



One Common Language

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Two hundred and forty-nine years after declaring independence from England, the 47th president of the United States has ordered that English become the official language of his country.

What's in the order: The executive order, [Designating English as the Official Language of The United States](#), sets out the rationale for picking only one language for the Federal government. This rationale states that to promote unity, cultivate a shared American culture for all citizens, ensure consistency in government operations, and create a pathway to civic engagement, it is in America's best interest for the Federal government to designate one—and only one—official language.

What this means for companies:

- The population of America is multilingual, and reaching your customers and stakeholders in the way that is most likely to engage them remains the primary concern for companies.
- This is an order that promotes the efficiencies of adopting one language, but also leaves room for Federal agencies to use other languages where necessary. Companies should watch the actions taken by agencies but stick to their own policies for linguistic access and communication.

- The rise of reliable AI translation tools makes communications in multiple languages cheaper and speedier. Companies should confirm with their employee research groups (ERGs) the language policies of their organizations going forward.

The TCB take: Up until March 1, there was no official language of the United States, though English has long played that role for all practical and business purposes.

Acknowledging the diverse roots of your stakeholders is an effective practice for engagement, but this order points to the value of also capitalizing on the country's heritage of unification, assimilation, and belonging. Declaring a national language is a small point on that spectrum but one that can be used to build connections.

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