

# Assessing SSA's Efforts to Meet the Needs of Persons With Limited English Proficiency

Client: Social Security Administration

## Overview

This study assessed the effectiveness of the Social Security Administration's (SSA) efforts in meeting the information and service needs of individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). The evaluation aimed to—

- Determine the success of the Multi-Language Gateway (MLG) in meeting the public information needs of SSA's LEP clientele and recommend enhancements.
- Determine which information/services offered electronically in English should also be offered in other languages.
- Determine which organizations act as advocates and provide outreach, social services, or other assistance to LEP communities and how SSA can provide assistance to these organizations.
- Gather socioeconomic and demographic data on individuals with LEP who access and use the MLG (versus those who do not use the MLG).
- Identify and recommend ways in which SSA can use new electronic technologies to meet the information and other service needs of LEP individuals (along with the costs/benefits of these identified methods).

For this project, Insight conducted—

1. A literature review and secondary data analysis of databases to assess the demographics and socioeconomics of and internet/computer access and use among LEP population groups



2. Semistructured interviews with SSA regional office communications directors and district office managers in each regional office
3. In-depth interviews with community-based social service organizations
4. Site visits and focus groups with 10 LEP population groups
5. A cost-benefit analysis of various approaches to improve SSA's existing electronic services for individuals with LEP

Results of the study helped SSA improve access to information and services for individuals with LEP.

## Products

Final report, *Ensuring Meaningful Access to Services: Assessing SSA's Efforts to Serve Limited English Proficient Individuals in an Electronic Environment* (November 2004)