

Language Access Needs Assessment

Key Findings

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Framing the Study...

The Instrument:

County Assessment Tool For Language Access Needs (All county Extension offices, Spring 2017)

The screenshot shows the 'County Office Assessment Tool for Language Access Needs' form. It includes a header with the UW Extension logo and a title. The form is divided into sections: 'Introduction', 'Your county Extension office', 'Step 1: Understanding how Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals interact with your county's Extension programming', and 'Step 2: Identifying LEP populations served by your county's Extension office'. Each section contains specific questions and checkboxes for data collection.

Six Focus Areas

Step 1: Understanding how Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals interact with county's Extension programming

Step 2: Identifying LEP populations (by county)

Step 3: Providing language assistance services

Step 4: Training, procedures, and support

Step 5: Providing notice of language assistance services

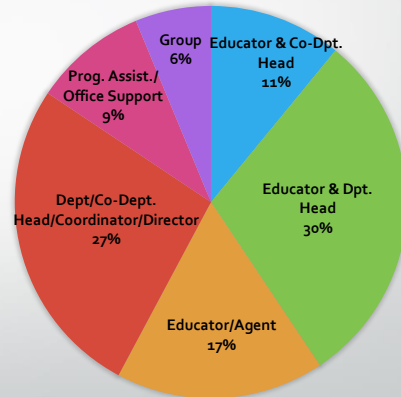
Step 6: Areas for training and professional development

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Study sample

- **Unit of analysis:** County Extension offices and their respective service areas
- **Response rate:** 88% (64/72 counties)
- **No response:** 8 counties
(Barron, Jackson, Jefferson, Kenosha, Kewaunee, Pierce, Racine, Vernon)

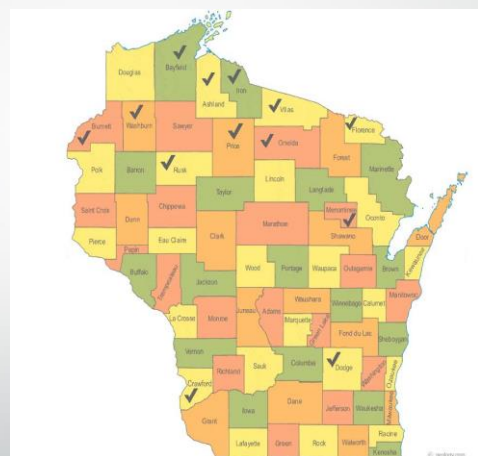
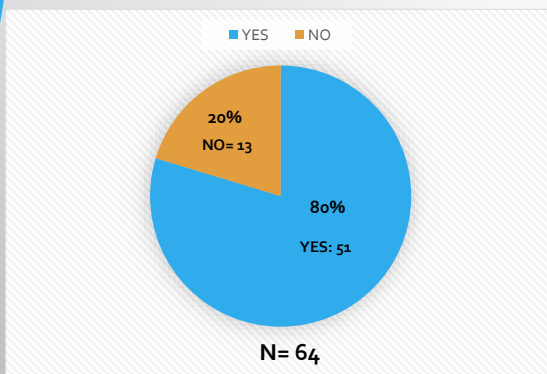
WHO COMPLETED THE FORM?



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Interactions between Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals and our counties' Extension offices

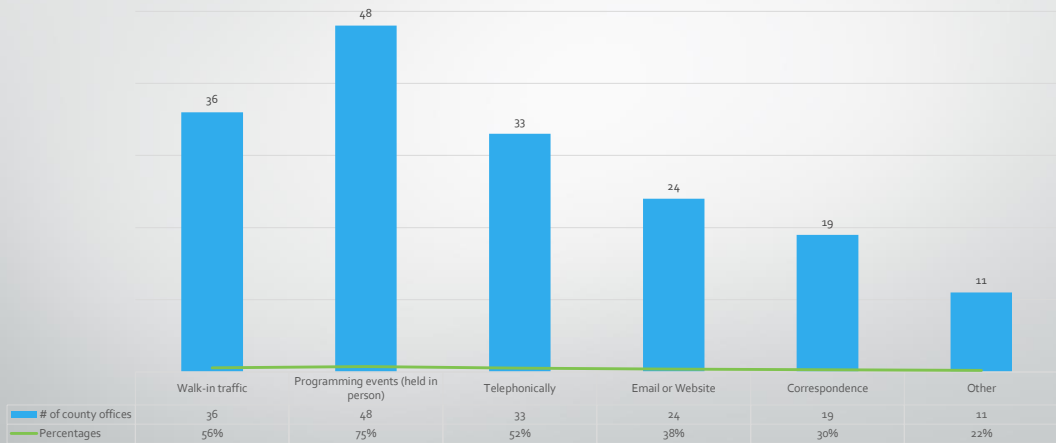
Do Extension offices interact with and/or serve individuals who have limited English Proficiency?



13 Extension offices reported no interaction with LEP individuals

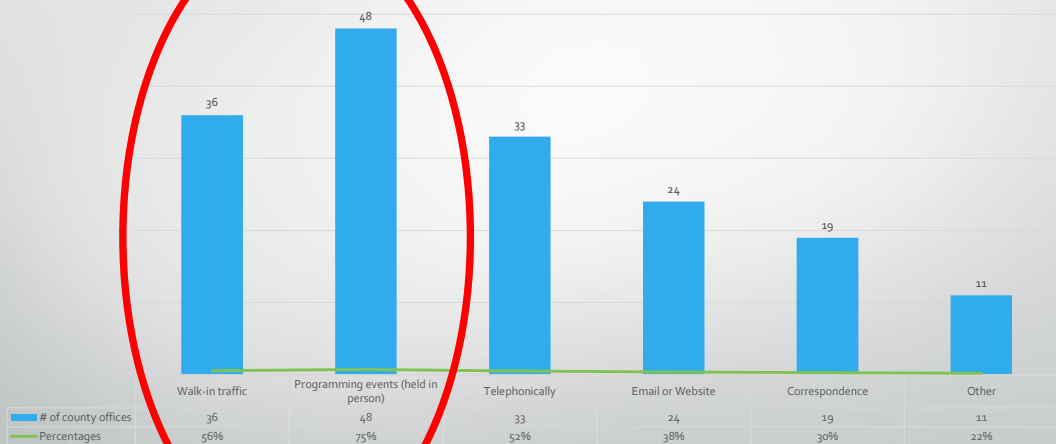
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How do our county offices interact with LEP individuals?



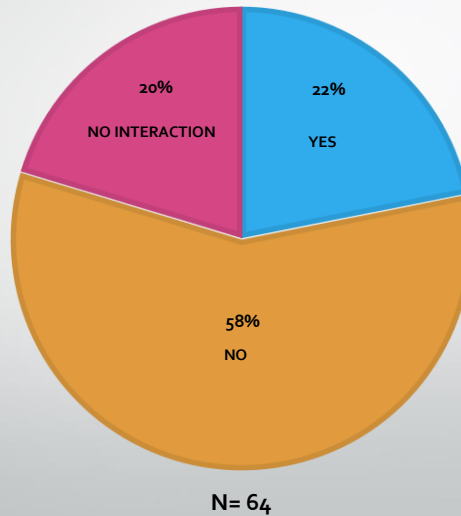
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How do our county offices interact with LEP individuals?



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Are county offices maintaining records on the primary languages spoken by individuals served by their programming?



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How do our county offices identify LEP populations?

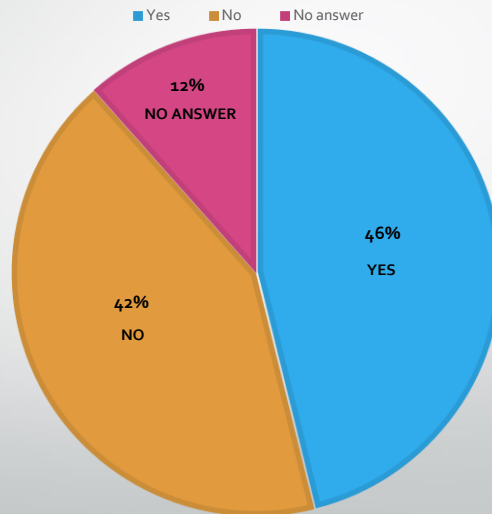
Three main ways :

1. Self-Identification (by LEP individuals)
2. Planning Procedures (e.g. sign-up, registration, outreach, etc.)
3. Inference (by Extension staff)

Is there an established process for collecting data?	Yes	No
Linguistic diversity in each county (English + other languages)	35%	65%
Number of LEP individuals who live in county	43%	57%
Number of LEP individuals served by office's programming efforts	31%	69%

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Do language differences between staff and the public limit our ability to develop strong relationships?



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How much time do county offices spend discussing ways to engage and include LEP individuals and communities?

- Over **84%** of the county offices spend less than 11% of their time talking about linguistic diversity issues.
- Who is talking about linguistic diversity issues?

✓ Fond du Lac
 ✓ Milwaukee
 ✓ Outagamie

} **40%**
average

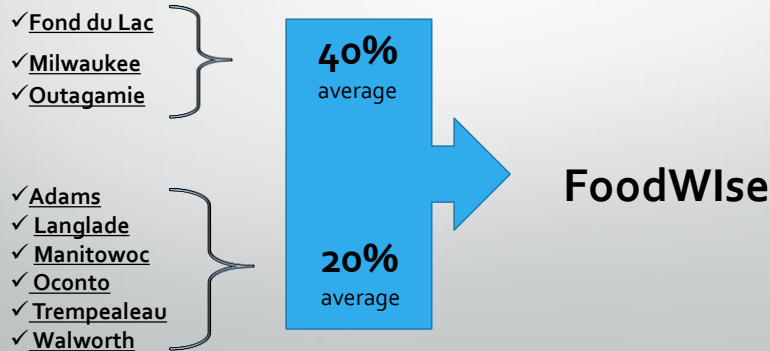
✓ Adams
 ✓ Langlade
 ✓ Manitowoc
 ✓ Oconto
 ✓ Trempealeau
 ✓ Walworth

} **20%**
average

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How much time do county offices spend discussing ways to engage and include LEP individuals and communities?

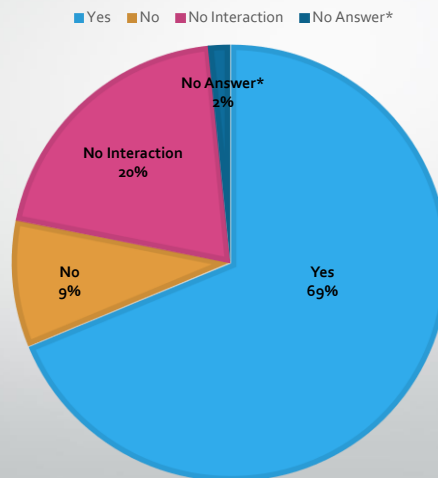
- Over **84%** of the county offices spend less than 11% of their time talking about linguistic diversity issues.
- Who is talking about linguistic diversity issues?



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Providing Language Support Services: Question 1

Have county offices ever used language support services (translation, interpretation and project consultation) to carry out educational programming?



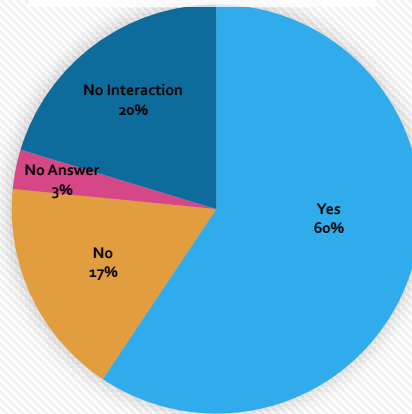
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Providing Language Support Services: Question 2

Have there been situations where LEP individuals provide their own interpreters or use family/friends?

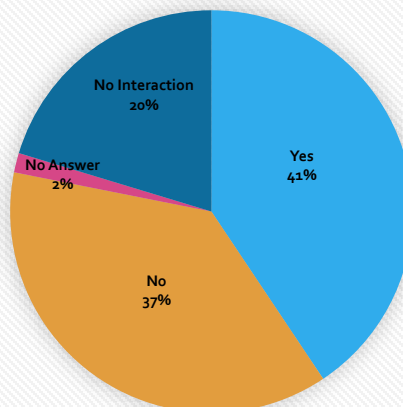
■ Yes ■ No ■ No Answer ■ No Interaction



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Does Extension staff in county offices communicate with the public in languages other than English?

■ Yes ■ No ■ No Answer ■ No Interaction



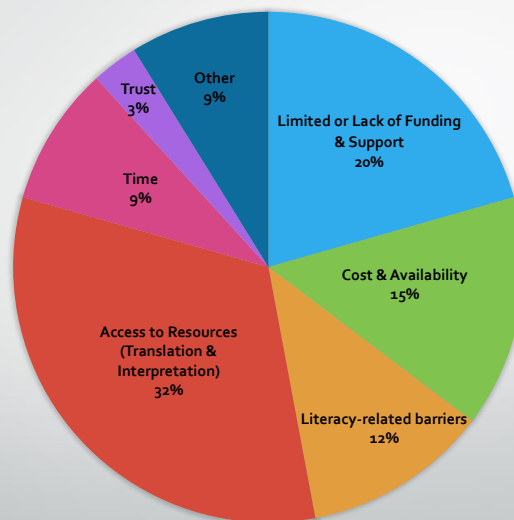
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Organizational needs for training and capacity building

- Requesting support for translation services..... 59%
- Requesting support for interpretation services..... 59%
- Outreach strategies to improve engagement..... 57%
- Identifying & better understanding programming needs..... 55%
- Basic communication skills in languages other than English..... 49%
- How to use specialized equipment 49%
- Where to find additional resources and information..... 47%
- Creating a welcoming office environment..... 41%
- Programming events/projects for speakers of multiple languages..... 35%
- Title VI Civil Rights reporting responsibilities..... 33%
- Bilingual staff skill development..... 27%
- Other (e.g. developing culturally-appropriate materials, strategies, etc.)..... 10%
- None of the above..... 6%

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What are the most common issues related to providing language access support in county offices?



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Conclusion

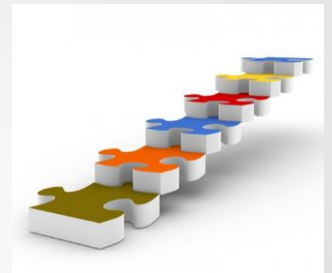
- Good departure point for further conversations on ways to address issues of language access in Cooperative Extension programming.
- Significant opportunities to generate a more collective understanding of language access and barriers associated with language differences.
- Clear need for capacity building within the organization including: training, strategic hiring, tools, and resources.

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Next Steps

- Language Access Plan (September 2017)
- Language Access & Support Website (September 2017)
- Toolkit for county offices (September 2017)
- Training for staff
- Sharing best practices for linguistically inclusive programming



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Thank You!

For more information visit our website:

<https://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/languageaccess/wp-login.php>

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