



MULTILINGUALISM IN PUBLIC SERVICE

The U.S. government has long recognized that knowledge of other world languages is vital to the national interest for purposes of diplomacy, national security, and economic growth.

KEY FACTS

In 2016, the State Department required language proficiency for 44% of its 10,111 overseas foreign service officer positions, of which 23% were filled by staff without the requisite proficiency levels.

Over one million individuals have participated in U.S. State Department exchange programs, including 565 current or former heads of government and 97 cur-

LANGUAGES AS SERVICE

Multiple programs exist across the federal government to invest in the pipeline of qualified linguists, some of which are targeted at youth so as to encourage long sequences of language learning. The State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the Defense Department's Defense Language National Security Education Office, and the Education Department's International and Foreign Language Education Office (IFLE) host the majority of these programs.

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

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The National Language Service Corps (NLSC), launched in 2007, is a voluntary civilian corps of U.S. citizens with proficiency in languages other than English that provides linguistic expertise and resources to U.S. communities and government agencies when called upon. To date, the NLSC has enrolled nearly 10,000 members, representing over 400 languages and assisting both routine assignments and disaster relief efforts, including during the earthquakes in Nepal in 2015 and in Haiti in 2010.