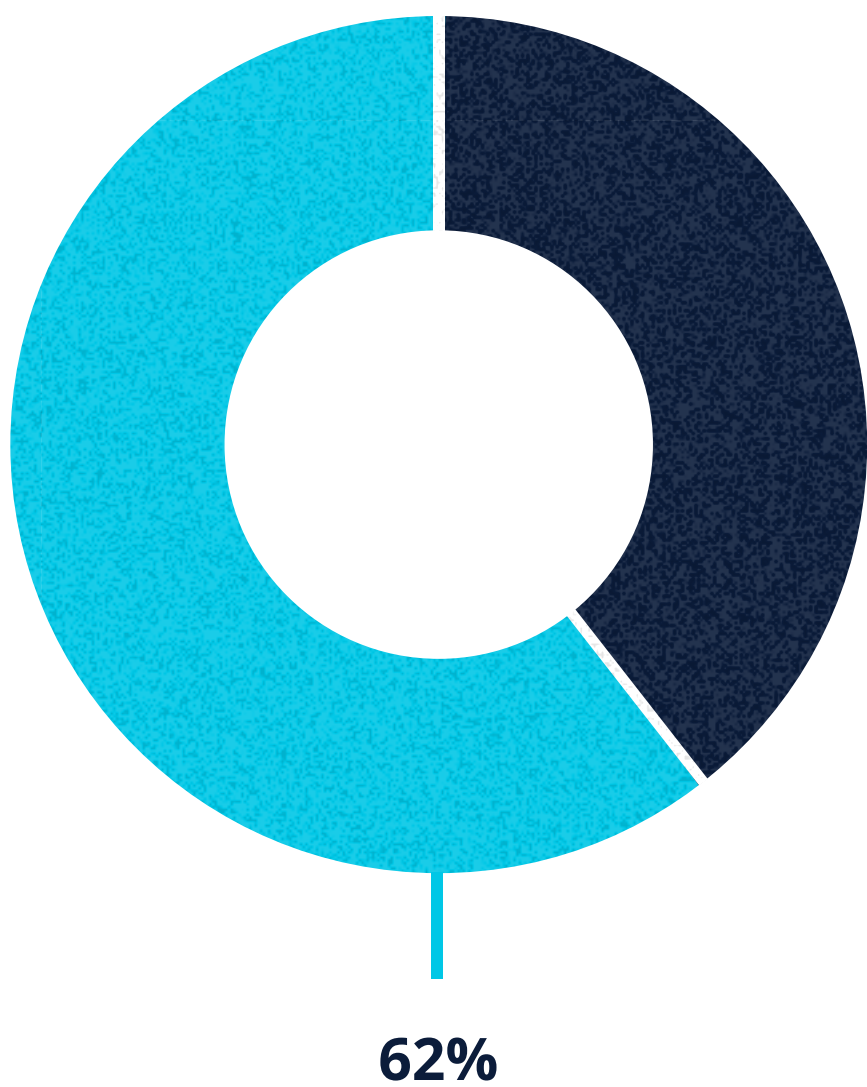
Communities where non-native English speakers are increasing



Respondents who say language access is “very important”



Respondents who say their meetings are only “low” or “not at all” inclusive



The data highlights key pain points:

1. Budget Constraints

Half of respondents (50%) say budget limitations are the primary reason they haven’t implemented more robust language access solutions.



2. Logistical Complexity

Over a third (39%) of respondents struggle with the operational challenges of coordinating multilingual support, especially when dealing with multiple languages and limited staff capacity.

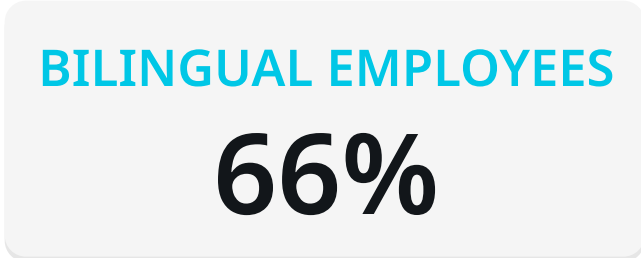


3. Over-Reliance on Informal Solutions

The most commonly used tools are:

Bilingual employees — used by 66%

Translated written materials — used by 50%



KEY FINDINGS

The data highlights key pain points that are limiting access, participation, and equity:

4. Workforce Readiness Gap

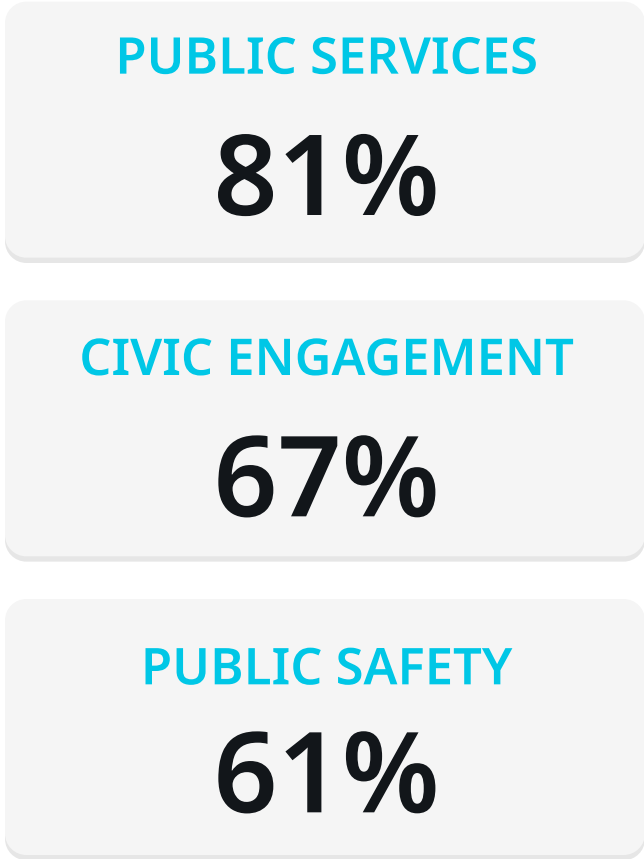
Just **1 in 5 municipalities (21%)** identified staff training as a key objective for improving engagement with non-native English speakers and people who are hard of hearing, suggesting that workforce readiness may be overlooked in language access planning.



5. Public Safety & Community Services Are Top Priorities

When it comes to accommodating people who speak different languages or are hard of hearing, public safety, civic engagement, and government services are top priorities.

- 81% cite public services like permit or passport applications
- 67% say civic engagement (enabling them to participate in community meetings, etc.)
- 61% are concerned about public safety—ensuring important information is effectively communicated



 More scalable and consistent tools like **AI translation software (31%)** and **professional interpreters (27%)** remain underutilized, signaling an opportunity for modernization.

 **Already using AI translation – 31%**
Nearly 1 in 3 agencies have adopted AI tools to improve multilingual communication.

 **Currently evaluating – 24%**
Nearly a quarter are actively reviewing AI options to modernize language access support.

 **Planning to evaluate – 33%**
A third are preparing to explore AI translation in the near future.

Data is from a survey conducted by SmartBrief for Wordly in 2025 with 117 municipal government professionals across the U.S. Respondents work in city, county, and borough governments of all sizes and have visibility into language access, communications, or community engagement.