

# Ethnologue: Languages of Belgium

## Twenty-sixth edition data

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## List of Abbreviations

A	Agent in constituent word order
<i>alt.</i>	alternate name for
<i>alt. dial.</i>	alternate dialect name for
AOV	Agent-Object-Verb
C	Consonant in canonical syllable patterns
<i>Class</i>	Language classification
CPPDCE	Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)
CSICH	Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)
<i>dial.</i>	primary dialect name for
EUD	European Union of the Deaf
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
km	kilometer(s)
L1 / L2	first language / second (or other additional) language
<i>Lg Dev</i>	Language development
<i>Lg Use</i>	Language use
m	meter(s)
P	Patient in constituent word order
PARADISEC	Pacific And Regional Archive for Digital Sources In Endangered Cultures
<i>pej.</i>	pejorative
pl.	plural
S	Subject in constituent word order
sg.	singular
SOV	Subject-Object-Verb
<i>Type</i>	Typological information
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
V	Vowel in canonical syllable patterns

## How to Use This Digest

This *Ethnologue* country digest provides an extract of the information about the language situation in Belgium that is published in the 26th edition of *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (see <http://www.ethnologue.com>), including some ways of presenting the information that are not available in the online version. The digest begins with a “Country Overview” (page 6) and “Statistical Summaries” (page 8) of languages and number of speakers by language size, by language status, and by language family.

The “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 11) provides detailed information on the 41 languages listed in the *Ethnologue* for the country of Belgium. This includes languages that are indigenous to the country, languages that have developed well-established multigenerational speaker communities after immigrating in the past, and languages that have a significant presence in the country but are not established (that is, not being transmitted to the next generation within the country). A complete language entry has the following form and content:

**Primary language name** [ISO 639-3 code] (Alternate names). Autonym. *Users*: Country user population. Population stability comment. Population remarks. Monolingual population. Ethnic population. *Location*: Location. *Status*: EGIDS level. Special cases. Language function in country. *Class*: Linguistic classification. Macrolanguage membership. *Dialects*: Dialect names. Intelligibility and dialect relations. Lexical similarity. *Type*: Linguistic typology information. *Lg Use*: Remarks on use of the language. Domains of use. User age range. Language attitudes. Bilingualism remarks. Use as second language. *Lg Dev*: Literacy rates. Literacy remarks. Use in education. Publications and use in media. Revitalization efforts. Language development agencies. *DLS*: Digital support. *Writing*: Scripts used. *Other*: Non-indigenous. General remarks. Religion. *Map*: Map page. *Worldwide*: Total population in all countries. Other countries where used.

See <http://www.ethnologue.com/methodology/#languagePages> for a full description of these information elements. If the autonym contains the “?” character, this indicates a complex non-Roman character that the PDF-creating software we are using is not able to render. We regret the inconvenience.

The “Language Map” (page 24) shows the locations of the listed languages. If the location of a language is given on a map, the *Map* element of the language entry indicates the page number of the map. If the language is identified on a map by name, but that name differs from the primary name in the language entry, the name on the map is given in parentheses. If the language is represented on the map by an index number, rather than by its name, the index number is given following the page number (with a colon as separator).

Many ways of finding languages are provided. “Languages by Population” (page 25) lists the languages in order of their first-language speaker populations. “Languages by Status” (page 29) lists the languages by their level of development or endangerment as measured on EGIDS, the Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (Lewis and Simons 2010). “Languages by

Province” (page 34) lists the top-level administrative subdivisions of Belgium and the languages located within each. “Languages by Family” (page 35) lists the languages by their linguistic classifications. “Language Code Index” (page 36) gives an alphabetical listing of all the three-letter codes from ISO 639-3 that are used in this digest to uniquely identify languages. “Language Name Index” (page 37) lists every name that appears in the language listings as a primary or alternate name of a language or dialect. A total of 52 unique names are associated with the 41 languages described in this digest.

Finally, a listing of all the published sources cited within this digest is found in “Bibliography” (page 39). The published sources are cited using standard in-text citations enclosed in parentheses, consisting of the author’s or editor’s surname followed by the year of publication. Unpublished sources including personal communications and unpublished reports are also acknowledged when specific statements or facts are attributed to them. They are identified using in-text citations enclosed in parentheses in which the year of the communication is given first, followed by the source’s first initial and surname. In such a case, there is no corresponding entry in the bibliography.

This digest is designed for use in both digital and print formats. The cross-references are thus rendered as page numbers that are hyperlinks. When using the document in printed form, simply turn to the referenced page by number. When using it in digital form, click on the blue text to jump to the cross-referenced location.

If you believe any of the information about a language in this digest is in error or if you are able to supply missing information, please send your proposed change to the editor using one of the means given below. Provide as much information as possible about the source of your information. Full bibliographic details of published sources are especially helpful.

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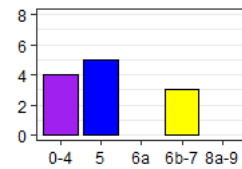
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## Country Overview

Name of country	Belgium
Other names	Kingdom of Belgium
Population	11,632,000 (2021 UNDESA)
Principal languages	Dutch, French
Literacy rate	99% (Roser and Ortiz-Ospina 2018)
Deaf population	610,120
International conventions	CPPDCE (2013), CSICH (2006), ICCPR (1983), UNCRPD (2009), UNDRIP (2007)
General references	Comrie 1987, Stephens 1976

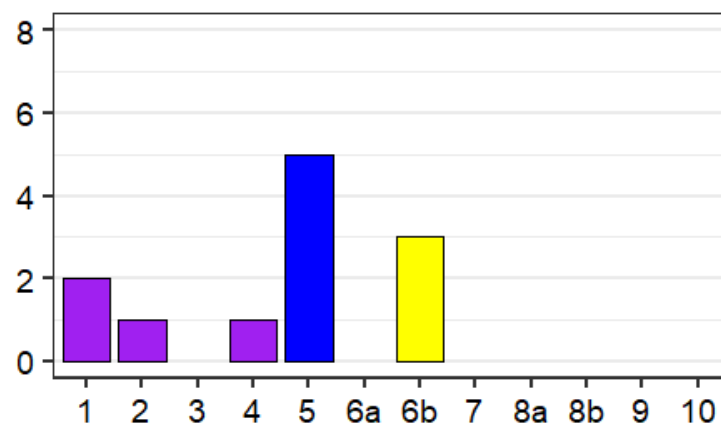
**Language counts** The number of established languages listed for Belgium is 12. All are living languages. Of these, 10 are indigenous and 2 are non-indigenous. Furthermore, 4 are institutional, 5 are developing, and 3 are in trouble. Also listed are 29 unestablished languages.



See the next page for an explanation of the summary categories for language vitality used in the above counts and graph.

## Language Status Profile

The following histogram gives a graphic profile of the established languages in Belgium with respect to their status of language development versus language endangerment. This includes all of the languages appearing in the “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 11) that report an EGIDS level after *Status*; macrolanguages and unestablished languages are not included in the profile. The horizontal axis plots the estimated level of development or endangerment as measured on the EGIDS scale (Lewis and Simons 2010). The height of each bar indicates the number of languages that are estimated to be at the given level. Consult “Languages by Status” (page 29) in order to see the specific languages for each level.



The color coding of the bars in the histogram above matches the color scheme used in the summary profile graph on the preceding page. In this scheme, the EGIDS levels are grouped as follows:

- Purple = Institutional (EGIDS 0–4) — The language has been developed to the point that it is used and sustained by institutions beyond the home and community.
- Blue = Developing (EGIDS 5) — The language is in vigorous use, with literature in a standardized form being used by some though this is not yet widespread or sustainable.
- Green = Vigorous (EGIDS 6a) — The language is in vigorous use among all generations and remains unstandardized.
- Yellow = In trouble (EGIDS 6b–7) — Intergenerational transmission is in the process of being broken, but the child-bearing generation can still use the language so it is possible that revitalization efforts could restore transmission of the language in the home.
- Red = Dying (EGIDS 8a–9) — The only fluent users (if any) are older than child-bearing age, so it is too late to restore natural intergenerational transmission through the home; a mechanism outside the home would need to be developed.
- Black = Extinct (EGIDS 10) — The language is no longer used and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language.

## Statistical Summaries

The “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 11) provides a detailed listing of all the languages of Belgium. This section steps back from the detail to offer a summary view of the language situation in the country. Specifically, it offers three numerical tabulations of the living established languages of Belgium and their users: by language size, by language status, and by language family.

### Summary by language size

Table 1 summarizes the distribution of living established languages in Belgium by number of L1 speakers. The *Population range* column categorizes the sizes of the languages by order of magnitude (in terms of the number of digits in the population of first-language speakers). Consult “Languages by Population” (page 25) for a listing of the specific languages in each range category.

The *Count* column gives the number of living established languages within the specified population range. The *Percent* column gives the share of the count for that population range as a percentage of the total number of languages given at the bottom of the Count column. The *Cumulative* column gives the cumulative sum of the percentage of languages going from top to bottom in the column.

The *Total* column gives the total L1 population of all the languages in the given range category. The second *Percent* column gives the percentage of the total country population as estimated at the bottom of the Total column. Note that if the table has a row for Unknown, representing languages for which the *Ethnologue* does not have a population estimate, the calculation of population percentage is not able to take those languages into account. The final *Cumulative* column gives the cumulative sums of the population percentages going from top to bottom in the column.

**Table 1:** Distribution of languages by number of first-language speakers

Population range	Living languages			Number of speakers		
	Count	Percent	Cumulative	Total	Percent	Cumulative
1,000,000 to 9,999,999	3	25.0	25.0%	11,650,000	88.36066	88.36066%
100,000 to 999,999	3	25.0	50.0%	1,400,000	10.61845	98.97911%
10,000 to 99,999	3	25.0	75.0%	124,100	0.94125	99.92036%
1,000 to 9,999	2	16.7	91.7%	10,500	0.07964	100.00000%
Unknown	1	8.3	100.0%			
<i>Totals</i>	12	100.0		13,184,600	100.00000	

## Summary by language status

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of living established languages in Belgium by their status in terms of language development or language endangerment. The *EGIDS* column categorizes the languages by their level on the EGIDS scale. Consult “Languages by Status” (page 29) for a listing of the specific languages that have been assigned to each level. Note that the EGIDS level reported here is for the status of the language in Belgium. Languages that are also used in other countries may be assigned to a different EGIDS level in those countries.

The next six columns are as in Table 1. In addition, the *Mean* column gives the average L1 population of all the languages with the given EGIDS level and the *Median* column gives the median L1 population for the languages at that level, that is, half of the languages at that level have a higher population and half have a lower population. If there are any languages with an unknown population, these are ignored in the calculation of the mean and the median.

**Table 2:** Distribution of languages by vitality status

EGIDS	Living languages			Number of speakers			Mean	Median
	Count	Percent	Cumulative	Total	Percent	Cumulative		
1	2	16.7	16.7%	10,580,000	80.2451	80.2451%	5,290,000	5,290,000
2	1	8.3	25.0%	50,800	0.3853	80.6304%	50,800	50,800
4	1	8.3	33.3%	43,300	0.3284	80.9588%	43,300	43,300
5	5	41.7	75.0%	640,500	4.8579	85.8168%	128,100	18,250
6b	3	25.0	100.0%	1,870,000	14.1832	100.0000%	623,333	600,000
<i>Totals</i>	12	100.0		13,184,600	100.0000			

## Summary by language family

The genealogical classifications given in the language entries of the “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 11) name 2 different top-level groups. Table 3 summarizes the distribution of living established languages and their L1 populations within these families. The columns are as for table 2, with the exception that *Cumulative* is excluded since there is no inherent ordering of the families.

**Table 3:** Distribution of languages by language family

Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers			
	Count	Percent	Total	Percent	Mean	Median
Indo-European	10	83.3	13,174,100	99.9	1,317,410	600,000
Sign language	2	16.7	10,500	0.1	5,250	5,250

<b>Language family</b>	<b>Living languages</b>		<b>Number of speakers</b>			
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>
<i>Totals</i>	12	100.0	13,184,600	100.0		

## Alphabetical Listing of Languages

**Albanian, Tosk** [als]. Autonym: Shqip. *Users*: 12,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Albanian, Tosk. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head initial; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); definite article affix; case-marking (4 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; 29 consonant and 7 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *NT*: 1827–2007. *Writing*: Elbasan script, no longer in use. Greek script, no longer in use. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,924,600 (as L1: 1,918,600; as L2: 6,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Albania, Greece. Also established in: Turkey. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States.

**Arabic, Algerian Spoken** [arq]. *Users*: 32,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. *NT*: 1965. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 41,433,600 (as L1: 35,693,600; as L2: 5,740,000). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Algeria. Also established in: Egypt. Unestablished in: Burkina Faso, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sudan, Tunisia, United States.

**Arabic, Levantine** [apc]. *Users*: 32,100 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Lg Dev*: Radio. TV. Dictionary. Grammar. Bible portions: 1940–1973. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 47,595,360 (as L1: 47,236,360; as L2: 359,000). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Turkey. Also established in: Mexico. Unestablished in: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, France, French Guiana, Gambia, Germany, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Kuwait, Libya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Martinique, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Portugal, Qatar (North Levantine Spoken Arabic), Saudi Arabia (North Levantine Spoken Arabic), Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela, Yemen.

**Arabic, Mesopotamian Spoken** [acm]. *Users*: 8,140 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Type*: SVO; 32 consonant phonemes. *Lg Dev*: Radio. TV. Grammar. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 18,162,050. Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Iran, Iraq, Syria. Also established in: Turkey. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Finland, Germany, India, Kuwait, Lebanon, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, United

Kingdom, United States, Yemen.

**Arabic, Moroccan Spoken** [ary]. *Users*: 340,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives, adjectives, relatives after noun heads; articles and numerals before noun heads; question word initial; prefixes 3. suffixes 4; word order distinguishes subjects, objects, indirect objects, topic and comment; affixes do not indicate case of noun phrase; verb affixes mark person, number, gender of subject, object-obligatory; CCVCC; nontonal. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. NT: 1932–2012. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 39,160,180 (as L1: 29,540,180; as L2: 9,620,000). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Morocco, Western Sahara. Also established in: Egypt, Spain. Unestablished in: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Italy, Libya, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.

**Arabic, North Mesopotamian Spoken** [ayp]. *Users*: 4,590 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Lg Dev*: Grammar. NT: 2012. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 10,263,460. Global EGIDS level: 6a (Vigorous). Indigenous in: Iraq, Syria, Turkey. Also established in: Jordan. Unestablished in: Germany, Norway, Sweden.

**Arabic, Tunisian Spoken** [aeb]. *Users*: 20,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. Texts. NT: 1847–2011. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script, informal use on social media (Akin 2014). *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 11,709,890. Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Tunisia. Also established in: Israel. Unestablished in: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Libya, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, United States.

**Bengali** [ben]. *Users*: 5,000 in Belgium (2018), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Outer Languages, Eastern, Bengali-Assamese. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head both initial and final; 3 genders: male, female, neuter; content q-word initial and final; clause constituents indicated by case-marking (5 cases) and word order; verb affixes mark person, number; definite article affix; tense; passives and voice; causatives; comparatives; non-tonal; 35 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes; stress on first syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1832–2016. *Writing*: Bengali (Bangla) script, primary usage. Braille script. Newa script, no longer in use. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 272,828,760 (as L1: 233,808,880; as L2: 39,019,880). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Bangladesh, India. Also established in: Nepal, Singapore. Unestablished in: Australia, Bhutan, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

**Bulgarian** [bul]. *Users*: 46,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*:

Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Balto-Slavic, Slavic, South, Eastern. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); vestiges of dual number; definite article affix; verb affixes mark person, number; tense and aspect; comparatives; 35 consonants, 6 vowels, 2 diphthongs; non-tonal; free stress. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Bible*: 1864–1923. *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, primary usage. Cyrillic script, Old Church Slavonic variant, 19th century, experimental usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,745,340 (as L1: 6,541,540; as L2: 1,203,800). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Turkey. Also established in: Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Ukraine. Unestablished in: Australia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Kazakhstan, Libya, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.

**Chinese, Mandarin** [cmn]. *Users*: 22,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*:

Unestablished. *Class*: Sino-Tibetan, Chinese. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; 6 full (concrete meaning) word classes; no articles; passives; 24 consonants, 8 vowels, 6 diphthongs; tonal (4 phonemic tones). *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Bible*: 1874–1983. *Writing*: Bopomofo script, used since 1913, revised in 1920 and 1932, mainly used in Taiwan. Braille script. Han script, Simplified variant, used since 1956, official in Mainland China (1956) and Singapore (1969), also used elsewhere. Han script, Traditional variant, used since mid-19th century, official in Taiwan, also used elsewhere. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,138,222,350 (as L1: 939,237,350; as L2: 198,985,000). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: China. Also established in 17 other countries and unestablished in 60 more.

**Dari** [prs]. *Users*: 6,510 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished.

*Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Iranian, Western, Southwestern, Persian. *Type*: SOV; no articles; verb affixes mark person, number; tense and aspect; causatives; 23 consonants, 7 vowels, 2 diphthongs. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Newspapers. Periodicals. Radio. TV. Videos. Dictionary. Grammar. Texts. *Bible*: 2008. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant, used in print. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, used in handwriting and for book titles. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 30,291,510 (as L1: 10,277,510; as L2: 20,014,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Afghanistan. Also established in: Iran, Pakistan. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Germany, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States.

**Dutch** [nld] (Flemish, Nederlands, Vlaams). Autonym: Nederlands. *Users*: 7,640,000 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 6,160,000 in Belgium (European Commission 2012). L2 users: 1,480,000 (2017 P. Jorgensen). *Location*: Antwerp, East Flanders, Flemish Brabant, and Limburg provinces; one area in Brussels. *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, Low Saxon-Low Franconian, Low Franconian. *Dialects*: Brabants, Oost-Vlaams, Antwerps. *Type*: SVO (SOV in subordinate clauses); prepositions; noun head final; gender (common/neuter); definite and

indefinite articles; passives (middle, active, passive); tense and aspect; comparatives; 21 consonants, 13 vowels, 3 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on first syllable. *Lg Use*: Most also use English [eng] (European Commission 2006). Many also use French [fra] (European Commission 2006). Some also use Standard German [deu] (European Commission 2006). *Lg Dev*: Taught in all primary and secondary schools in Flanders (Dutch-speaking area). Fully developed. Bible: 1526–2004. *Writing*: Braille script, used since 1951. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Called Vlaams in Belgium, even though different from West Flemish (Vlaams) [vls] spoken in West Flanders. In the Dutch linguistic area there are minority rights for French-speaking persons in Drogenbos, Kraainem, Linkebeek, Sint-Genesius-Rode, Wemmel, Wezembeek-Oppem, Mesen, Spiere-Helkijn, Ronse, Bever, Herstappe, Voeren. *Map*: 24. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 24,487,090 (as L1: 22,862,590; as L2: 1,624,500). Also indigenous in: Netherlands. Also established in: Aruba, Caribbean Netherlands, Curacao, Sint Maarten, Suriname, United States. Unestablished in: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

**English** [eng] (Anglais, Engels, Englisch). Autonym: English. *Users*: 4,423,300 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 43,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. L2 users: 4,380,000 (2020). *Status*: 4 (Educational). *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, English. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives after noun heads; articles, adjectives, numerals before noun heads; question word initial; word order distinguishes subject, object, indirect objects, given and new information, topic and comment; active and passive; causative; comparative; consonant and vowel clusters; 24 consonants, 13 vowels, 8 diphthongs; non-tonal; free stress; phrasal verbs. *Lg Use*: Used as L2 by Dutch [nld], West Flemish [vls]. *Lg Dev*: Taught as subject in all primary and secondary schools. Fully developed. Bible: 1382–2002. *Writing*: Braille script. Deseret Alphabet, developed in 1854 with limited usage until 1877. Duployan shorthand. Latin script, primary usage. Shavian (Shaw) script, no longer in use. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1,076,766,120). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Ireland, United Kingdom. Also established in 167 other countries and unestablished in 16 more.

**Flemish Sign Language** [vgt] (VGT, Vlaamse Gebarentaal). *Users*: 6,500 (2021 EUD). 6,500 deaf signers, approximately 0.1% of the total population of Flanders (2021 EUD). *Location*: Scattered in Flanders. *Status*: 5 (Developing). Recognized language (2006, Parliamentary decree, 26 April 2006). *Class*: Sign language, Deaf community sign language. *Dialects*: West-Vlaanderen (West Flanders), Oost-Vlaanderen (East Flanders), Antwerpen (Antwerp), Vlaams-Brabant (Flemish Brabant), Limburg. These regional dialects developed in different deaf schools. Also intra-regional variation, some related to gender and age. Most similar to French Belgian Sign Language [sfb]. Influence from spoken Dutch [nld], particularly in mouthing. Limited influence from Signed Dutch (used for some communication with hearing people). Fingerspelling system similar to French Sign Language [fsl]. *Type*: One-handed fingerspelling. *Lg Use*: Vigorous. 7 schools for the deaf in Flanders but only a few use VGT for instruction. As of 2008, deaf children increasingly attend mainstream schools, with

occasional interpreting into VGT. Used by all. Many also use Dutch [nld], in classrooms for writing (Van Herreweghe and Vermeerbergen 2003). *Lg Dev*: Videos. Dictionary. Grammar. Agency: Federation of Flemish Deaf Organisations (Fevlado). *DLS*: Emerging (0.01). *Other*: Some courses and training programs for L2 users and interpreters. 165 sign language interpreters (2019 EUD). Legal provision of free sign language interpreting since 1993. Christian.

**French** [fra] (Frans, Französisch, Français). Autonym: français. *Users*: 9,650,000 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 4,420,000 in Belgium (European Commission 2012). L2 users: 5,230,000 (European Commission 2012). *Location*: Hainaut, Liège, Namur, and Walloon Brabant provinces; Luxembourg province: Lorraine; southern hills, and one area in Brussels. *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Gallo-Romance, Gallo-Rhaetian, Oil, French. *Dialect*: Lorraine. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final for common adjectives, numbers, possessives, but most attributive adjectives come after the noun; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; comparatives; 20 consonant and 14 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; syllable-timed stress. *Lg Dev*: Taught in all primary and secondary schools in Wallonia (French-speaking community). Fully developed. Bible: 1530–2000. *Writing*: Braille script. Duployan shorthand. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: The following municipalities have minority rights for Dutch-speaking persons: Comines-Warneton, Mouscron, Enghien, Floubecques; and for German-speaking persons: Malmèdy, Weismes, Welkenraedt. *Map*: 24. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Also indigenous in: Andorra, France, Luxembourg, Monaco, Switzerland. Also established in 96 other countries and unestablished in 24 more.

**French Belgian Sign Language** [sfb] (LSBF, LSFB, Langue des signes belge francophone, Langue des signes de Belgique Francophone). *Users*: 4,000 (2021 EUD). 4,000 deaf signers (2021 EUD), approximately 0.1% of the total population of Wallonia. Another estimate: 26,500 (2014 IMB). *Location*: Scattered in Wallonia. *Status*: 5 (Developing). Recognized language (2003, Decree on the recognition of Sign Language, no. 4501 of 22 October). *Class*: Sign language, Deaf community sign language. *Dialects*: Regional dialects developed in different deaf schools. Most similar to Flemish Sign Language [vgt]. Major difference is in the mouthings which, for LSFB, are drawn from spoken French [fra]; sometimes people can understand the other language moderately well, but others have difficulty, especially (as in television) where there is no adjustment to the language of the addressee. Limited influence from Belgium Signed French (used for some communication with hearing people). Fingerspelling system similar to French Sign Language [fsl]. *Type*: One-handed fingerspelling. *Lg Use*: Vigorous. 4 schools for deaf children (Timmermans 2005). Taught in several private schools since 1980s, in vocational schools since 1992 (twelve levels), and in some deaf schools as pilot project since official government recognition in 2003. Interpreters required in court. Used by all. Also use French [fra]. *Lg Dev*: TV. Videos. Dictionary. Agency: Fédération Francophone des Sourds de Belgique (French-speaking Federation of the Deaf Belgians,

FFSB). *DLS*: Emerging (0.01). *Other*: 24 working sign language interpreters (2019 EUD). Instruction offered for parents of deaf children. Christian.

**German, Standard** [deu] (Allemand, Deutsch, Duits). Autonym: Deutsch. *Users*: 2,590,800 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 50,800 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. L2 users: 2,540,000 (2020). *Location*: Liège province: Verviers municipality, Amel, Bnlingen, Bntchenbach, Burg-Reuland, Eupen, Kelmis, Lontzen, Raeren, and Sankt-Vith. *Status*: 2 (Provincial). Statutory provincial language in German-speaking areas (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, High German, German, Middle German, East Middle German. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); definite and indefinite articles; case-marking (4 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; comparatives; 22 consonants, 22 vowels, 3 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on first syllable of the root. *Lg Use*: Used as L2 by Dutch [nld], Limburgish [lim]. *Lg Dev*: Taught in all primary and secondary schools in German-speaking area. Fully developed. Bible: 1466–2016. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. Latin script, Fraktur variant, used until 1940. Runic script, no longer in use. *Map*: 24. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 133,245,880 (as L1: 75,282,080; as L2: 57,963,800). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Also indigenous in: Austria, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Italy. Also established in 40 other countries and unestablished in 23 more.

**Greek** [ell]. *Users*: 28,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Greek, Attic. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); definite and indefinite articles; case-marking (3 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives (active, medio-passive, passive); tense and aspect; comparatives; 18 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; free stress. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1840–1994. *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, used in Ukraine. Greek script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 13,088,220 (as L1: 12,992,220; as L2: 96,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Albania, Greece. Also established in: Australia, Cyprus, Egypt, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine. Unestablished in: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Finland, Germany, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

**Hindi** [hin]. *Users*: 13,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Western Hindi, Hindustani. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head final; content q-word in situ; gender (masculine/feminine); no articles; clause constituents partially indicated by case-marking (direct, oblique), postpositions, and word order; verbal affixation marks person, number, gender, and honorificity of subject; split ergativity; both tense and aspect; passives and voice; causatives; non-tonal; 30 consonants, 10 vowels, 2 diphthongs; stress linked to syllable weight. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1835–2000. *Writing*: Braille script. Devanagari script, primary usage. Latin

script, recent informal usage, especially online on social media. Mahajani script, no longer in use, historic usage. Nawa script, no longer in use, historic usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 609,454,770 (as L1: 344,650,870; as L2: 264,803,900). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: India. Also established in: Kuwait, Nepal, Singapore, South Africa. Unestablished in: Australia, Austria, Belize, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Kenya, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, New Zealand, Oman, Panama, Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sint Maarten, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Yemen.

**Italian** [ita]. Autonym: Italiano. *Users*: 279,000 in Belgium (2018 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Italo-Dalmatian. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; comparatives; 23 consonant and 7 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; stress mostly on penultimate syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1471–1985. *Writing*: Braille script, used since 1974. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 67,935,480 (as L1: 64,647,380; as L2: 3,288,100). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Croatia, Italy, San Marino, Slovenia, Switzerland. Also established in 12 other countries and unestablished in 34 more.

**Kabyle** [kab]. Autonym: Taqbaylit, Tazwawt. *Users*: 49,000 in Belgium (2000). All Berber speakers in Belgium: 115,000. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Northern, Kabyle. *Type*: Gender (masculine/feminine); verb affixes mark person, number, gender of subject; tense and aspect; 47 consonant and 4 vowel phonemes. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. Texts. Bible: 2011. *Writing*: Latin script, primary usage. Tifinagh (Berber) script, symbolic use only. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,496,400 (as L1: 7,489,300; as L2: 7,100). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Algeria (Amazigh). Also established in: France. Unestablished in: Canada.

**Kinyarwanda** [kin]. Autonym: Ikinyarwanda. *Users*: 14,700 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, J, Ruanda-Rundi (D.61). *Type*: SVO; 16 noun classes; no articles; verb affixes mark person, number; tense and aspect; 24 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes; tonal. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Radio. Dictionary. Grammar. Texts. Bible: 1954–1993. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 14,522,750 (as L1: 14,518,160; as L2: 4,590). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda (Fumbira). Unestablished in: Australia, Burundi, Canada, Finland, Kenya.

**Kurdish, Northern** [kmr]. Autonym: Kurdî-Kurmancî, Kurmancî. *Users*: 19,700 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Iranian, Western, Northwestern, Kurdish. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Newspapers. Periodicals. Radio. TV. Videos. Dictionary. Grammar. Bible: 2008. *Writing*: Arabic script,

Naskh variant, used in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. Armenian script, used between 1921–1929, used in Armenia. Cyrillic script, used in Armenia, Russia, and Azerbaijan. Latin script, developed in 1932, used in Turkey and Syria. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 15,789,810 (as L1: 15,785,010; as L2: 4,800). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey. Also established in: Georgia, Lebanon, Turkmenistan. Unestablished in: Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States.

**Limburgish** [lim] (Limberger, Limbourgeois, Limburgan, Limburgian, Limburgic, Limburgs, Limburgs Plat, Lèmburgs, Plat). Autonym: Lèmburgs. *Users*: 600,000 in Belgium (2001). *Location*: Liège province: Eupen; Limburg province: Hasselt, Genk, Maaseik, Voeren. *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, Low Saxon-Low Franconian, Low Franconian. *Lg Use*: Efforts are underway to have Limburgish officially recognized by the Belgian government. All domains, songs. Used by all. Also use Dutch [nld]. Also use French [fra]. Also use Standard German [deu]. *Lg Dev*: Literacy rate in L2: 99%–100%. Dictionary. Grammar. Bible portions: 2001. *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Christian. *Map*: 24. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,300,000. Also indigenous in: Netherlands. Also established in: Germany.

**Lingala** [lin]. Autonym: Lingala. *Users*: 20,100 in Belgium (2013 census). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Northwest, C, Bangi-Ntomba (C.30). *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head initial; 12 noun classes; no articles; verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; causatives; 16 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes; tonal (2 tones: high, low); tendency to vowel harmony. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. Texts. Bible: 1970–2000. *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 40,277,800 (as L1: 20,259,660; as L2: 20,018,140). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Unestablished in: Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, United Kingdom.

**Luxembourgish** [ltz] (Letzburgerisch, Luxembourggeois, Lëtzebuergesch). Autonym: Lëtzebuergesch. *Users*: 30,000 in Belgium (1998). *Location*: Luxembourg province: Arlon and Bastogne area. *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). Statutory language of provincial identity in southeastern Wallonia (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 December). *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, High German, German, Middle German, West Middle German, Moselle Franconian. *Dialect*: Areler. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; articles, adjectives, numerals, relatives before noun heads; question word initial; 3 prefixes, 2 suffixes on a word; rigid word order; passives; nontonal. *Lg Dev*: Newspapers. Radio. TV. Dictionary. Grammar. NT: 2017. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 24. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 528,500 (as L1: 442,100; as L2: 86,400). Global EGIDS level: 4 (Educational). Also indigenous in: France, Germany, Luxembourg. Also established in: Romania (Transylvanian Saxon).

**Pashto, Southern** [pbt]. *Users*: 10,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*:

Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Iranian, Eastern, Southeastern, Pashto. *Type*: SOV; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine); no articles; case-marking (3 cases); verb affixes mark person, number, gender of subject; passives; tense and aspect; causatives. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Newspapers. Periodicals. Radio. TV. Videos. Dictionary. Grammar. Texts. Bible portions: 2011–2019. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant, used in print. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, used in handwriting and for book titles. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 19,871,430 (as L1: 16,391,430; as L2: 3,480,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan. Unestablished in: Finland, Germany, Sweden, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom.

**Persian, Iranian** [pes]. *Users*: 12,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Iranian, Western, Southwestern, Persian. *Type*: SOV; noun head initial; no articles; tense and aspect; causatives; 23 consonant and 6 vowel phonemes; stress on final syllable (or root). *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1845–1995. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, used in Iran. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 78,623,350 (as L1: 57,192,350; as L2: 21,431,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Iran. Also established in: Bahrain, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, Tajikistan, United Arab Emirates. Unestablished in: Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Japan, Kuwait, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan, Yemen.

**Picard** [pcd] (Chtimi, Rouchi). Autonym: Picard. *Users*: 200,000 in Belgium (Salminen 2007). *Location*: Hainaut province: Ath, Mons, Soignies, and Tournai municipalities. *Status*: 6b (Threatened). Statutory language of provincial identity in western Hainaut Province (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 Dec). *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Gallo-Romance, Gallo-Rhaetian, Oil, French. *Dialect*: Belgian Picard. *Lg Use*: The Belgian government recognizes Picard officially as an indigenous regional language. Recognized by the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. Some reports by the French government consider it a separate language from French [fra]. Home, family, friends, community. Some young people, all adults, a few children learn the language (Salminen 2007). Also use French [fra], at school, in court, for administration, and with outsiders. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Bible portions: 1863. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 24. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 700,000. Also indigenous in: France.

**Polish** [pol]. *Users*: 97,200 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Balto-Slavic, Slavic, West, Lechitic. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); no articles; case-marking (7 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; aspect; comparatives; 30 consonant and 8 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1561–2018. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 40,589,930 (as L1: 39,896,930; as L2: 693,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Czechia, Poland, Ukraine. Also established in: Germany, Hungary, Israel, Lithuania, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia.

Unestablished in: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan.

**Portuguese** [por]. Autonym: Português. *Users*: 59,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Portuguese-Galician. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; comparatives; 21 consonants, 13 vowels, 11 diphthongs; non-tonal. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1751–2017. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 263,638,850 (as L1: 236,266,650; as L2: 27,372,200). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Portugal, Spain. Also established in 14 other countries and unestablished in 38 more.

**Punjabi, Western** [pnb]. *Users*: 4,370 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Intermediate Divisions, Western, Panjabi, Western Panjabi. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; gender (masculine/feminine); no articles; case-marking (7 cases); verb affixes mark person, number, gender of subject; passives; tense and aspect; 15 consonant and 24 vowel phonemes; tonal (3 tones: high, mid, low). *Lg Dev*: Literature. Newspapers. Periodicals. Radio. TV. Videos. Grammar. NT: 1819–1931. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, primary usage, also called Shahmukhi. Khojki script. Lahnda (Landa) script, no longer in use. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 66,715,480. Global EGIDS level: 5 (Developing). Indigenous in: India, Pakistan. Unestablished in: Afghanistan, Australia, Finland, Germany, Libya, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.

**Romanian** [ron]. *Users*: 121,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Eastern. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head initial; gender (masculine/feminine/ambigeneric); indefinite article and definite article suffix; case-marking (2 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; 22 consonants, 7 vowels, 2 diphthongs; non-tonal; free stress. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1688–1989. *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, official usage in Moldova until 1991. Cyrillic script, Old Church Slavonic variant, 1688, experimental usage. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 24,478,820 (as L1: 24,461,820; as L2: 17,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Moldova, Romania, Ukraine. Also established in: Hungary, Israel, Serbia. Unestablished in: Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan.

**Russian** [rus]. *Users*: 62,100 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*:

Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Balto-Slavic, Slavic, East. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives after noun heads; adjectives, numerals before noun heads; question word initial; 1 prefix on a word; recursive addition of suffixes allowed; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); no articles; case-marking (6 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense and aspect; comparatives; 32 consonants, 5 vowels, 4 diphthongs; non-tonal; free stress. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1876–2011. *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 254,997,130 (as L1: 146,954,150; as L2: 107,987,980). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Ukraine. Also established in 17 other countries and unestablished in 29 more.

**Spanish** [spa]. Autonym: Castellano, Español. *Users*: 673,100 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 96,100 in Belgium (2021). L2 users: 577,000 (2021). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Castilian. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives, relatives after noun heads; articles, numerals before noun heads; adjectives before or after noun heads depending on whether it is evaluative or descriptive; question word initial; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark number, person; passives; tense; comparatives; 20 consonants, 5 vowels, 5 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. Silbo Gomero whistled variety of Spanish used in Canary Islands. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1553–2012. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Andorra, Gibraltar, Spain. Also established in 40 other countries and unestablished in 32 more.

**Turkish** [tur]. Autonym: Türkçe. *Users*: 145,000 in Belgium (2018 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Turkic, Southern, Turkish. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head final; indefinite articles; case-marking (6 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; causatives; comparatives; 19 consonant and 8 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; stress on final syllable; vowel harmony; evidentiality. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1827–2006. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant, no longer in use. Braille script. Cyrillic script, used in Bulgaria. Greek script, no longer in use. Latin script, used since 1928 or 1929, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 90,028,000 (as L1: 84,010,500; as L2: 6,017,500). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey. Also established in: Germany, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Syria, Uzbekistan. Unestablished in: Albania, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

**Turoyo** [tru]. Autonym: Surayt. *Users*: 2,000 in Belgium (1994). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, Aramaic, Eastern, Central, Northwestern. *Lg Dev*: NT:

1992–2013. *Writing*: Latin script, primary usage. Syriac script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 103,100. Global EGIDS level: 6b (Threatened). Indigenous in: Syria, Turkey. Unestablished in: Germany, Iraq, Lebanon, Netherlands, United States.

**Urdu** [urd]. *Users*: 9,480 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Western Hindi, Hindustani. *Type*: SOV; postposition; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine); no articles; direct and oblique cases; verb affixes mark person, number, gender of subject; passives; tense and aspect; causatives; 35 consonants, 21 vowels; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1843–1998. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, primary usage. Braille script. Devanagari script, used in India (Ahmad 2011). *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 231,717,940 (as L1: 70,555,140; as L2: 161,162,800). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: India, Pakistan. Also established in: Bangladesh (Bihari), Fiji, Guyana, Mauritius, Nepal, South Africa. Unestablished in: Afghanistan, Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

**Walloon** [wln] (Wallon). Autonym: Walon. *Users*: 600,000 (Salminen 2007), decreasing. Active speakers may only be 300,000 (Salminen 2007). Few monolinguals. *Location*: Hainaut, Liège, Namur, Walloon Brabant provinces; Luxembourg province: Bastogne, Marche-en-Famenne, and Neufchâteau municipalities. *Status*: 6b (Threatened). Statutory language of provincial identity in Wallonia (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 Dec). *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Gallo-Romance, Gallo-Rhaetian, Oïl, French. *Dialects*: Central Walloon, Eastern Walloon, Western Walloon, Southern Walloon. Developed between the 8th and 12th centuries from remnants of Latin brought to the region by Roman soldiers, merchants, and settlers. Eastern subdialect considered the most difficult to understand. *Lg Use*: Many native authors. Used in theaters. An indigenous language recognized in Belgium since 1990. Usage began decreasing in the 20th century, but Walloon is increasingly recognized as valuable for informal purposes. More rural use than urban. Not used in schools. Some young people, all adults. Most also use French [fra], particularly many of the youth who are using it as their L1. *Lg Dev*: Newspapers. Periodicals. Radio. TV. Dictionary. Grammar. Bible portions: 1934. *DLS*: Ascending (0.41). *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Also spoken in Luxembourg until recently. It is or was spoken in parts of northern France, and in Green Bay, Wisconsin, United States. *Map*: 24.

**West Flemish** [vls] (Vlaams, West Vlaams, West-Vloams, Western Flemish, Westvlams). Autonym: West-Vlams. *Users*: 1,070,000 in Belgium (1998 University of Ghent). *Location*: West Flanders province. *Status*: 6b (Threatened). *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, Low Saxon-Low Franconian, Low Franconian. *Dialects*: None known. Considered a variant of Dutch [nld]. Reportedly similar to German [deu], English [eng], Frisian [fry]. *Type*: SOV. *Lg Use*: Some of all ages. Also use English [eng]. Also use French [fra]. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 1980–2003. *DLS*: Ascending (0.22). *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Christian. *Map*: 24.

*Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,232,000. Also indigenous in: France, Netherlands.

**Yiddish, Eastern** [ydd]. *Location:* Antwerp. *Status:* 5\* (Developing). *Class:* Indo-European, Germanic, West, High German, Yiddish. *Type:* SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine, feminine, neuter); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark person, number; 20 consonant, 6 vowels and 3 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on first syllable. *Lg Use:* A stable language community. *Lg Dev:* Periodicals. Radio. Grammar. Bible: 1821–1936. *Writing:* Hebrew script. *Other:* Non-indigenous. Jewish. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 408,547 (as L1: 401,947; as L2: 6,600). Indigenous in: Ukraine. Also established in 19 other countries and unestablished in 3 more.



## Languages by Population

In this section the languages of Belgium are listed in order of their population of first-language speakers within the country, from highest to lowest. The entries report just the population and status elements.

### 1,000,000 to 9,999,999

**Dutch** [[nld](#)] *Users*: 6,160,000 in Belgium (European Commission 2012). 7,640,000 in Belgium, all users. L2 users: 1,480,000 (2017 P. Jorgensen). *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 24,487,090 (as L1: 22,862,590; as L2: 1,624,500).

**French** [[fra](#)] *Users*: 4,420,000 in Belgium (European Commission 2012). 9,650,000 in Belgium, all users. L2 users: 5,230,000 (European Commission 2012). *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030).

**West Flemish** [[vls](#)] *Users*: 1,070,000 in Belgium (1998 University of Ghent). *Status*: 6b (Threatened). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,232,000.

### 100,000 to 999,999

**Limburgish** [[lim](#)] *Users*: 600,000 in Belgium (2001). *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,300,000.

**Walloon** [[wln](#)] *Users*: 600,000 (Salminen 2007), decreasing. Active speakers may only be 300,000 (Salminen 2007). Few monolinguals. *Status*: 6b (Threatened). Statutory language of provincial identity in Wallonia (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 Dec).

**Arabic, Moroccan Spoken** [[ary](#)] *Users*: 340,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 39,160,180 (as L1: 29,540,180; as L2: 9,620,000).

**Italian** [[ita](#)] *Users*: 279,000 in Belgium (2018 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 67,935,480 (as L1: 64,647,380; as L2: 3,288,100).

**Picard** [[pcd](#)] *Users*: 200,000 in Belgium (Salminen 2007). *Status*: 6b (Threatened). Statutory language of provincial identity in western Hainaut Province (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 Dec). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 700,000.

**Turkish** [[tur](#)] *Users*: 145,000 in Belgium (2018 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 90,028,000 (as L1: 84,010,500; as L2: 6,017,500).

**Romanian** [[ron](#)] *Users*: 121,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*:

Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 24,478,820 (as L1: 24,461,820; as L2: 17,000).

## 10,000 to 99,999

**Polish** [pol] *Users*: 97,200 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 40,589,930 (as L1: 39,896,930; as L2: 693,000).

**Spanish** [spa] *Users*: 96,100 in Belgium (2021). 673,100 in Belgium, all users. L2 users: 577,000 (2021). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930).

**Russian** [rus] *Users*: 62,100 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 254,997,130 (as L1: 146,954,150; as L2: 107,987,980).

**Portuguese** [por] *Users*: 59,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 263,638,850 (as L1: 236,266,650; as L2: 27,372,200).

**German, Standard** [deu] *Users*: 50,800 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. 2,590,800 in Belgium, all users. L2 users: 2,540,000 (2020). *Status*: 2 (Provincial). Statutory provincial language in German-speaking areas (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 133,245,880 (as L1: 75,282,080; as L2: 57,963,800).

**Kabyle** [kab] *Users*: 49,000 in Belgium (2000). All Berber speakers in Belgium: 115,000. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,496,400 (as L1: 7,489,300; as L2: 7,100).

**Bulgarian** [bul] *Users*: 46,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,745,340 (as L1: 6,541,540; as L2: 1,203,800).

**English** [eng] *Users*: 43,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. 4,423,300 in Belgium, all users. L2 users: 4,380,000 (2020). *Status*: 4 (Educational). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1076,766,120).

**Arabic, Levantine** [apc] *Users*: 32,100 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 47,595,360 (as L1: 47,236,360; as L2: 359,000).

**Arabic, Algerian Spoken** [arq] *Users*: 32,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 41,433,600 (as L1: 35,693,600; as L2: 5,740,000).

**Luxembourgish** [ltz] *Users*: 30,000 in Belgium (1998). *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). Statutory language of provincial identity in southeastern Wallonia (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 December). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 528,500 (as L1: 442,100; as L2: 86,400).

**Greek** [ell] *Users:* 28,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 13,088,220 (as L1: 12,992,220; as L2: 96,000).

**Chinese, Mandarin** [cmn] *Users:* 22,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,138,222,350 (as L1: 939,237,350; as L2: 198,985,000).

**Arabic, Tunisian Spoken** [aeb] *Users:* 20,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 11,709,890.

**Lingala** [lin] *Users:* 20,100 in Belgium (2013 census). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 40,277,800 (as L1: 20,259,660; as L2: 20,018,140).

**Kurdish, Northern** [kmr] *Users:* 19,700 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 15,789,810 (as L1: 15,785,010; as L2: 4,800).

**Kinyarwanda** [kin] *Users:* 14,700 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 14,522,750 (as L1: 14,518,160; as L2: 4,590).

**Hindi** [hin] *Users:* 13,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 609,454,770 (as L1: 344,650,870; as L2: 264,803,900).

**Persian, Iranian** [pes] *Users:* 12,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 78,623,350 (as L1: 57,192,350; as L2: 21,431,000).

**Albanian, Tosk** [als] *Users:* 12,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,924,600 (as L1: 1,918,600; as L2: 6,000).

**Pashto, Southern** [pbt] *Users:* 10,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 19,871,430 (as L1: 16,391,430; as L2: 3,480,000).

## 1,000 to 9,999

**Urdu** [urd] *Users:* 9,480 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 231,717,940 (as L1: 70,555,140; as L2: 161,162,800).

**Arabic, Mesopotamian Spoken** [acm] *Users:* 8,140 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 18,162,050.

**Dari** [prs] *Users:* 6,510 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 30,291,510 (as L1: 10,277,510; as L2: 20,014,000).

**Flemish Sign Language** [vgt] *Users:* 6,500 (2021 EUD). 6,500 deaf signers, approximately 0.1% of the total population of Flanders (2021 EUD). *Status:* 5 (Developing). Recognized language

(2006, Parliamentary decree, 26 April 2006).

**Bengali** [[ben](#)] *Users*: 5,000 in Belgium (2018), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished.

*Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 272,828,760 (as L1: 233,808,880; as L2: 39,019,880).

**Arabic, North Mesopotamian Spoken** [[ayp](#)] *Users*: 4,590 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 10,263,460.

**Punjabi, Western** [[pnb](#)] *Users*: 4,370 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 66,715,480.

**French Belgian Sign Language** [[sfb](#)] *Users*: 4,000 (2021 EUD). 4,000 deaf signers (2021 EUD), approximately 0.1% of the total population of Wallonia. Another estimate: 26,500 (2014 IMB). *Status*: 5 (Developing). Recognized language (2003, Decree on the recognition of Sign Language, no. 4501 of 22 October).

**Turoyo** [[tru](#)] *Users*: 2,000 in Belgium (1994). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 103,100.

## Unknown

**Yiddish, Eastern** [[ydd](#)] *Status*: 5\* (Developing). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 408,547 (as L1: 401,947; as L2: 6,600).

## Languages by Status

In this section the languages of Belgium are listed in order of their status within the country as represented by their level on the EGIDs scale (Lewis and Simons 2010). The language entries are reduced to just the information elements that are relevant to assessing the EGIDS level: population, status, language use, language development, and writing.

### 1 (National)

**Dutch** [nld] *Users:* 7,640,000 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 6,160,000 in Belgium (European Commission 2012). L2 users: 1,480,000 (2017 P. Jorgensen). *Status:* Statutory national language (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Lg Use:* Most also use English [eng] (European Commission 2006). Many also use French [fra] (European Commission 2006). Some also use Standard German [deu] (European Commission 2006). *Writing:* Braille script, used since 1951. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 24,487,090 (as L1: 22,862,590; as L2: 1,624,500).

**French** [fra] *Users:* 9,650,000 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 4,420,000 in Belgium (European Commission 2012). L2 users: 5,230,000 (European Commission 2012). *Status:* Statutory national language (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Writing:* Braille script. Duployan shorthand. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030).

### 2 (Provincial)

**German, Standard** [deu] *Users:* 2,590,800 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 50,800 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. L2 users: 2,540,000 (2020). *Status:* Statutory provincial language in German-speaking areas (1994, Constitution, Articles 2,4,30). *Lg Use:* Used as L2 by Dutch [nld], Limburgish [lim]. *Writing:* Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. Latin script, Fraktur variant, used until 1940. Runic script, no longer in use. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 133,245,880 (as L1: 75,282,080; as L2: 57,963,800).

### 4 (Educational)

**English** [eng] *Users:* 4,423,300 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 43,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. L2 users: 4,380,000 (2020). *Lg Use:* Used as L2 by Dutch [nld], West Flemish [vls]. *Writing:* Braille script. Deseret Alphabet, developed in 1854 with limited usage until 1877. Duployan shorthand. Latin script, primary usage. Shavian (Shaw) script, no longer in use. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1,076,766,120).

## 5 (Developing)

**Flemish Sign Language** [[vgt](#)] *Users:* 6,500 (2021 EUD). 6,500 deaf signers, approximately 0.1% of the total population of Flanders (2021 EUD). *Status:* Recognized language (2006, Parliamentary decree, 26 April 2006). *Lg Use:* Vigorous. 7 schools for the deaf in Flanders but only a few use VGT for instruction. As of 2008, deaf children increasingly attend mainstream schools, with occasional interpreting into VGT. Used by all. Many also use Dutch [[nld](#)], in classrooms for writing (Van Herreweghe and Vermeerbergen 2003). *Lg Dev:* Videos. Dictionary. Grammar.

**French Belgian Sign Language** [[sfb](#)] *Users:* 4,000 (2021 EUD). 4,000 deaf signers (2021 EUD), approximately 0.1% of the total population of Wallonia. Another estimate: 26,500 (2014 IMB). *Status:* Recognized language (2003, Decree on the recognition of Sign Language, no. 4501 of 22 October). *Lg Use:* Vigorous. 4 schools for deaf children (Timmermans 2005). Taught in several private schools since 1980s, in vocational schools since 1992 (twelve levels), and in some deaf schools as pilot project since official government recognition in 2003. Interpreters required in court. Used by all. Also use French [[fra](#)]. *Lg Dev:* TV. Videos. Dictionary.

**Limburgish** [[lim](#)] *Users:* 600,000 in Belgium (2001). *Lg Use:* Efforts are underway to have Limburgish officially recognized by the Belgian government. All domains, songs. Used by all. Also use Dutch [[nld](#)]. Also use French [[fra](#)]. Also use Standard German [[deu](#)]. *Writing:* Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,300,000.

**Yiddish, Eastern** [[ydd](#)] *Lg Use:* A stable language community. *Writing:* Hebrew script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 408,547 (as L1: 401,947; as L2: 6,600).

## 5 (Dispersed)

**Luxembourgish** [[ltz](#)] *Users:* 30,000 in Belgium (1998). *Status:* Statutory language of provincial identity in southeastern Wallonia (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 December). *Writing:* Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 528,500 (as L1: 442,100; as L2: 86,400).

## 6b (Threatened)

**Picard** [[pcd](#)] *Users:* 200,000 in Belgium (Salminen 2007). *Status:* Statutory language of provincial identity in western Hainaut Province (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 Dec). *Lg Use:* The Belgian government recognizes Picard officially as an indigenous regional language. Recognized by the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. Some reports by the French government consider it a separate language from French [[fra](#)]. Home, family, friends, community. Some young people, all adults, a few children learn the language (Salminen 2007). Also use French [[fra](#)], at school, in court, for administration, and with outsiders. *Writing:* Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 700,000.

**Walloon** [[wln](#)] *Users:* 600,000 (Salminen 2007), decreasing. Active speakers may only be 300,000 (Salminen 2007). Few monolinguals. *Status:* Statutory language of provincial identity

in Wallonia (1990, Valmy Feaux Decree of 14 Dec). *Lg Use*: Many native authors. Used in theaters. An indigenous language recognized in Belgium since 1990. Usage began decreasing in the 20th century, but Walloon is increasingly recognized as valuable for informal purposes. More rural use than urban. Not used in schools. Some young people, all adults. Most also use French [fra], particularly many of the youth who are using it as their L1. *Lg Dev*: Newspapers. Periodicals. Radio. TV. Dictionary. Grammar. Bible portions: 1934. *Writing*: Latin script.

**West Flemish** [vls] *Users*: 1,070,000 in Belgium (1998 University of Ghent). *Lg Use*: Some of all ages. Also use English [eng]. Also use French [fra]. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 1980–2003. *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,232,000.

## Unestablished

**Albanian, Tosk** [als] *Users*: 12,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing*: Elbasan script, no longer in use. Greek script, no longer in use. Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,924,600 (as L1: 1,918,600; as L2: 6,000).

**Arabic, Algerian Spoken** [arq] *Users*: 32,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 41,433,600 (as L1: 35,693,600; as L2: 5,740,000).

**Arabic, Levantine** [apc] *Users*: 32,100 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 47,595,360 (as L1: 47,236,360; as L2: 359,000).

**Arabic, Mesopotamian Spoken** [acm] *Users*: 8,140 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 18,162,050.

**Arabic, Moroccan Spoken** [ary] *Users*: 340,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 39,160,180 (as L1: 29,540,180; as L2: 9,620,000).

**Arabic, North Mesopotamian Spoken** [ayp] *Users*: 4,590 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 10,263,460.

**Arabic, Tunisian Spoken** [aeb] *Users*: 20,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script, informal use on social media (Akin 2014). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 11,709,890.

**Bengali** [ben] *Users*: 5,000 in Belgium (2018), based on nationality. *Writing*: Bengali (Bangla) script, primary usage. Braille script. Newa script, no longer in use. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 272,828,760 (as L1: 233,808,880; as L2: 39,019,880).

**Bulgarian** [bul] *Users*: 46,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, primary usage. Cyrillic script, Old Church Slavonic variant, 19th century, experimental usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,745,340 (as L1:

6,541,540; as L2: 1,203,800).

**Chinese, Mandarin** [cmn] *Users:* 22,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Bopomofo script, used since 1913, revised in 1920 and 1932, mainly used in Taiwan. Braille script. Han script, Simplified variant, used since 1956, official in Mainland China (1956) and Singapore (1969), also used elsewhere. Han script, Traditional variant, used since mid-19th century, official in Taiwan, also used elsewhere. Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,138,222,350 (as L1: 939,237,350; as L2: 198,985,000).

**Dari** [prs] *Users:* 6,510 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant, used in print. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, used in handwriting and for book titles. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 30,291,510 (as L1: 10,277,510; as L2: 20,014,000).

**Greek** [ell] *Users:* 28,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Braille script. Cyrillic script, used in Ukraine. Greek script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 13,088,220 (as L1: 12,992,220; as L2: 96,000).

**Hindi** [hin] *Users:* 13,600 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Braille script. Devanagari script, primary usage. Latin script, recent informal usage, especially online on social media. Mahajani script, no longer in use, historic usage. Newa script, no longer in use, historic usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 609,454,770 (as L1: 344,650,870; as L2: 264,803,900).

**Italian** [ita] *Users:* 279,000 in Belgium (2018 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Braille script, used since 1974. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 67,935,480 (as L1: 64,647,380; as L2: 3,288,100).

**Kabyle** [kab] *Users:* 49,000 in Belgium (2000). All Berber speakers in Belgium: 115,000. *Writing:* Latin script, primary usage. Tifinagh (Berber) script, symbolic use only. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 7,496,400 (as L1: 7,489,300; as L2: 7,100).

**Kinyarwanda** [kin] *Users:* 14,700 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 14,522,750 (as L1: 14,518,160; as L2: 4,590).

**Kurdish, Northern** [kmr] *Users:* 19,700 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant, used in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. Armenian script, used between 1921–1929, used in Armenia. Cyrillic script, used in Armenia, Russia, and Azerbaijan. Latin script, developed in 1932, used in Turkey and Syria. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 15,789,810 (as L1: 15,785,010; as L2: 4,800).

**Lingala** [lin] *Users:* 20,100 in Belgium (2013 census). *Writing:* Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 40,277,800 (as L1: 20,259,660; as L2: 20,018,140).

**Pashto, Southern** [pbt] *Users:* 10,300 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant, used in print. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, used in handwriting and for book titles. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 19,871,430 (as L1: 16,391,430; as

L2: 3,480,000).

**Persian, Iranian** [pes] *Users:* 12,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, used in Iran. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 78,623,350 (as L1: 57,192,350; as L2: 21,431,000).

**Polish** [pol] *Users:* 97,200 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 40,589,930 (as L1: 39,896,930; as L2: 693,000).

**Portuguese** [por] *Users:* 59,900 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 263,638,850 (as L1: 236,266,650; as L2: 27,372,200).

**Punjabi, Western** [pnb] *Users:* 4,370 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, primary usage, also called Shahmukhi. Khojki script. Lahnda (Landa) script, no longer in use. Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 66,715,480.

**Romanian** [ron] *Users:* 121,000 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Braille script. Cyrillic script, official usage in Moldova until 1991. Cyrillic script, Old Church Slavonic variant, 1688, experimental usage. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 24,478,820 (as L1: 24,461,820; as L2: 17,000).

**Russian** [rus] *Users:* 62,100 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Braille script. Cyrillic script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 254,997,130 (as L1: 146,954,150; as L2: 107,987,980).

**Spanish** [spa] *Users:* 673,100 in Belgium, all users. L1 users: 96,100 in Belgium (2021). L2 users: 577,000 (2021). *Writing:* Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930).

**Turkish** [tur] *Users:* 145,000 in Belgium (2018 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant, no longer in use. Braille script. Cyrillic script, used in Bulgaria. Greek script, no longer in use. Latin script, used since 1928 or 1929, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 90,028,000 (as L1: 84,010,500; as L2: 6,017,500).

**Turoyo** [tru] *Users:* 2,000 in Belgium (1994). *Writing:* Latin script, primary usage. Syriac script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 103,100.

**Urdu** [urd] *Users:* 9,480 in Belgium (2020 census), based on nationality. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, primary usage. Braille script. Devanagari script, used in India (Ahmad 2011). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 231,717,940 (as L1: 70,555,140; as L2: 161,162,800).

## Languages by Province

This index gives an alphabetical listing of the top-level administrative subdivisions within Belgium. Under the name of each province is a list of the language communities that are located within its area.

### **Antwerp**

Dutch [nld], [13](#)

Yiddish, Eastern [ydd], [23](#)

### **East Flanders**

Dutch [nld], [13](#)

### **Flemish Brabant**

Dutch [nld], [13](#)

### **Hainaut**

French [fra], [15](#)

Picard [pcd], [19](#)

Walloon [wln], [22](#)

### **Liège**

French [fra], [15](#)

German, Standard [deu], [16](#)

Limburgish [lim], [18](#)

Walloon [wln], [22](#)

### **Limburg**

Dutch [nld], [13](#)

Limburgish [lim], [18](#)

### **Luxembourg**

French [fra], [15](#)

Luxembourgish [ltz], [18](#)

Walloon [wln], [22](#)

### **Namur**

French [fra], [15](#)

Walloon [wln], [22](#)

### **Walloon Brabant**

French [fra], [15](#)

Walloon [wln], [22](#)

### **West Flanders**

West Flemish [vls], [22](#)

## Languages by Family

This index gives an alphabetical listing of the linguistic classifications used for the established languages of Belgium. The entries in this index represent the full path in the linguistic family tree from the highest level grouping down to the lowest. All the languages listed in the same entry are members of the same lowest-level subgroup. The referenced page contains the main entry that describes the language.

### **Indo-European, Germanic, West, English**

English [eng], [14](#)

### **Indo-European, Germanic, West, High German, German, Middle German, East Middle German**

German, Standard [deu], [16](#)

### **Indo-European, Germanic, West, High German, German, Middle German, West Middle German, Moselle Franconian**

Luxembourgish [ltz], [18](#)

### **Indo-European, Germanic, West, High German, Yiddish**

Yiddish, Eastern [ydd], [23](#)

### **Indo-European, Germanic, West, Low Saxon-Low Franconian, Low Franconian**

Dutch [nld], [13](#)

Limburgish [lim], [18](#)

West Flemish [vls], [22](#)

### **Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Gallo-Romance, Gallo-Rhaetian, Oil, French**

French [fra], [15](#)

Picard [pcd], [19](#)

Walloon [wln], [22](#)

### **Sign language, Deaf community sign language**

Flemish Sign Language [vgt], [14](#)

French Belgian Sign Language [sfb], [15](#)

## Language Code Index

This index gives an alphabetical listing of all 41 three-letter codes that are used in this work to uniquely identify languages. The referenced page contains the main entry that describes the language. All codes listed are part of the ISO 639-3 standard; see <http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/>.

<b>acm</b>	Arabic, Mesopotamian Spoken, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>lin</b>	Lingala, <a href="#">18</a>
<b>aeb</b>	Arabic, Tunisian Spoken, <a href="#">12</a>	<b>ltz</b>	Luxembourgish, <a href="#">18</a>
<b>als</b>	Albanian, Tosk, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>nld</b>	Dutch, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>apc</b>	Arabic, Levantine, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>pbt</b>	Pashto, Southern, <a href="#">18</a>
<b>arq</b>	Arabic, Algerian Spoken, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>pcd</b>	Picard, <a href="#">19</a>
<b>ary</b>	Arabic, Moroccan Spoken, <a href="#">12</a>	<b>pes</b>	Persian, Iranian, <a href="#">19</a>
<b>ayp</b>	Arabic, North Mesopotamian Spoken, <a href="#">12</a>	<b>pnb</b>	Punjabi, Western, <a href="#">20</a>
<b>ben</b>	Bengali, <a href="#">12</a>	<b>pol</b>	Polish, <a href="#">19</a>
<b>bul</b>	Bulgarian, <a href="#">13</a>	<b>por</b>	Portuguese, <a href="#">20</a>
<b>cmn</b>	Chinese, Mandarin, <a href="#">13</a>	<b>prs</b>	Dari, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>deu</b>	German, Standard, <a href="#">16</a>	<b>ron</b>	Romanian, <a href="#">20</a>
<b>ell</b>	Greek, <a href="#">16</a>	<b>rus</b>	Russian, <a href="#">20</a>
<b>eng</b>	English, <a href="#">14</a>	<b>sfb</b>	French Belgian Sign Language, <a href="#">15</a>
<b>fra</b>	French, <a href="#">15</a>	<b>spa</b>	Spanish, <a href="#">21</a>
<b>hin</b>	Hindi, <a href="#">16</a>	<b>tru</b>	Turoyo, <a href="#">21</a>
<b>ita</b>	Italian, <a href="#">17</a>	<b>tur</b>	Turkish, <a href="#">21</a>
<b>kab</b>	Amazigh, <a href="#">17</a>	<b>urd</b>	Urdu, <a href="#">22</a>
<b>kin</b>	Kinyarwanda, <a href="#">17</a>	<b>vgt</b>	Flemish Sign Language, <a href="#">14</a>
<b>kmr</b>	Kurdish, Northern, <a href="#">17</a>	<b>vls</b>	West Flemish, <a href="#">22</a>
<b>lim</b>	Limburgish, <a href="#">18</a>	<b>wln</b>	Walloon, <a href="#">22</a>
		<b>ydd</b>	Yiddish, Eastern, <a href="#">23</a>

## Language Name Index

This index lists every name that appears in the language listings as a primary or alternate name of a language or dialect. The following abbreviations are used in the index entries: *alt.* ‘alternate name for’; *alt. dial.* ‘alternate name for a dialect of’; *dial.* ‘primary name for a dialect of’; *pej. alt.* ‘pejorative alternate name for’; and *pej. alt. dial.* ‘pejorative alternate name for a dialect of’. Each index entry resolves to the primary name for the language with which the indexed name is associated, followed by square brackets containing the unique three-letter language code from ISO 639-3. The referenced page contains the main entry that describes the language. If the language appears on a map, the entry for the primary name also lists page numbers for the maps on which the language occurs.

- Tosk Albanian**, *see* Albanian, Tosk [als], 11
- Allemand**, *alt.* German, Standard [deu], 16
- Anglais**, *alt.* English [eng], 14
- Antwerp**, *alt. dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Antwerpen**, *dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Antwerps**, *dial.* Dutch [nld], 13
- Algerian Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Algerian Spoken [arq], 11
- Levantine Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Levantine [apc], 11
- Mesopotamian Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Mesopotamian Spoken [acm], 11
- Moroccan Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Moroccan Spoken [ary], 12
- North Mesopotamian Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, North Mesopotamian Spoken [ayp], 12
- Tunisian Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Tunisian Spoken [aeb], 12
- Areler**, *dial.* Luxembourgish [ltz], 18
- Belgian Picard**, *dial.* Picard [pcd], 19
- Brabants**, *dial.* Dutch [nld], 13
- Central Walloon**, *dial.* Walloon [wln], 22
- Mandarin Chinese**, *see* Chinese, Mandarin [cmn], 13
- Chtimi**, *alt.* Picard [pcd], 19
- Deutsch**, *alt.* German, Standard [deu], 16
- Duits**, *alt.* German, Standard [deu], 16
- Dutch** [nld], 13, 24
- East Flanders**, *alt. dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Eastern Walloon**, *dial.* Walloon [wln], 22
- Engels**, *alt.* English [eng], 14
- Englisch**, *alt.* English [eng], 14
- English** [eng], 14
- Flemish**, *alt.* Dutch [nld], 13
- Flemish Brabant**, *alt. dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Flemish Sign Language** [vgt], 14, 0
- Français**, *alt.* French [fra], 15
- Frans**, *alt.* French [fra], 15
- Französisch**, *alt.* French [fra], 15
- French** [fra], 15, 24
- French Belgian Sign Language** [sfb], 15, 0
- German, Standard** [deu], 16, 24  
*see* German, Standard [deu], 16
- Northern Kurdish**, *see* Kurdish, Northern [kmr], 17
- Langue des signes belge francophone**, *alt.* French Belgian Sign Language [sfb], 15
- Langue des signes de Belgique**

- Francophone**, *alt.* French Belgian Sign Language [sfb], 15
- Lèmburgs**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Letzburgisch**, *alt.* Luxembourgish [ltz], 18
- Lëtzebuergesch**, *alt.* Luxembourgish [ltz], 18
- Limberger**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Limbourgeois**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Limburg**, *dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Limburgan**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Limburgian**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Limburgic**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Limburgish** [lim], 18, 24
- Limburgs**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Limburgs Plat**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Lorraine**, *dial.* French [fra], 15
- LSBF**, *alt.* French Belgian Sign Language [sfb], 15
- LSFB**, *alt.* French Belgian Sign Language [sfb], 15
- Luxembourgeois**, *alt.* Luxembourgish [ltz], 18
- Luxembourgish** [ltz], 18, 24
- Nederlands**, *alt.* Dutch [nld], 13
- Oost-Vlaams**, *dial.* Dutch [nld], 13
- Oost-Vlaanderen**, *dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Southern Pashto**, *see* Pashto, Southern [pbt], 18
- Iranian Persian**, *see* Persian, Iranian [pes], 19
- Picard** [pcd], 19, 24
- Plat**, *alt.* Limburgish [lim], 18
- Western Punjabi**, *see* Punjabi, Western [pnb], 20
- Rouchi**, *alt.* Picard [pcd], 19
- Southern Walloon**, *dial.* Walloon [wln], 22
- VGT**, *alt.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Vlaams**, *alt.* Dutch [nld], 13  
*alt.* West Flemish [vls], 22
- Vlaams-Brabant**, *dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Vlaamse Gebarentaal**, *alt.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Wallon**, *alt.* Walloon [wln], 22
- Walloon** [wln], 22, 24
- Walon**, *alt.* Walloon [wln], 22
- West Flanders**, *alt. dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- West Flemish** [vls], 22, 24
- West Vlaams**, *alt.* West Flemish [vls], 22
- Western Flemish**, *alt.* West Flemish [vls], 22
- Western Walloon**, *dial.* Walloon [wln], 22
- West-Vlaanderen**, *dial.* Flemish Sign Language [vgt], 14
- Westvlams**, *alt.* West Flemish [vls], 22
- West-Vlams**, *alt.* West Flemish [vls], 22
- West-Vloams**, *alt.* West Flemish [vls], 22
- Yiddish, Eastern** [ydd], 23  
*see* Yiddish, Eastern [ydd], 23

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