

Ethnologue: Languages of Libya

Twenty-sixth edition data

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List of Abbreviations

A	Agent in constituent word order
ACHPR	African Charter on Human Peoples' Rights (1987)
<i>alt.</i>	alternate name for
<i>alt. dial.</i>	alternate dialect name for
AOV	Agent-Object-Verb
C	Consonant in canonical syllable patterns
CDE	Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)
<i>Class</i>	Language classification
DBS	Deaf Bible Society
<i>dial.</i>	primary dialect name for
DOOR	Deaf Opportunity Outreach
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
IMB	International Mission Board
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
<i>pl.</i>	plural
S	Subject in constituent word order
<i>sg.</i>	singular
SIL	SIL International
<i>Type</i>	Typological information
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
V	Vowel in canonical syllable patterns
VSO	Verb-Subject-Object

How to Use This Digest

This *Ethnologue* country digest provides an extract of the information about the language situation in Libya 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 10) provides detailed information on the 31 languages listed in the *Ethnologue* for the country of Libya. 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. *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.

Many ways of finding languages are provided. “Languages by Population” (page 19) lists the languages in order of their first-language speaker populations. “Languages by Status” (page 22) 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 District” (page 26) lists the top-level administrative subdivisions of Libya and the languages located within each. “Languages by Family” (page 27) lists the languages by their linguistic classifications. “Language Code Index” (page 28) 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 29) lists every name that appears in the language listings as a primary or alternate name of a language or dialect. A total of 43 unique names are associated with the 31

languages described in this digest.

Finally, a listing of all the published sources cited within this digest is found in “Bibliography” (page 31). 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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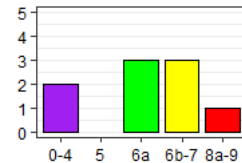
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Country Overview

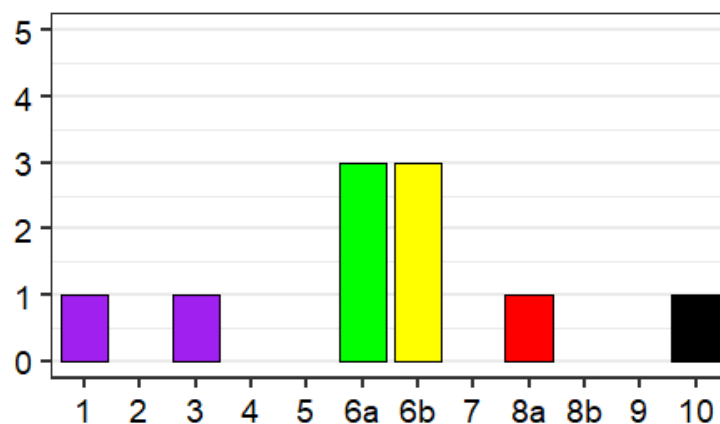
Name of country	Libya
Other names	State of Libya
Population	6,871,000 (2020 World Bank)
Principal languages	Libyan Spoken Arabic, Standard Arabic
Literacy rate	91% (2015 World Factbook)
International conventions	ACHPR (1986), CDE (1973), ICCPR (1970), UNCRPD (2018), UNDRIP (2007)
General references	Applegate 1970, Cohen 1985, Welmers 1971b
Language counts	<p>The number of established languages listed for Libya is 10. Of these, 9 are living and 1 is extinct. Of the living languages, 8 are indigenous and 1 is non-indigenous. Furthermore, 2 are institutional, 3 are vigorous, 3 are in trouble, and 1 is dying. Also listed are 21 unestablished languages.</p>



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 Libya 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 10) 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 22) 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 10) provides a detailed listing of all the languages of Libya. 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 Libya 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 Libya 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 19) 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	1	11.1	11.1%	4,550,000	93.64876	93.64876%
100,000 to 999,999	1	11.1	22.2%	247,000	5.08379	98.73255%
10,000 to 99,999	3	33.3	55.6%	56,200	1.15672	99.88927%
1,000 to 9,999	2	22.2	77.8%	5,380	0.11073	100.00000%
Unknown	2	22.2	100.0%			
<i>Totals</i>	9	100.0		4,858,580	100.00000	

Summary by language status

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of living established languages in Libya 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 22) 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 Libya. 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				
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>
1	1	11.1	11.1%	Unknown				
3	1	11.1	22.2%	4,550,000	93.6488	93.6488%	4,550,000	4,550,000
6a	3	33.3	55.6%	267,000	5.4954	99.1442%	89,000	133,500
6b	3	33.3	88.9%	38,890	0.8004	99.9446%	12,963	13,400
8a	1	11.1	100.0%	2,690	0.0554	100.0000%	2,690	2,690
<i>Totals</i>	9	100.0		4,858,580	100.0000			

Summary by language family

The genealogical classifications given in the language entries of the “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 10) name 3 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				
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	
Afro-Asiatic	7	77.8	4,835,890	99.5	690,841	22,800	
Nilo-Saharan	1	11.1	2,690	0.1	2,690	2,690	
Sign language	1	11.1	20,000	0.4	20,000	20,000	
<i>Totals</i>	9	100.0	4,858,580	100.0			

Alphabetical Listing of Languages

Arabic, Egyptian Spoken [arz]. *Users:* 671,000 in Libya (2020). No monolinguals. *Status:* Unestablished. *Class:* Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Lg Dev:* Radio. TV. Videos. Dictionary. Grammar. NT: 1932. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant, primary usage. Braille script. *Other:* Non-indigenous. Muslim. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 102,436,230 (as L1: 77,436,230; as L2: 25,000,000). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Egypt. Also established in: United Arab Emirates. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Syria, United Kingdom, United States, Yemen.

Arabic, Hassaniyya [mey]. *Users:* 54,000 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Class:* Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Lg Dev:* Literature. Radio. Dictionary. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script, in development. *Other:* Non-indigenous. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 5,189,980. Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Algeria, Mali (Hasanya Arabic), Mauritania (Hassaniyya), Western Sahara. Also established in: Morocco, Niger, Senegal (Hassaniyya). Unestablished in: Gambia (Hassaniyya), United States (Hassaniyya).

Arabic, Levantine [apc]. *Users:* 72,500 in Libya (2020). *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, Belgium, 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, 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, Libyan Spoken [ayl] (Libyan Arabic, Libyan Vernacular Arabic, Sulaimitian Arabic, Western Egyptian Bedawi Spoken Arabic). *Users:* 4,550,000 in Libya (2020), increasing. *Location:* Widespread, especially north. *Status:* 3 (Wider communication). De facto national working language. Shaped by the Sulaimi migration and the migration of Arabs to the Maghreb in 1492 following the Reconquista; spoken throughout northeastern Africa. Used as a lingua franca by Libyans whose L1 is not Arabic. Used in spoken communication in Libya, folk poetry, entertainment, and written communication online. *Class:* Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. A member of macrolanguage Arabic [ara] (Saudi Arabia). *Dialects:*

Tripolitanian Arabic, Southern Libyan Arabic, Eastern Libyan Arabic. In the west it is reportedly similar to Bedouin Arabic of southern Tunisia [aeb]. The Eastern variety is reportedly very similar to Northwest Egyptian Bedawi Arabic [avl] in Egypt. *Type*: VSO. *Lg Use*: Language not considered proper for official occasions, but at university, lecturers use it alongside Standard Arabic [arb]. Daily life. Used by all. Used as L2 by Awjilah [auj]. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Radio. TV. Videos. Dictionary. Grammar. *DLS*: Emerging (0.04). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Other*: Muslim. *Map*: 18. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 5,420,530. Also indigenous in: Egypt (Western Egyptian Bedawi Spoken Arabic), Niger. Unestablished in: Canada, Germany, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

Arabic, Moroccan Spoken [ary]. *Users*: 306,000 in Libya (2020). *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: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.

Arabic, Standard [arb]. *Users*: 5,650,000 in Libya (2015 SIL), all users. *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (2011, Constitutional Declaration, Article 1). *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Type*: VSO; prepositions; noun head initial; gender (masculine/feminine); dual number; definite and indefinite affixes; case-marking (3 cases); verb affixes mark number, gender of subject; aspect; 28 consonant and 6 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; stress on first syllable; trilateral roots, few affixes. *Lg Use*: Not an L1. Nearly all written materials, formal speeches. *Lg Dev*: Taught in all primary and secondary schools. Fully developed. Bible: 1645–2008. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant, primary usage. Braille script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 273,989,700. Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Saudi Arabia. Also established in 30 other countries and unestablished in 1 more.

Arabic, Sudanese Spoken [apd]. *Users*: 305,000 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Radio. TV. Dictionary. Grammar. NT: 1978. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 42,373,370 (as L1: 33,373,370; as L2: 9,000,000). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: South Sudan, Sudan. Also established in: Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Germany, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken [acq]. *Users*: 132,000 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished.

Class: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Lg Dev:* Grammar. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Other:* Non-indigenous. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 11,856,700. Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Yemen. Also established in: Djibouti, Ethiopia. Unestablished in: Egypt, Kenya, Kuwait, Madagascar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

Arabic, Tunisian Spoken [aeb]. *Users:* 213,000 in Libya (2020). *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: Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, United States.

Awjilah [auj] (Aoudjila, Augila, Aujila, Awjila, Awjili). *Users:* 2,690 (2020). *Location:* Al Wahat district: east, Cyrenaica. *Status:* 8a (Moribund). *Class:* Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Eastern, Awjila-Sokna. *Lg Use:* Older adults only. Shifted to Libyan Spoken Arabic [ayl]. *Lg Dev:* Grammar. Texts. *DLS:* Emerging (0.01). *Other:* Outsiders moving into their territory. Muslim. *Map:* 18.

Bulgarian [bul]. *Users:* 3,600 in Libya (2020). *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, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Kazakhstan, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.

Chinese, Mandarin [cmn]. *Users:* 2,320 in Libya (2020). *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.

English [eng]. Autonym: English. *Users:* 13,700 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *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 Dev*: Taught as subject in secondary schools, mostly in private 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: 1076,766,120). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Ireland, United Kingdom. Also established in 168 other countries and unestablished in 15 more.

French [fra]. Autonym: français. *Users*: 8,220 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Gallo-Romance, Gallo-Rhaetian, Oil, French. *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 as subject in secondary schools, mostly in private schools. Fully developed. *Bible*: 1530–2000. *Writing*: Braille script. Duployan shorthand. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Andorra, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Monaco, Switzerland. Also established in 96 other countries and unestablished in 23 more.

Ghadamès [gha] (Berbère, Ghadāmis, Ghadames). *Users*: 13,400 in Libya (2020). *Location*: Nalut district: Ghadamès, a small oasis near Algeria-Tunisia border. *Status*: 6b (Threatened). *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Northern, Zenati, East. *Dialects*: Ayt Waziten (Ait Wazitan), Ayt Welid. *Lg Use*: Some young people, all adults. *Lg Dev*: Grammar. Texts. *DLS*: Emerging (0.01). *Other*: Muslim. *Map*: 18. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 16,500. Unestablished in: Tunisia.

Greek [ell]. *Users*: 8,220 in Libya (2020). *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, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Finland, Germany, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, 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.

Italian [ita]. Autonym: Italiano. *Users*: 30,300 in Libya (2020). *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.

Korean [kor]. *Users*: 15,500 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Koreanic. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1911–1993. *Writing*: Braille script. Hangul and Han scripts, primary usage. Latin script, used for maps and signs. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 81,740,540 (as L1: 81,721,540; as L2: 19,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: North Korea, South Korea. Also established in: China, Japan, Russian Federation, United States, Uzbekistan. Unestablished in: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Brazil, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China–Taiwan, Denmark, France, Germany, Guam, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Mariana Islands, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Vietnam.

Libyan Sign Language [lbs]. *Users*: 20,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/IMB). Estimated 13,000–27,000 deaf signers, assuming 0.2%–0.4% of total population. Another estimate: 38,000 (2014 IMB). *Location*: Scattered. *Status*: 6a* (Vigorous). *Class*: Sign language, Deaf community sign language. *Dialects*: None known. Unclear how similar it is to other sign languages in the region. Not the same as Unified Arabic Sign Language, an artificial system promoted by representatives of 18 Arabic-speaking countries (Rashdan 2016). *Lg Use*: Deaf associations. *Lg Dev*: Videos. Dictionary. Agency: Libyan General Federation of Deaf Societies (LGFDS). *DLS*: Still. *Other*: Muslim.

Maltese [mlt]. Autonym: Malti. *Users*: 7,200 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head initial; gender (masculine/feminine); definite article; verb affixes mark person, number; 23 consonants, 10 vowels, 8 diphthongs; non-tonal. *Lg Dev*: Grammar. Bible: 1932–1984. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant, no longer in use, attempts at using Arabic script have failed. Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 572,540 (as L1: 571,460; as L2: 1,080). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Malta. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Italy, Tunisia, United Kingdom.

Nafusi [jbn] (Djerbi, Jabal Nafusi, Jbel Nafusi, Jebel Nefusi, Nefusi). *Users*: 247,000 in Libya

(2020). Preschool children are monolingual in Nafusi. *Location*: Al Jabal al Gharbi and Nalut districts: Jabal Nafusah, Nalut, Tripolitania, and Yafran areas, isolated on Zuara Coast west of Tripoli. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Northern, Zenati, East. *Dialects*: Zuara (Zouara, Zuraa, Zuwara, Zuwarah, Zwara), Tamezret (Duwinna), Jerbi (Jerba). Zuara dialect well known in Jebel Nafusa area and in Jerba Tunisia. Some visit Zuara, but not vice versa. Matmata and Tatawine area less well understood by speakers in Jerba or Zuara. Speakers in Zuara and Jebel areas understand Jerba dialect stories well. *Lg Use*: All domains. Used by all. Positive attitudes. *Lg Dev*: Radio. TV. Grammar. Texts. *DLS*: Emerging (0.06). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Other*: Most live apart from Arabized inhabitants of the region. Muslim. *Map*: 18. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 297,000. Also established in: Tunisia (Shilha).

Punjabi, Western [pnb]. *Users*: 72,500 in Libya (2020). *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, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.

Sawknah [swn] (Sokna, Sokni, Sukna, Tasuknit). *Users*: No known L1 speakers. The last speaker probably died in the 1950s (Basset 1969). *Location*: Al Jufrah district. *Status*: 10 (Extinct). *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Eastern, Awjila-Sokna. *DLS*: Emerging (0.01).

Serbian [srp]. *Users*: 28,900 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Balto-Slavic, Slavic, South, Western. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); no articles; case-marking (7 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense and aspect; causatives; comparatives; 25 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes, the ‘r’ also functioning as a vocalic (or syllabic) consonant; nontonal. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1804–1868. *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, primary usage. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 10,213,776 (as L1: 10,193,976; as L2: 19,800). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia. Also established in: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Turkey. Unestablished in: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, Zambia.

Sinhala [sin]. *Users*: 16,400 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Outer Languages, Southern, Sinhalese-Maldivian. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); indefinite article suffix;

case-marking (5 cases); tense and aspect; causatives; 23 consonants and 13 vowels; non-tonal; distinctive diglossia. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1823–1982. *Writing*: Braille script. Sinhala script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 17,553,910 (as L1: 15,542,810; as L2: 2,011,100). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Sri Lanka. Also established in: Singapore. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Malaysia, Maldives, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Sweden, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

Siwi [siz]. *Location*: Al Butnan district: Jaghub town. *Status*: 6a* (Vigorous). *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Eastern, Siwa. *Lg Dev*: Grammar. *Map*: 18. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 20,000. Also indigenous in: Egypt.

Tagalog [tgl]. Autonym: Tagalog. *Users*: 13,700 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Central Philippine, Central Philippine, Tagalog. *Type*: Prepositions; no articles; ergativity; tense and aspect; comparatives; 16 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; inclusive/exclusive pronouns. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1905. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. Tagalog script, no longer in use. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 83,054,910 (as L1: 28,746,910; as L2: 54,308,000). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Philippines. Also established in: Canada, Guam, Sweden, United States. Unestablished in: American Samoa, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Brazil, Cayman Islands, China–Hong Kong, China–Macao, China–Taiwan, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Northern Mariana Islands, Norway, Oman, Palau, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom.

Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv] (Tamachek, Tamachek', Tamahaq, Tamashekin, Tamasheq, Tomachek, Tourage, Toureg, Tuareg). Autonym: Tamahaq. *Users*: 22,800 in Libya (2020). *Location*: Ghat and Murzuq districts; south Hoggar mountains, Tamanrasset and south (Hoggar dialect); Ganet and west Libya oases, Ghat area (Ghat dialect). *Status*: 6b* (Threatened). *Class*: Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Tamasheq, Northern. *Dialects*: Hoggar (Ahaggaren, Ajjer, Tahaggart), Ghat (Djanet, Ganet). *Lg Dev*: Grammar. Texts. Bible portions: 1948–1965. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. Tifinagh (Berber) script, called Shifinagh in Niger. *Other*: Muslim. *Map*: 18. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 132,700. Also indigenous in: Algeria, Niger.

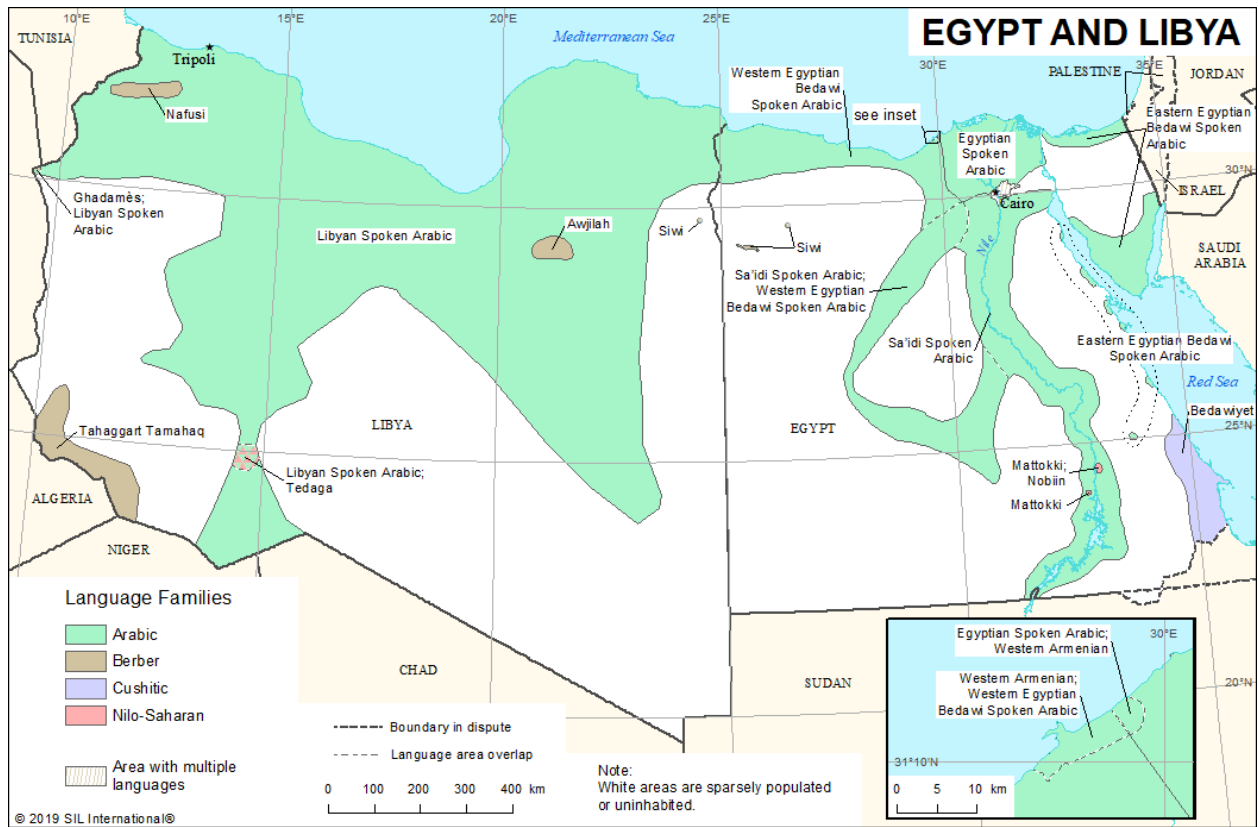
Tedaga [tuq] (Tudaga). Autonym: Tudaga. *Users*: 2,690 in Libya (2020). *Location*: Murzuq district: Al Katrun and Maknusa; southwest border area. *Status*: 6b* (Threatened). *Class*: Nilo-Saharan, Saharan, Western, Tebu. *Lg Dev*: Texts. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 18. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 59,590. Global EGIDS level: 6a (Vigorous). Also indigenous in: Chad, Niger. Also established in: Nigeria.

Turkish [tur]. Autonym: Türkçe. *Users*: 15,000 in Libya (2010 census). *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, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Georgia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

Zaghawa [zag] (Beria). Autonym: Beria. *Users*: 9,400 in Libya (2020). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Nilo-Saharan, Saharan, Eastern. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Dictionary. Grammar. *Writing*: Beria (Erfe) script. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 348,400. Global EGIDS level: 6a (Vigorous). Indigenous in: Chad, Sudan.

Language Map



Languages by Population

In this section the languages of Libya 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

Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl] *Users:* 4,550,000 in Libya (2020), increasing. *Status:* 3 (Wider communication). De facto national working language. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 5,420,530.

100,000 to 999,999

Arabic, Egyptian Spoken [arz] *Users:* 671,000 in Libya (2020). No monolinguals. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 102,436,230 (as L1: 77,436,230; as L2: 25,000,000).

Arabic, Moroccan Spoken [ary] *Users:* 306,000 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 39,160,180 (as L1: 29,540,180; as L2: 9,620,000).

Arabic, Sudanese Spoken [apd] *Users:* 305,000 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 42,373,370 (as L1: 33,373,370; as L2: 9,000,000).

Nafusi [jbn] *Users:* 247,000 in Libya (2020). Preschool children are monolingual in Nafusi. *Status:* 6a (Vigorous). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 297,000.

Arabic, Tunisian Spoken [aeb] *Users:* 213,000 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 11,709,890.

Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken [acq] *Users:* 132,000 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 11,856,700.

10,000 to 99,999

Arabic, Levantine [apc] *Users:* 72,500 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 47,595,360 (as L1: 47,236,360; as L2: 359,000).

Punjabi, Western [pnb] *Users:* 72,500 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 66,715,480.

Arabic, Hassaniyya [mey] *Users:* 54,000 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 5,189,980.

Italian [ita] *Users:* 30,300 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 67,935,480 (as L1: 64,647,380; as L2: 3,288,100).

Serbian [srp] *Users:* 28,900 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 10,213,776 (as L1: 10,193,976; as L2: 19,800).

Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv] *Users:* 22,800 in Libya (2020). *Status:* 6b* (Threatened). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 132,700.

Libyan Sign Language [lbs] *Users:* 20,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/IMB). Estimated 13,000–27,000 deaf signers, assuming 0.2%–0.4% of total population. Another estimate: 38,000 (2014 IMB). *Status:* 6a* (Vigorous).

Sinhala [sin] *Users:* 16,400 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 17,553,910 (as L1: 15,542,810; as L2: 2,011,100).

Korean [kor] *Users:* 15,500 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 81,740,540 (as L1: 81,721,540; as L2: 19,000).

Turkish [tur] *Users:* 15,000 in Libya (2010 census). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 90,028,000 (as L1: 84,010,500; as L2: 6,017,500).

English [eng] *Users:* 13,700 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1076,766,120).

Tagalog [tgl] *Users:* 13,700 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 83,054,910 (as L1: 28,746,910; as L2: 54,308,000).

Ghadamès [gha] *Users:* 13,400 in Libya (2020). *Status:* 6b (Threatened). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 16,500.

1,000 to 9,999

Zaghawa [zag] *Users:* 9,400 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 348,400.

French [fra] *Users:* 8,220 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030).

Greek [ell] *Users:* 8,220 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 13,088,220 (as L1: 12,992,220; as L2: 96,000).

Maltese [mlt] *Users:* 7,200 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 572,540 (as L1: 571,460; as L2: 1,080).

Bulgarian [bul] *Users:* 3,600 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 7,745,340 (as L1: 6,541,540; as L2: 1,203,800).

Awjilah [auj] *Users:* 2,690 (2020). *Status:* 8a (Moribund).

Tedaga [tuq] *Users:* 2,690 in Libya (2020). *Status:* 6b* (Threatened). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 59,590.

Chinese, Mandarin [cmn] *Users:* 2,320 in Libya (2020). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total

users in all countries: 1,138,222,350 (as L1: 939,237,350; as L2: 198,985,000).

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Sawknah [[swn](#)] *Users:* No known L1 speakers. The last speaker probably died in the 1950s (Basset 1969). *Status:* 10 (Extinct).

Unknown

Arabic, Standard [[arb](#)] *Users:* 5,650,000 in Libya (2015 SIL), all users. *Status:* 1 (National).
Statutory national language (2011, Constitutional Declaration, Article 1). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 273,989,700.

Siwi [[siz](#)] *Status:* 6a* (Vigorous). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 20,000.

Languages by Status

In this section the languages of Libya 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)

Arabic, Standard [arb] *Users:* 5,650,000 in Libya (2015 SIL), all users. *Status:* Statutory national language (2011, Constitutional Declaration, Article 1). *Lg Use:* Not an L1. Nearly all written materials, formal speeches. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant, primary usage. Braille script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 273,989,700.

3 (Wider communication)

Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl] *Users:* 4,550,000 in Libya (2020), increasing. *Status:* De facto national working language. Shaped by the Sulaimi migration and the migration of Arabs to the Maghreb in 1492 following the Reconquista; spoken throughout northeastern Africa. Used as a lingua franca by Libyans whose L1 is not Arabic. Used in spoken communication in Libya, folk poetry, entertainment, and written communication online. *Lg Use:* Language not considered proper for official occasions, but at university, lecturers use it alongside Standard Arabic [arb]. Daily life. Used by all. Used as L2 by Awjilah [auj]. *Lg Dev:* Literature. Radio. TV. Videos. Dictionary. Grammar. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 5,420,530.

6a (Vigorous)

Libyan Sign Language [lbs] *Users:* 20,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/IMB). Estimated 13,000–27,000 deaf signers, assuming 0.2%–0.4% of total population. Another estimate: 38,000 (2014 IMB). *Lg Use:* Deaf associations. *Lg Dev:* Videos. Dictionary.

Nafusi [jbn] *Users:* 247,000 in Libya (2020). Preschool children are monolingual in Nafusi. *Lg Use:* All domains. Used by all. Positive attitudes. *Lg Dev:* Radio. TV. Grammar. Texts. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 297,000.

Siwi [siz] *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 20,000.

6b (Threatened)

Ghadamès [gha] *Users:* 13,400 in Libya (2020). *Lg Use:* Some young people, all adults. *Lg Dev:* Grammar. Texts. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 16,500.

Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv] *Users:* 22,800 in Libya (2020). *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant.

Latin script. Tifinagh (Berber) script, called Shifinagh in Niger. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 132,700.

Tedaga [tuq] *Users*: 2,690 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 59,590.

8a (Moribund)

Awjilah [auj] *Users*: 2,690 (2020). *Lg Use*: Older adults only. Shifted to Libyan Spoken Arabic [ayl]. *Lg Dev*: Grammar. Texts.

10 (Extinct)

Sawknah [swn] *Users*: No known L1 speakers. The last speaker probably died in the 1950s (Basset 1969).

Unestablished

Arabic, Egyptian Spoken [arz] *Users*: 671,000 in Libya (2020). No monolinguals. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant, primary usage. Braille script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 102,436,230 (as L1: 77,436,230; as L2: 25,000,000).

Arabic, Hassaniyya [mey] *Users*: 54,000 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script, in development. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 5,189,980.

Arabic, Levantine [apc] *Users*: 72,500 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 47,595,360 (as L1: 47,236,360; as L2: 359,000).

Arabic, Moroccan Spoken [ary] *Users*: 306,000 in Libya (2020). *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, Sudanese Spoken [apd] *Users*: 305,000 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 42,373,370 (as L1: 33,373,370; as L2: 9,000,000).

Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken [acq] *Users*: 132,000 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 11,856,700.

Arabic, Tunisian Spoken [aeb] *Users*: 213,000 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script, informal use on social media (Akin 2014). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 11,709,890.

Bulgarian [bul] *Users*: 3,600 in Libya (2020). *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*: 2,320 in Libya (2020). *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).

English [eng] *Users*: 13,700 in Libya (2020). *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: 1076,766,120).

French [fra] *Users*: 8,220 in Libya (2020). *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).

Greek [ell] *Users*: 8,220 in Libya (2020). *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).

Italian [ita] *Users*: 30,300 in Libya (2020). *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).

Korean [kor] *Users*: 15,500 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Braille script. Hangul and Han scripts, primary usage. Latin script, used for maps and signs. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 81,740,540 (as L1: 81,721,540; as L2: 19,000).

Maltese [mlt] *Users*: 7,200 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant, no longer in use, attempts at using Arabic script have failed. Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 572,540 (as L1: 571,460; as L2: 1,080).

Punjabi, Western [pnb] *Users*: 72,500 in Libya (2020). *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.

Serbian [srp] *Users*: 28,900 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, primary usage. Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 10,213,776 (as L1: 10,193,976; as L2: 19,800).

Sinhala [sin] *Users*: 16,400 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Braille script. Sinhala script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 17,553,910 (as L1: 15,542,810; as L2: 2,011,100).

Tagalog [tgl] *Users*: 13,700 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. Tagalog script, no longer in use. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 83,054,910 (as L1: 28,746,910; as L2: 54,308,000).

Turkish [tur] *Users*: 15,000 in Libya (2010 census). *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).

Zaghawa [[zag](#)] *Users*: 9,400 in Libya (2020). *Writing*: Beria (Erfe) script. Latin script.
Worldwide: Total users in all countries: 348,400.

Languages by District

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

Al Butnan

Siwi [siz], 16

Al Jabal al Gharbi

Nafusi [jbn], 14

Al Jufrah

Sawknah [swn], 15

Al Wahat

Awjilah [auj], 12

Ghat

Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16

Murzuq

Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16

Tedaga [tuq], 16

Nalut

Ghadamès [gha], 13

Nafusi [jbn], 14

Languages by Family

This index gives an alphabetical listing of the linguistic classifications used for the established languages of Libya. 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.

Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Eastern, Awjila-Sokna

Awjilah [auj], [12](#)

Sawknah [swn], [15](#)

Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Eastern, Siwa

Siwi [siz], [16](#)

Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Northern, Zenati, East

Ghadamès [gha], [13](#)

Nafusi [jbn], [14](#)

Afro-Asiatic, Berber, Tamasheq, Northern

Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], [16](#)

Afro-Asiatic, Semitic, Central, South, Arabic

Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], [10](#)

Arabic, Standard [arb], [11](#)

Nilo-Saharan, Saharan, Western, Tebu

Tedaga [tuq], [16](#)

Sign language, Deaf community sign language

Libyan Sign Language [lbs], [14](#)

Language Code Index

This index gives an alphabetical listing of all 31 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/>.

acq	Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken, 11	jbn	Nafusi, 14
aeb	Arabic, Tunisian Spoken, 12	kor	Korean, 14
apc	Arabic, Levantine, 10	lbs	Libyan Sign Language, 14
apd	Arabic, Sudanese Spoken, 11	mey	Hassaniyya, 10
arb	Arabic, Standard, 11	mlt	Maltese, 14
ary	Arabic, Moroccan Spoken, 11	pnb	Punjabi, Western, 15
arz	Arabic, Egyptian Spoken, 10	sin	Sinhala, 15
auj	Awjilah, 12	siz	Siwi, 16
ayl	Arabic, Libyan Spoken, 10	srp	Serbian, 15
bul	Bulgarian, 12	swn	Sawknah, 15
cmn	Chinese, Mandarin, 12	tgl	Tagalog, 16
ell	Greek, 13	thv	Tamahaq, Tahaggart, 16
eng	English, 12	tuq	Tedaga, 16
fra	French, 13	tur	Turkish, 16
gha	Ghadamès, 13	zag	Zaghawa, 17
ita	Italian, 14		

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.

- Ahaggaren**, *alt. dial.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Ait Wazitan**, *alt. dial.* Ghadamès [gha], 13
- Ajjer**, *alt. dial.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Aoudjila**, *alt.* Awjilah [auj], 12
- Egyptian Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Egyptian Spoken [arz], 10
- Hassaniyya Arabic**, *see* Hassaniyya [mey], 10
- Levantine Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Levantine [apc], 10
- Arabic, Libyan Spoken** [ayl], 10, 18
see Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], 10
- Moroccan Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Moroccan Spoken [ary], 11
- Arabic, Standard** [arb], 11
see Arabic, Standard [arb], 11
- Sudanese Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Sudanese Spoken [apd], 11
- Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken [acq], 11
- Tunisian Spoken Arabic**, *see* Arabic, Tunisian Spoken [aeb], 12
- Augila**, *alt.* Awjilah [auj], 12
- Aujila**, *alt.* Awjilah [auj], 12
- Awjila**, *alt.* Awjilah [auj], 12
- Awjilah** [auj], 12, 18
- Awjili**, *alt.* Awjilah [auj], 12
- Ayt Waziten**, *dial.* Ghadamès [gha], 13
- Ayt Welid**, *dial.* Ghadamès [gha], 13
- Berbère**, *alt.* Ghadamès [gha], 13
- Mandarin Chinese**, *see* Chinese, Mandarin [cmn], 12
- Djanet**, *alt. dial.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Djerbi**, *alt.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Duwinna**, *alt. dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Eastern Libyan Arabic**, *dial.* Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], 10
- Ganet**, *alt. dial.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Ghadames**, *alt.* Ghadamès [gha], 13
- Ghadamès** [gha], 13, 18
- Ghadāmis**, *alt.* Ghadamès [gha], 13
- Ghat**, *dial.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Hoggar**, *dial.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Jabal Nafusi**, *alt.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Jbel Nafusi**, *alt.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Jebel Nefusi**, *alt.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Jerba**, *alt. dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Jerbi**, *dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Libyan Arabic**, *alt.* Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], 10
- Libyan Sign Language** [lbs], 14, 0
- Libyan Vernacular Arabic**, *alt.* Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], 10

- Nafusi** [jbn], 14, 18
- Nefusi**, *alt.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Western Punjabi**, *see* Punjabi, Western [pnb], 15
- Sawknah** [swn], 15
- Siwi** [siz], 16, 18
- Sokna**, *alt.* Sawknah [swn], 15
- Sokni**, *alt.* Sawknah [swn], 15
- Southern Libyan Arabic**, *dial.* Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], 10
- Sukna**, *alt.* Sawknah [swn], 15
- Sulaimitian Arabic**, *alt.* Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], 10
- Tahaggart**, *alt. dial.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tamachek**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tamachek'**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tamahaq**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tamahaq, Tahaggart** [thv], 16, 18
see Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tamashekin**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tamasheq**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tamezret**, *dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Tasuknit**, *alt.* Sawknah [swn], 15
- Tedaga** [tuq], 16, 18
- Tomachek**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tourage**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Toureg**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tripolitanian Arabic**, *dial.* Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], 10
- Tuareg**, *alt.* Tamahaq, Tahaggart [thv], 16
- Tudaga**, *alt.* Tedaga [tuq], 16
- Western Egyptian Bedawi Spoken Arabic**, *alt.* Arabic, Libyan Spoken [ayl], 10
- Zouara**, *alt. dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Zuara**, *dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Zuraa**, *alt. dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Zuwara**, *alt. dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Zuwarah**, *alt. dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14
- Zwara**, *alt. dial.* Nafusi [jbn], 14

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