

Ethnologue: Languages of Madagascar

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
CPPDCE	Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)
CSICH	Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)
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
pl.	plural
S	Subject in constituent word order
sg.	singular
SIL	SIL International
<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)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
V	Vowel in canonical syllable patterns
VOS	Verb-Object-Subject

How to Use This Digest

This *Ethnologue* country digest provides an extract of the information about the language situation in Madagascar 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 27 languages listed in the *Ethnologue* for the country of Madagascar. 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. Macrolanguage member languages. *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 17) lists the languages in order of their first-language speaker populations. “Languages by Status” (page 20) 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 Region” (page 23) lists the top-level administrative subdivisions of Madagascar and the languages located within each. “Languages by Family” (page 24) lists the languages by their linguistic classifications. “Language Code Index” (page 25) 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 26) lists every name that appears in the language listings as a primary or

alternate name of a language or dialect. A total of 49 unique names are associated with the 27 languages described in this digest.

Finally, a listing of all the published sources cited within this digest is found in “Bibliography” (page 28). 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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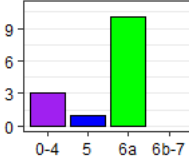
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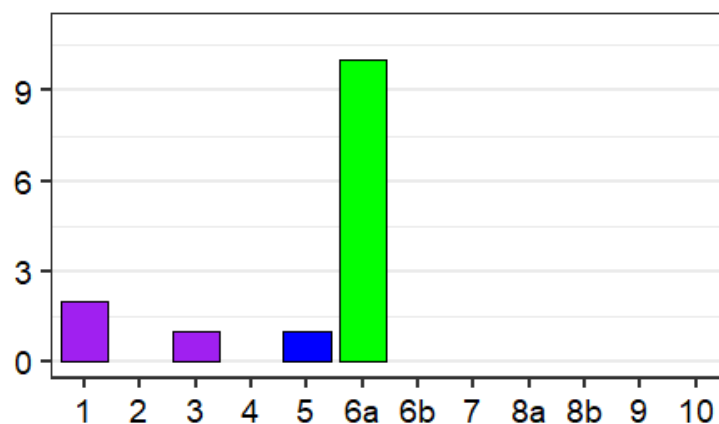
Country Overview

Name of country	Madagascar												
Other names	Republic of Madagascar												
Population	28,472,000 (2021 UNDESA)												
Principal languages	French, Merina Malagasy												
Literacy rate	75% (2018 UNESCO)												
International conventions	ACHPR (1992), CDE (1964), CPPDCE (2006), CSICH (2006), ICCPR (1971), UNCRPD (2015), UNDRIP (2007)												
General references	Bouwer 2010; Campbell and King 2011												
Language counts	<p>The number of established languages listed for Madagascar is 14. All are living languages. Of these, 12 are indigenous and 2 are non-indigenous. Furthermore, 3 are institutional, 1 is developing, and 10 are vigorous. Also listed are 12 unestablished languages and 1 macrolanguage.</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Language Vitality Counts for Madagascar</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Vitality Category</th> <th>Count</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-4</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6a</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6b-7</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8a-9</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Vitality Category	Count	0-4	3	5	1	6a	9	6b-7	0	8a-9	0
Vitality Category	Count												
0-4	3												
5	1												
6a	9												
6b-7	0												
8a-9	0												

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 Madagascar 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 20) 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 Madagascar. 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 Madagascar 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 Madagascar 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 17) 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	7	50.0	50.0%	16,045,000	87.77832	87.77832%
100,000 to 999,999	5	35.7	85.7%	2,204,000	12.05755	99.83588%
10,000 to 99,999	1	7.1	92.9%	30,000	0.16412	100.00000%
Unknown	1	7.1	100.0%			
<i>Totals</i>	14	100.0		18,279,000	100.00000	

Summary by language status

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of living established languages in Madagascar 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 20) 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 Madagascar. 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>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative</i>		
1	2	14.3	14.3%	7,550,000	41.3042	41.3042%	3,775,000	3,775,000
3	1	7.1	21.4%	Unknown				
5	1	7.1	28.6%	135,000	0.7386	42.0428%	135,000	135,000
6a	10	71.4	100.0%	10,594,000	57.9572	100.0000%	1,059,400	1,170,000
<i>Totals</i>	14	100.0		18,279,000	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>
Austronesian	11	78.6	18,114,000	99.1	1,646,727	1,210,000
Indo-European	2	14.3	30,000	0.2	15,000	30,000
Sign language	1	7.1	135,000	0.7	135,000	135,000
<i>Totals</i>	14	100.0	18,279,000	100.0		

Alphabetical Listing of Languages

Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken [acq]. *Users:* 56,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *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, Libya, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

Chinese, Mandarin [cmn]. *Users:* 70,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *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.

Comorian, Maore [swb]. Autonym: Shimaore. *Users:* 3,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status:* Unestablished. *Class:* Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, G, Swahili (G.44). *Lg Dev:* NT: 1995. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Other:* Non-indigenous. Muslim. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 203,600. Global EGIDS level: 5 (Developing). Indigenous in: Mayotte. Unestablished in: Réunion.

Comorian, Mwali [wlc]. *Users:* 1,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status:* Unestablished. *Class:* Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, G, Swahili (G.44). *Other:* Non-indigenous. Muslim. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 45,900. Global EGIDS level: 6a (Vigorous). Indigenous in: Comoros. Unestablished in: Réunion.

Comorian, Ndzwani [wni]. Autonym: Shindzwani. *Users:* 8,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status:* Unestablished. *Class:* Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, G, Swahili (G.44). *Lg Dev:* Bible portions: 2011. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Other:* Non-indigenous. Muslim. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 384,600. Global EGIDS level: 6a (Vigorous). Indigenous in: Comoros. Unestablished in: Réunion.

Comorian, Ngazidja [zdj]. Autonym: Shingazidja. *Users:* 8,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status:* Unestablished. *Class:* Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo,

Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, G, Swahili (G.44). *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 1976–2007. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. Muslim. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 437,900. Global EGIDS level: 5 (Developing). Indigenous in: Comoros. Unestablished in: Réunion.

English [eng] (Anglisy). Autonym: English. *Location*: Scattered. *Status*: 3 (Wider communication). *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. 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. Although English had official status from 2007 to 2010, it is rarely used, with preference given to Malagasy and French [fra]. *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.

French [fra] (Frantsay, Français). Autonym: français. *Users*: 7,730,000 in Madagascar, all users. L1 users: 30,000 in Madagascar (2020 J. Leclerc). L2 users: 7,700,000 (Marcoux et al 2022). *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (2010, Constitution, Article 6). *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 primary schools from grade 2. Used as language of instruction in all secondary 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 95 other countries and unestablished in 24 more.

Gujarati [guj]. *Users*: 89,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Intermediate Divisions, Western, Gujarati. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); no articles; case-marking (6 cases); verb affixes mark person, number, gender of subject; split ergativity; passives; tense and aspect; comparatives; 31 consonants, 8 vowels, 2 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1823–2005. *Writing*: Braille script. Gujarati script, primary usage. Khojki script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 62,116,220 (as L1: 57,076,220; as L2: 5,040,000). Global EGIDS level: 2 (Provincial). Indigenous in: India. Also established in:

Bahrain, Fiji, Kenya, Pakistan, Singapore, Tanzania, Zambia. Unestablished in: Australia, Bangladesh, Botswana, Burundi, Canada, Iran, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, New Zealand, Oman, Réunion, South Africa, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, United States, Zimbabwe.

Korean [kor]. *Users*: 16,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *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, Libya, 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.

Malagasy [mlg]. A macrolanguage. Population total all languages (L1 only): 18,142,360. *DLS*: . *Other*: Includes: Antankarana Malagasy [xmv], Bara Malagasy [bhr], Masikoro Malagasy [msh], Merina Malagasy [plt], Northern Betsimisaraka Malagasy [bmm], Sakalava Malagasy [skg], Southern Betsimisaraka Malagasy [bzc], Tandroy-Mahafaly Malagasy [tdx], Tanosy Malagasy [txy], Tesaka Malagasy [tkg], Tsimihety Malagasy [xmw]. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 18,142,360.

Malagasy Sign Language [mzc] (Madagascar Sign Language). *Users*: 135,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated 80,000–160,000, assuming 0.3%–0.6% of total population. Other estimates: 110,000 (2014 IMB); 170,000, assuming 1% (2014 Rajaonary Theodoric, World Association of Sign Language Interpreters). *Location*: Scattered. *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Class*: Sign language, Deaf community sign language. *Dialects*: None known. Reportedly similar to Norwegian Sign Language [nsl], but this needs verification. *Lg Use*: Vigorous. Used by all. *Lg Dev*: TV. Agency: Federation of the Deaf in Madagascar (FMM). *DLS*: Emerging (0.01). *Other*: 7 deaf schools sponsored by Evangelical Lutherans. 5 working sign language interpreters (2014 World Association of Sign Language Interpreters).

Malagasy, Antankarana [xmv] (Antakarana Malagasy, Antekarana, Antekarana Malagasy, Tankarana, Tankarana Malagasy). Autonym: Antakarana. *Users*: 156,000 (2011 SIL). *Location*: Antsiranana province: Diana and Sava regions; Mahajanga province: Sofia region, a small area. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Dialects*: Lexical similarity: 71% with the Merina dialect of Plateau Malagasy [plt]. *Type*: VOS. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 2014. *DLS*: Emerging (0.01). *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Muslim. *Map*: 16:1.

Malagasy, Bara [bhr]. Autonym: Bara Malagasy. *Users*: 724,000 (2011 SIL). *Location*: Antananarivo province: Vakinankaratra region; Fianarantsoa province: Amoron'i Mania,

Ihorombe, and Haute Matsiatra regions; Toliara province. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Dialects*: Lexical similarity: 69% with the Merina dialect of Plateau Malagasy [plt]. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Grammar. Bible portions: 2011. *DLS*: Still. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 16:2.

Malagasy, Masikoro [msh]. Autonym: Masikoro Malagasy. *Users*: 550,000 (2011 SIL). Ethnic population: A quarter are Masikoro; the rest are Masikoro speakers from other ethnic groups. *Location*: Toliara province: Atsimo-Andrefana region, Moromba south to Tollara; Menabe region, coast near Mangoky river, inland near Mozambique channel. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Dialects*: Lexical similarity: 72% with the Merina dialect of Plateau Malagasy [plt]. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 2008–2015. *DLS*: Still. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 16:5.

Malagasy, Merina [plt] (Ambaniandro, Borizano, Borizany, Fiteny Malagasy, Hova, Malagasy fiteny, Malgache, Official Malagasy, Plateau Malagasy, Standard Malagasy, Teny ôfisialy). Autonym: Malagasy, Malagasy ôfisialy. *Users*: 7,520,000 in Madagascar (2011 SIL). *Location*: Antananarivo and Fianarantsoa provinces; Mahajanga province: Betsiboka region. *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (2010, Provisional Constitution, Article 6), use limited in higher education. *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Dialects*: Merina, Betsileo, Sihanaka, Bezanozano, Tanala, Vakinankaritra, Zafimaniry. Reportedly the most similar language outside Madagascar is Ma'anyan [mhy] in south Borneo (Kalimantan, Indonesia). *Type*: VOS; prepositions; noun head initial; definite article; verb affixes mark person, number; active, passive and circumstantial voices; tense; causatives; 29 consonants, 5 vowels, 3 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable; inclusive/exclusive pronouns. *Lg Dev*: Taught in all primary and secondary schools through all of primary school and as subject thereafter. Fully developed. Bible: 1835–2011. *DLS*: Vital (0.61). *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: The standard is most similar to the Merina dialect, with loans incorporated from Bantu languages, Swahili [swh], Arabic, English, French. Traditional religion, Christian, Muslim. *Map*: 16:6. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,549,160 (as L1: 7,548,360; as L2: 800). Also established in: Comoros (Malagasy). Unestablished in: Canada, Mauritius (Malagasy), Mayotte (Malagasy), Réunion (Malagasy).

Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka [bmm] (Antavaratra). Autonym: Betsimisaraka. *Users*: 1,270,000 (2011 SIL). *Location*: Antananarivo province: areas in Analamanga and Vakinankaritra regions; Antsiranana province: Sava region, south of Bemariva river; Mahajanga province: Sofia region, east and southeast; Toamasina province. East coast from Mahanoro north. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 2014. *DLS*: Emerging (0.02). *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 16:10.

Malagasy, Sakalava [skg]. *Users*: 1,210,000 (2014 SIL). Based on extrapolations of latest census

figures to report on Malagasy people groups (2014 L. Bouwer). *Location*: Antananarivo province: western Bongolava and Vakinankaratra regions; Antsiranana province: Diana region; Fianarantsoa province: western Amoron'i Mania region; Mahajanga province; Toliara province: Atsimo-Andrefana and Menabe (coastline only) regions. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Dialects*: Vezo, Northern Sakalava Boeny, Southern Sakalava Boeny, Menabe. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *DLS*: Emerging (0.05). *Map*: 16:11.

Malagasy, Southern Betsimisaraka [bzc] (Antatsimo, Betsimisaraka). *Users*: 2,000,000 (2011 SIL). *Location*: Antananarivo province: Vakinankaratra region; Fianarantsoa province: Amoron'i Mania and Atsimo-Atsinanana regions; Vatovavy-Fitovinany region, Nosy Varika, Manakara Atsimo, and Mananjary districts; Toamasina province: Alaotra-Mangoro region, south border; Atsinanana region, Mahanoro district. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Lg Use*: All domains, except education, religion, and government. Used by all. Positive attitudes. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. *DLS*: Emerging (0.02). *Other*: Traditional religion. *Map*: 16:12.

Malagasy, Tandro-Mahafaly [tdx] (Mahafaly, Ntandroy, Tandroy). *Autonym*: Antandroy. *Users*: 1,300,000 (2011 SIL). Tandroy 865,000; Mahafaly 330,000; Karimbola 103,000. *Location*: Toliara province: Androy region, Ambovombe, Bekily, Beloha, and Tsihombe districts; Anosy and Atsimo-Andrefana regions. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Dialects*: Lexical similarity: 62% with the Merina dialect of Plateau Malagasy [plt]. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 2012–2014. *DLS*: Emerging (0.05). *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 16:13.

Malagasy, Tanosy [txy]. *Users*: 639,000 (2011 SIL). *Location*: Fianarantsoa province: Atsimo-Atsinanana region, Mahafaly area and northeast; Toliara province: Androy, Anosy, and Atsimo-Andrefana regions, southeast coast. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Dialects*: Lexical similarity: 75% with the Merina dialect of Plateau Malagasy [plt]. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 2014. *DLS*: Still. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 16:14.

Malagasy, Tesaka [tkg] (Antaisaka, Antesaka, Atesaka). *Autonym*: Tesaka Malagasy. *Users*: 1,130,000 (2010 T. Bergman). *Location*: Fianarantsoa province: Atsimo-Atsinanana and Ihorombe regions; Toliara province: Anosy region, migrating, particularly to western deltas. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Lg Use*: All domains, except education, religion, and government. Used by all. Positive attitudes. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 2014. *DLS*: Still. *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Traditional religion. *Map*: 16:15.

Malagasy, Tsimihety [xmw] (Tsimihety). *Autonym*: Tsimihety Malagasy. *Users*: 1,615,000 (2011 SIL). *Location*: Antsiranana province; Fianarantsoa province: Analanjirofo and Alaotra-Mangoro regions; Mahajanga province: Sofia region. *Status*: 6a (Vigorous). *Class*:

Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. A member of macrolanguage Malagasy [mlg]. *Dialects*: Lexical similarity: 68% with the Merina dialect of Plateau Malagasy [plt]. *Type*: VOS. *Lg Use*: Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Bible portions: 1924. *DLS*: Still. *Writing*: Latin script. *Map*: 16:16.

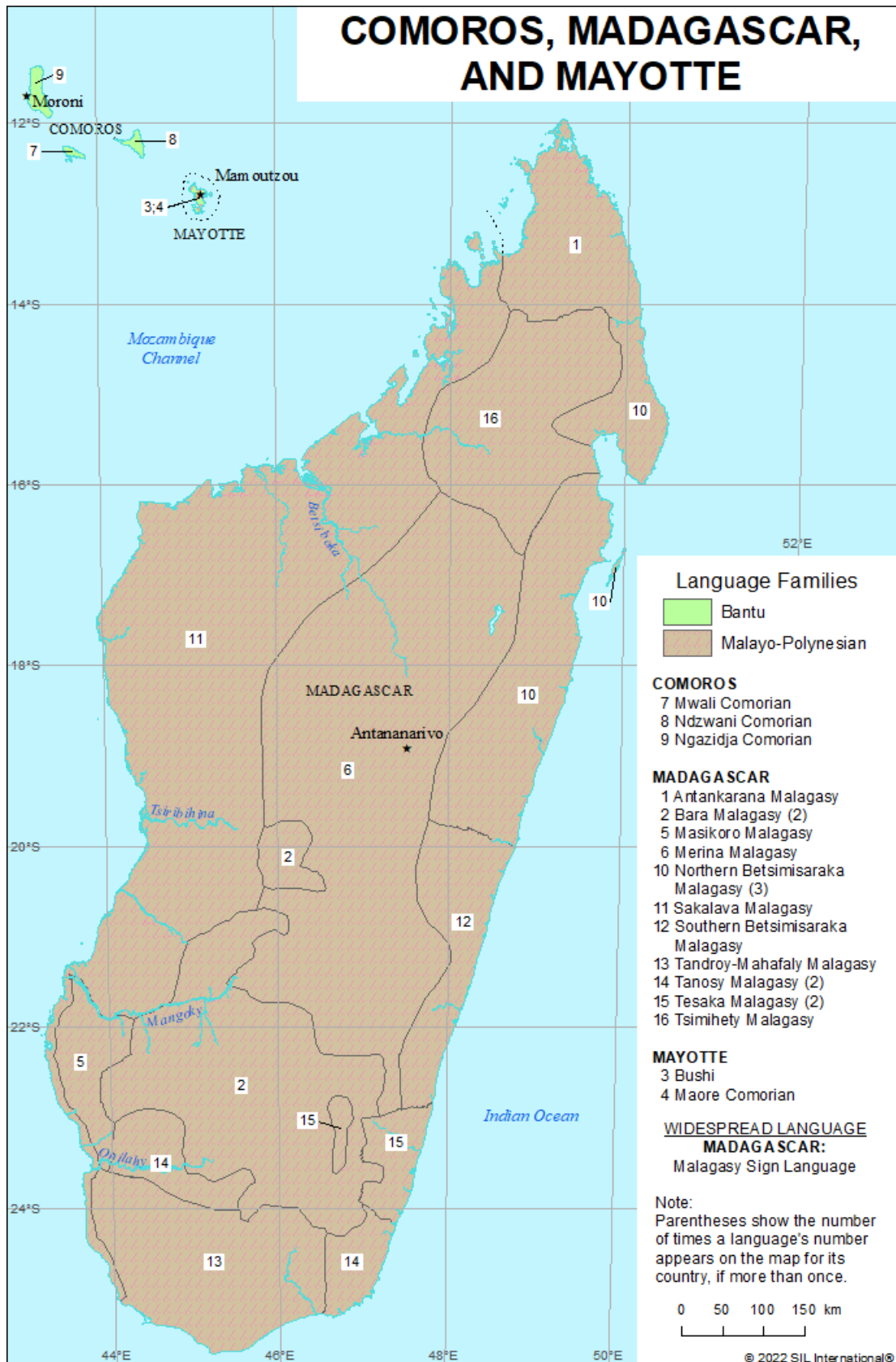
Malay [zlm]. *Users*: 33,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Malayo-Chamic, Malayic, Malay. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 19,179,170 (as L1: 16,171,280; as L2: 3,007,890). Global EGIDS level: 5 (Developing). Indigenous in: Indonesia, Malaysia. Also established in: Singapore. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, China–Taiwan, Germany, Ireland, Japan, United Kingdom, United States, Yemen.

Morisyen [mfe]. Autonym: Kreol Morisien. *Users*: 3,600 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Creole, French based. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. NT: 2010. *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,040,810 (as L1: 1,034,270; as L2: 6,540). Global EGIDS level: 3 (Wider communication). Indigenous in: Mauritius. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, France, South Africa, United Kingdom.

Réunion French Creole [rcf]. Autonym: Kréol réunioné. *Users*: 111,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Creole, French based. *Lg Dev*: Grammar. Bible portions: 2017. *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 809,000. Global EGIDS level: 5 (Developing). Indigenous in: Réunion. Also established in: France.

Swahili [swh]. Autonym: Kiswahili. *Users*: 5,600 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Niger-Congo, Atlantic-Congo, Volta-Congo, Benue-Congo, Bantoid, Southern, Narrow Bantu, Central, G, Swahili (G.42). *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head initial; 18 noun classes; no articles; verb affixes mark person, number, object; passives; causatives; comparatives; 22 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1891–2017. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 71,558,080 (as L1: 16,164,680; as L2: 55,393,400). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia, Tanzania. Also established in: Burundi, Oman, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Comoros, Finland, Mayotte, New Zealand, Réunion, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

Language Map



Languages by Population

In this section the languages of Madagascar 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

Malagasy, Merina [plt] *Users:* 7,520,000 in Madagascar (2011 SIL). *Status:* 1 (National).

Statutory national language (2010, Provisional Constitution, Article 6), use limited in higher education. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 7,549,160 (as L1: 7,548,360; as L2: 800).

Malagasy, Southern Betsimisaraka [bzc] *Users:* 2,000,000 (2011 SIL). *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy, Tsimihety [xmw] *Users:* 1,615,000 (2011 SIL). *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy, Tandroy-Mahafaly [tdx] *Users:* 1,300,000 (2011 SIL). Tandroy 865,000; Mahafaly 330,000; Karimbola 103,000. *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka [bmm] *Users:* 1,270,000 (2011 SIL). *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy, Sakalava [skg] *Users:* 1,210,000 (2014 SIL). Based on extrapolations of latest census figures to report on Malagasy people groups (2014 L. Bouwer). *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy, Tesaka [tkg] *Users:* 1,130,000 (2010 T. Bergman). *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

100,000 to 999,999

Malagasy, Bara [bhr] *Users:* 724,000 (2011 SIL). *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy, Tanosy [txy] *Users:* 639,000 (2011 SIL). *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy, Masikoro [msh] *Users:* 550,000 (2011 SIL). Ethnic population: A quarter are Masikoro; the rest are Masikoro speakers from other ethnic groups. *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy, Antankarana [xmv] *Users:* 156,000 (2011 SIL). *Status:* 6a (Vigorous).

Malagasy Sign Language [mzc] *Users:* 135,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated 80,000–160,000, assuming 0.3%–0.6% of total population. Other estimates: 110,000 (2014 IMB); 170,000, assuming 1% (2014 Rajaonary Theodoric, World Association of Sign Language Interpreters). *Status:* 5 (Developing).

Réunion French Creole [rcf] *Users:* 111,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 809,000.

10,000 to 99,999

Gujarati [guj] *Users:* 89,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status:*

Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 62,116,220 (as L1: 57,076,220; as L2: 5,040,000).

Chinese, Mandarin [cmn] *Users*: 70,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,138,222,350 (as L1: 939,237,350; as L2: 198,985,000).

Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken [acq] *Users*: 56,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 11,856,700.

Malay [zlm] *Users*: 33,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 19,179,170 (as L1: 16,171,280; as L2: 3,007,890).

French [fra] *Users*: 30,000 in Madagascar (2020 J. Leclerc). 7,730,000 in Madagascar, all users. L2 users: 7,700,000 (Marcoux et al 2022). *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (2010, Constitution, Article 6). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030).

Korean [kor] *Users*: 16,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 81,740,540 (as L1: 81,721,540; as L2: 19,000).

1,000 to 9,999

Comorian, Ndzwani [wni] *Users*: 8,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 384,600.

Comorian, Ngazidja [zdj] *Users*: 8,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 437,900.

Swahili [swh] *Users*: 5,600 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 71,558,080 (as L1: 16,164,680; as L2: 55,393,400).

Morisyen [mfe] *Users*: 3,600 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,040,810 (as L1: 1,034,270; as L2: 6,540).

Comorian, Maore [swb] *Users*: 3,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 203,600.

Comorian, Mwali [wlc] *Users*: 1,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 45,900.

Unknown

English [eng] *Status*: 3 (Wider communication). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries:

1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1076,766,120).

Languages by Status

In this section the languages of Madagascar 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)

French [[fra](#)] *Users:* 7,730,000 in Madagascar, all users. L1 users: 30,000 in Madagascar (2020 J. Leclerc). L2 users: 7,700,000 (Marcoux et al 2022). *Status:* Statutory national language (2010, Constitution, Article 6). *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).

Malagasy, Merina [[plt](#)] *Users:* 7,520,000 in Madagascar (2011 SIL). *Status:* Statutory national language (2010, Provisional Constitution, Article 6), use limited in higher education. *Lg Dev:* Fully developed. Bible: 1835–2011. *Writing:* Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 7,549,160 (as L1: 7,548,360; as L2: 800).

3 (Wider communication)

English [[eng](#)] *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).

5 (Developing)

Malagasy Sign Language [[mzc](#)] *Users:* 135,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated 80,000–160,000, assuming 0.3%–0.6% of total population. Other estimates: 110,000 (2014 IMB); 170,000, assuming 1% (2014 Rajaonary Theodoric, World Association of Sign Language Interpreters). *Lg Use:* Vigorous. Used by all. *Lg Dev:* TV.

6a (Vigorous)

Malagasy, Antankarana [[xmv](#)] *Users:* 156,000 (2011 SIL). *Lg Use:* Used by all. *Lg Dev:* Bible portions: 2014. *Writing:* Latin script.

Malagasy, Bara [[bhr](#)] *Users:* 724,000 (2011 SIL). *Lg Use:* Used by all. *Lg Dev:* Grammar. Bible portions: 2011. *Writing:* Latin script.

Malagasy, Masikoro [[msh](#)] *Users:* 550,000 (2011 SIL). Ethnic population: A quarter are Masikoro; the rest are Masikoro speakers from other ethnic groups. *Lg Use:* Used by all. *Lg*

Dev: Bible portions: 2008–2015. *Writing:* Latin script.

Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka [bmm] *Users:* 1,270,000 (2011 SIL). *Lg Use:* Used by all. *Lg Dev:* Bible portions: 2014. *Writing:* Latin script.

Malagasy, Sakalava [skg] *Users:* 1,210,000 (2014 SIL). Based on extrapolations of latest census figures to report on Malagasy people groups (2014 L. Bouwer). *Lg Use:* Used by all.

Malagasy, Southern Betsimisaraka [bzc] *Users:* 2,000,000 (2011 SIL). *Lg Use:* All domains, except education, religion, and government. Used by all. Positive attitudes. *Lg Dev:* Dictionary.

Malagasy, Tandroy-Mahafaly [tdx] *Users:* 1,300,000 (2011 SIL). Tandroy 865,000; Mahafaly 330,000; Karimbola 103,000. *Lg Use:* Used by all. *Lg Dev:* Bible portions: 2012–2014. *Writing:* Latin script.

Malagasy, Tanosy [txy] *Users:* 639,000 (2011 SIL). *Lg Use:* Used by all. *Lg Dev:* Bible portions: 2014. *Writing:* Latin script.

Malagasy, Tesaka [tkg] *Users:* 1,130,000 (2010 T. Bergman). *Lg Use:* All domains, except education, religion, and government. Used by all. Positive attitudes. *Lg Dev:* Bible portions: 2014. *Writing:* Latin script.

Malagasy, Tsimihety [xmw] *Users:* 1,615,000 (2011 SIL). *Lg Use:* Used by all. *Lg Dev:* Bible portions: 1924. *Writing:* Latin script.

Unestablished

Arabic, Ta'izzi-Adeni Spoken [acq] *Users:* 56,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 11,856,700.

Chinese, Mandarin [cmn] *Users:* 70,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *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).

Comorian, Maore [swb] *Users:* 3,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 203,600.

Comorian, Mwali [wlc] *Users:* 1,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 45,900.

Comorian, Ndzwani [wni] *Users:* 8,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 384,600.

Comorian, Ngazidja [zdj] *Users:* 8,000 in Madagascar (Johnstone and Mandryk 2001). *Writing:*

Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 437,900.

Gujarati [guj] *Users*: 89,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Writing*: Braille script. Gujarati script, primary usage. Khojki script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 62,116,220 (as L1: 57,076,220; as L2: 5,040,000).

Korean [kor] *Users*: 16,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *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).

Malay [zlm] *Users*: 33,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 19,179,170 (as L1: 16,171,280; as L2: 3,007,890).

Morisyen [mfe] *Users*: 3,600 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,040,810 (as L1: 1,034,270; as L2: 6,540).

Réunion French Creole [rcf] *Users*: 111,000 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 809,000.

Swahili [swh] *Users*: 5,600 in Madagascar (2020 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 71,558,080 (as L1: 16,164,680; as L2: 55,393,400).

Languages by Region

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

Antananarivo

- Malagasy, Bara [bhr], 12
- Malagasy, Merina [plt], 13
- Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka [bmm], 13
- Malagasy, Sakalava [skg], 13
- Malagasy, Southern Betsimisaraka [bzc], 14

Antsiranana

- Malagasy, Antankarana [xmv], 12
- Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka [bmm], 13
- Malagasy, Sakalava [skg], 13
- Malagasy, Tsimihety [xmw], 14

Fianarantsoa

- Malagasy, Bara [bhr], 12
- Malagasy, Merina [plt], 13
- Malagasy, Sakalava [skg], 13
- Malagasy, Southern Betsimisaraka [bzc], 14
- Malagasy, Tanosy [txy], 14
- Malagasy, Tesaka [tkg], 14
- Malagasy, Tsimihety [xmw], 14

Mahajanga

- Malagasy, Antankarana [xmv], 12
- Malagasy, Merina [plt], 13
- Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka [bmm], 13
- Malagasy, Sakalava [skg], 13
- Malagasy, Tsimihety [xmw], 14

Mayotte

- Comorian, Maore [swb], 10

Toamasina

- Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka [bmm], 13
- Malagasy, Southern Betsimisaraka [bzc], 14

Toliara

- Malagasy, Bara [bhr], 12
- Malagasy, Masikoro [msh], 13
- Malagasy, Sakalava [skg], 13
- Malagasy, Tandroy-Mahafaly [tdx], 14
- Malagasy, Tanosy [txy], 14
- Malagasy, Tesaka [tkg], 14

Languages by Family

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

Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy

- Malagasy, Antankarana [xmv], [12](#)
- Malagasy, Bara [bhr], [12](#)
- Malagasy, Masikoro [msh], [13](#)
- Malagasy, Merina [plt], [13](#)
- Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka [bmm], [13](#)
- Malagasy, Sakalava [skg], [13](#)
- Malagasy, Southern Betsimisaraka [bzc], [14](#)
- Malagasy, Tandroay-Mahafaly [tdx], [14](#)
- Malagasy, Tanosy [txy], [14](#)
- Malagasy, Tesaka [tkg], [14](#)
- Malagasy, Tsimihety [xmw], [14](#)

Indo-European, Germanic, West, English

- English [eng], [11](#)

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

- French [fra], [11](#)

Sign language, Deaf community sign language

- Malagasy Sign Language [mzc], [12](#)

Language Code Index

This index gives an alphabetical listing of all 27 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, 10	rcf	Réunion French Creole, 15
bhr	Malagasy, Bara, 12	skg	Malagasy, Sakalava, 13
bmm	Malagasy, Northern Betsimisaraka, 13	swb	Comorian, Maore, 10
bzc	Malagasy, Southern Betsimisaraka, 14	swh	Swahili, 15
cmn	Chinese, Mandarin, 10	tdx	Malagasy, Tandroy-Mahafaly, 14
eng	English, 11	tkg	Malagasy, Tesaka, 14
fra	French, 11	txy	Malagasy, Tanosy, 14
guj	Gujarati, 11	wlc	Comorian, Mwali, 10
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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.

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