

# Ethnologue: Languages of Mauritius

## 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)
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
UNCRRPD	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

## How to Use This Digest

This *Ethnologue* country digest provides an extract of the information about the language situation in Mauritius 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 16 languages listed in the *Ethnologue* for the country of Mauritius. 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 16) lists the languages in order of their first-language speaker populations. “Languages by Status” (page 18) 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 Family” (page 21) lists the languages by their linguistic classifications. “Language Code Index” (page 22) 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 23) lists every name that appears in the language listings as a primary or alternate name of a language or dialect. A total of 26 unique names are associated with the 16 languages described in this digest.

Finally, a listing of all the published sources cited within this digest is found in “Bibliography”

(page 24). 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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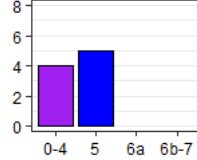
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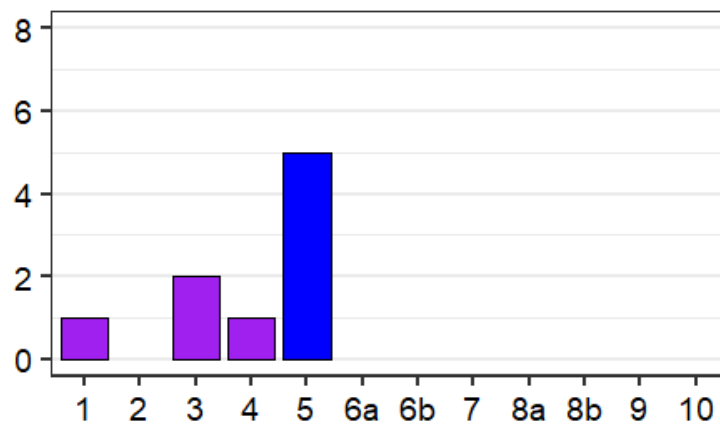
## Country Overview

Name of country	Mauritius
Other names	Republic of Mauritius
Population	1,273,000 (2021 UNDESA)
Comments	Includes Rodrigues and other islands.
Principal languages	English, French
Literacy rate	91% (2018 UNESCO)
International conventions	ACHPR (1992), CDE (1970), CPPDCE (2006), CSICH (2004), ICCPR (1973), UNCRPD (2010), UNDRIP (2007)
General references	Baker 1972, Baker and Ramnak 1985, Barz and Siegel 1988, Eriksen 1990
Language counts	<p>The number of established languages listed for Mauritius is 9. All are living languages. Of these, 2 are indigenous and 7 are non-indigenous. Furthermore, 4 are institutional and 5 are developing. Also listed are 7 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 Mauritius 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 18) 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 Mauritius. 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 Mauritius 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 Mauritius 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 16) 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
100,000 to 999,999	1	11.1	11.1%	976,000	85.29977	85.29977%
10,000 to 99,999	4	44.4	55.6%	162,200	14.17584	99.47562%
1,000 to 9,999	3	33.3	88.9%	5,200	0.45447	99.93008%
100 to 999	1	11.1	100.0%	800	0.06992	100.00000%
<i>Totals</i>	9	100.0		1,144,200	100.00000	

### Summary by language status

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of living established languages in Mauritius 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 18) 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 Mauritius. 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%	3,100	0.2709	0.2709%	3,100	3,100
3	2	22.2	33.3%	1,027,000	89.7570	90.0280%	513,500	513,500
4	1	11.1	44.4%	800	0.0699	90.0979%	800	800
5	5	55.6	100.0%	113,300	9.9021	100.0000%	22,660	20,200
<i>Totals</i>	9	100.0		1,144,200	100.0000			

## Summary by language family

The genealogical classifications given in the language entries of the “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 10) name 5 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>
Creole	1	11.1	976,000	85.3	976,000	976,000
Dravidian	1	11.1	1,100	0.1	1,100	1,100
Indo-European	5	55.6	145,900	12.8	29,180	25,000
Sign language	1	11.1	1,000	0.1	1,000	1,000
Sino-Tibetan	1	11.1	20,200	1.8	20,200	20,200
<i>Totals</i>	9	100.0	1,144,200	100.0		

## Alphabetical Listing of Languages

**Bengali** [ben]. *Users*: 6,660 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Outer Languages, Eastern, Bengali-Assamese. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head both initial and final; 3 genders: male, female, neuter; content q-word initial and final; clause constituents indicated by case-marking (5 cases) and word order; verb affixes mark person, number; definite article affix; tense; passives and voice; causatives; comparatives; non-tonal; 35 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes; stress on first syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Bible*: 1832–2016. *Writing*: Bengali (Bangla) script, primary usage. Braille script. Newa script, no longer in use. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 272,828,760 (as L1: 233,808,880; as L2: 39,019,880). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Bangladesh, India. Also established in: Nepal, Singapore. Unestablished in: Australia, Belgium, Bhutan, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

**Bhojpuri** [bho]. *Users*: 66,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Location*: Widespread. *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Outer Languages, Eastern, Bihari. *Dialects*: Mauritian Bhojpuri, Bojpur. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine for animate nouns); content q-word in situ; clause constituents indicated by both case-marking (3 cases) and word order; verbal affixation marks person, number and genders of subject and object; no ergativity; tense and aspect; non-tonal; 34 consonant and 6 vowel phonemes, about 4 diphthongs; stress on penultimate syllable. *Lg Use*: Government and politics. *Lg Dev*: Taught as subject in primary schools. Taught as subject in tertiary schools. Literature. Newspapers. Periodicals. Radio. TV. Videos. Grammar. Texts. NT: 1998–2006. *Writing*: Devanagari script. Kaithi script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. Although often called Hindi, the language is Bhojpuri. Hindu. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 52,463,000 (as L1: 52,303,000; as L2: 160,000). Global EGIDS level: 4 (Educational). Indigenous in: India, Nepal. Unestablished in: South Africa.

**Chinese, Hakka** [hak]. *Users*: 4,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Sino-Tibetan, Chinese. *Type*: SVO; tonal. *Lg Dev*: Literature. Newspapers. Periodicals. Radio. TV. Videos. Dictionary. Grammar. *Bible*: 1916–2012. *Writing*: Han script, Simplified variant. Han script, Traditional variant. Latin script, used since early 19th century. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 44,271,630 (as L1: 44,020,430; as L2: 251,200). Global EGIDS level: 4 (Educational). Indigenous in: China, China–Hong Kong. Also established in 12 other countries and unestablished in 8 more.

**Chinese, Mandarin** [cmn]. *Users*: 20,200 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *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 16 other countries and unestablished in 61 more.

**English** [eng] (Anglais). Autonym: English. *Users*: 203,100 in Mauritius, all users. L1 users: 3,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). L2 users: 200,000 (Crystal 2003a). *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (1992, Constitution, Articles 33,46,49), used in education. *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, English. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives after noun heads; articles, adjectives, numerals before noun heads; question word initial; word order distinguishes subject, object, indirect objects, given and new information, topic and comment; active and passive; causative; comparative; consonant and vowel clusters; 24 consonants, 13 vowels, 8 diphthongs; non-tonal; free stress; phrasal verbs. *Lg Use*: Courts, road signs. *Lg Dev*: Taught in most primary and secondary schools from grade 4. Taught in most tertiary 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 167 other countries and unestablished in 16 more.

**French** [fra] (français). Autonym: français. *Users*: 926,000 in Mauritius, all users. L1 users: 51,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). L2 users: 875,000 (Marcoux et al 2022). *Location*: Widespread. *Status*: 3 (Wider communication). De facto national working language. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Gallo-Romance, Gallo-Rhaetian, Oïl, 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 Use*: Stores. Widely used by young people as L2. Older adults tend to use creole. Used as L2 by Morisyen [mfe]. *Lg Dev*: Taught in most primary schools through grade 3 and as subject thereafter. 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*: 2,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *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, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, New Zealand, Oman, Réunion, South Africa, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, United States, Zimbabwe.

**Hindi** [hin]. *Users*: 36,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Western Hindi, Hindustani. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head final; content q-word in situ; gender (masculine/feminine); no articles; clause constituents partially indicated by case-marking (direct, oblique), postpositions, and word order; verbal affixation marks person, number, gender, and honorificity of subject; split ergativity; both tense and aspect; passives and voice; causatives; non-tonal; 30 consonants, 10 vowels, 2 diphthongs; stress linked to syllable weight. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1835–2000. *Writing*: Braille script. Devanagari script, primary usage. Latin script, recent informal usage, especially online on social media. Mahajani script, no longer in use, historic usage. Newa script, no longer in use, historic usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 609,454,770 (as L1: 344,650,870; as L2: 264,803,900). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: India. Also established in: Kuwait, Nepal, Singapore, South Africa. Unestablished in: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belize, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Finland, Germany, Indonesia, Ireland, Kenya, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Oman, Panama, Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sint Maarten, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Yemen.

**Malagasy** [plt] (Malgache, Plateau Malagasy). Autonym: Malagasy, Malagasy ôfisialy. *Users*: 1,300 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Austronesian, Malayo-Polynesian, Greater Barito, East, Malagasy. *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*: Fully developed. Bible: 1835–2011. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,549,160 (as L1: 7,548,360; as L2: 800). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Madagascar (Merina Malagasy). Also established in: Comoros. Unestablished in: Canada (Merina Malagasy), Mayotte, Réunion.

**Marathi** [mar]. *Users*: 17,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Outer Languages, Southern. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); no articles; case-marking (7 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense and aspect; 37 consonants, 8 vowels, 2 diphthongs; non-tonal. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1821–2002. *Writing*: Braille script.

Devanagari script, primary usage. Modi script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 99,216,870 (as L1: 83,201,270; as L2: 16,015,600). Global EGIDS level: 2 (Provincial). Indigenous in: India. Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, Israel, New Zealand, Oman, United Kingdom, United States.

**Mauritian Sign Language** [lisy] (MSL). *Users*: 1,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated, assuming 0.1% of total population. *Location*: Scattered. *Status*: 5 (Developing). *Class*: Sign language, Deaf community sign language. *Lg Use*: Deaf schools. Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. Agency: Society for the Welfare of the Deaf (SWDEAF). *DLS*: Emerging (0.01).

**Morisyen** [mfe] (Creolophone, Kreol, Kreol Mauricean, Kreol Morisyin, Kreole, Maurisyen, Mauritian, Mauritian Creole, Mauritius Creole French, Maurysen). Autonym: Kreol Morisien. *Users*: 976,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Location*: Widespread. *Status*: 3 (Wider communication). De facto language of national identity. Originated in 1721 in the colonial society in Bourbon and brought to Mauritius. Lingua franca between freed slaves, Indian and Chinese immigrants. *Class*: Creole, French based. *Dialect*: Rodrigues Creole. More similar to French creoles of the Caribbean than to Réunion Creole (Baker 1972). *Lg Use*: Generally used at home while standard French [fra] is more commonly used in the workplace. Neutral attitudes. Lower prestige than French [fra] or English [eng]. Also use French [fra]. *Lg Dev*: Taught in most primary schools through grade 3. Dictionary. Grammar. NT: 2010. *DLS*: Ascending (0.40). *Writing*: Latin script. *Maps*: 15, 15. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,040,810 (as L1: 1,034,270; as L2: 6,540). Unestablished in: Australia, Canada, France, Madagascar, South Africa, United Kingdom.

**Punjabi, Eastern** [pan]. *Users*: 25,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Intermediate Divisions, 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. Radio. Grammar. Bible: 1959–2017. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Gurmukhi script, primary usage. Khojki script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 52,077,070 (as L1: 48,299,070; as L2: 3,778,000). Global EGIDS level: 2 (Provincial). Indigenous in: India, Pakistan. Also established in: Fiji, Kenya, Singapore. Unestablished in: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, Oman, Réunion, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

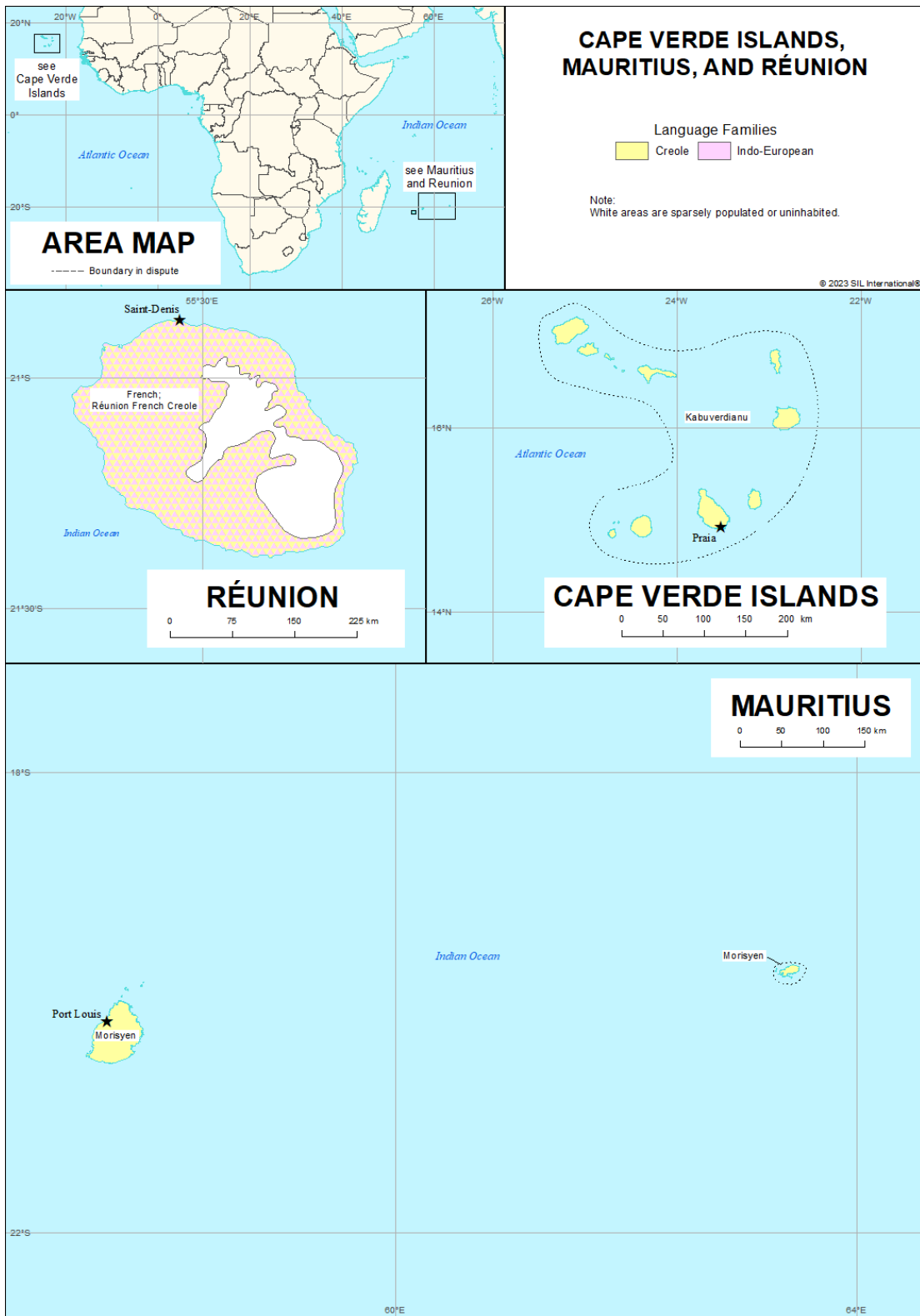
**Tamil** [tam]. *Users*: 1,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Location*: Flacq, Plaines Wilhems, and Savanne districts. *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *Class*: Dravidian, Southern, Tamil-Kannada, Tamil-Kodagu, Tamil-Malayalam, Tamil. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; gender (rational, non-rational); no articles; case-marking (8 cases); verb affixes mark person, number, gender of subject; passives (affective, effective); tense; no comparatives; 18 consonants, 10 vowels and 2 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on first syllable; inclusive/exclusive pronouns. *Lg Use*: Government, politics. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1727–2002. *Writing*: Arabic script,

Naskh variant, no longer in use. Braille script. Tamil script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. Hindu. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 86,640,030 (as L1: 78,587,030; as L2: 8,053,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: India, Sri Lanka. Also established in: Fiji, Malaysia, Martinique, Pakistan, Réunion, Singapore, South Africa. Unestablished in: Australia, Bahrain, Belize, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Guadeloupe, Ireland, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

**Telugu** [tel]. *Users*: 19,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Dravidian, South-Central, Telugu. *Type*: SOV; postpositions; noun head final; gender; no articles; case-marking (7 cases); verb affixes mark person, number gender of subject; passives; tense; causatives; 21 consonant and 11 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; stress on first syllable; inclusive/exclusive pronouns. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. Bible: 1854–2002. *Writing*: Braille script. Telugu script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 95,981,790 (as L1: 82,966,790; as L2: 13,015,000). Global EGIDS level: 2 (Provincial). Indigenous in: India. Also established in: Fiji, Singapore, South Africa. Unestablished in: Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Finland, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

**Urdu** [urd]. *Users*: 800 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Location*: Widespread. *Status*: 4 (Educational). *Class*: Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Western Hindi, Hindustani. *Type*: SOV; postposition; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine); no articles; direct and oblique cases; verb affixes mark person, number, gender of subject; passives; tense and aspect; causatives; 35 consonants, 21 vowels; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. *Lg Use*: Government, politics, religion. *Lg Dev*: Taught as subject in primary schools. Fully developed. Bible: 1843–1998. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, primary usage. Braille script. Devanagari script, used in India (Ahmad 2011). *Other*: Non-indigenous. Muslim. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 231,717,940 (as L1: 70,555,140; as L2: 161,162,800). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: India, Pakistan. Also established in: Bangladesh (Bihari), Fiji, Guyana, Nepal, South Africa. Unestablished in: Afghanistan, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

# Language Map



## Languages by Population

In this section the languages of Mauritius 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.

### 100,000 to 999,999

**Morisyen** [[mfe](#)] *Users*: 976,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: 3 (Wider communication). De facto language of national identity. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,040,810 (as L1: 1,034,270; as L2: 6,540).

### 10,000 to 99,999

**Bhojpuri** [[bho](#)] *Users*: 66,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 52,463,000 (as L1: 52,303,000; as L2: 160,000).

**French** [[fra](#)] *Users*: 51,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). 926,000 in Mauritius, all users. L2 users: 875,000 (Marcoux et al 2022). *Status*: 3 (Wider communication). De facto national working language. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030).

**Hindi** [[hin](#)] *Users*: 36,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 609,454,770 (as L1: 344,650,870; as L2: 264,803,900).

**Punjabi, Eastern** [[pan](#)] *Users*: 25,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 52,077,070 (as L1: 48,299,070; as L2: 3,778,000).

**Chinese, Mandarin** [[cmn](#)] *Users*: 20,200 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,138,222,350 (as L1: 939,237,350; as L2: 198,985,000).

**Telugu** [[tel](#)] *Users*: 19,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 95,981,790 (as L1: 82,966,790; as L2: 13,015,000).

**Marathi** [[mar](#)] *Users*: 17,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 99,216,870 (as L1: 83,201,270; as L2: 16,015,600).

### 1,000 to 9,999

**Bengali** [[ben](#)] *Users*: 6,660 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 272,828,760 (as L1: 233,808,880; as L2: 39,019,880).

**Chinese, Hakka** [[hak](#)] *Users*: 4,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 44,271,630 (as L1: 44,020,430; as L2: 251,200).

**English** [[eng](#)] *Users*: 3,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). 203,100 in Mauritius, all users. L2

users: 200,000 (Crystal 2003a). *Status*: 1 (National). Statutory national language (1992, Constitution, Articles 33,46,49), used in education. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1076,766,120).

**Gujarati** [guj] *Users*: 2,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 62,116,220 (as L1: 57,076,220; as L2: 5,040,000).

**Malagasy** [plt] *Users*: 1,300 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,549,160 (as L1: 7,548,360; as L2: 800).

**Tamil** [tam] *Users*: 1,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: 5\* (Dispersed). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 86,640,030 (as L1: 78,587,030; as L2: 8,053,000).

**Mauritian Sign Language** [lsy] *Users*: 1,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated, assuming 0.1% of total population. *Status*: 5 (Developing).

## 100 to 999

**Urdu** [urd] *Users*: 800 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status*: 4 (Educational). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 231,717,940 (as L1: 70,555,140; as L2: 161,162,800).

## Languages by Status

In this section the languages of Mauritius 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)

**English** [eng] *Users:* 203,100 in Mauritius, all users. L1 users: 3,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). L2 users: 200,000 (Crystal 2003a). *Status:* Statutory national language (1992, Constitution, Articles 33,46,49), used in education. *Lg Use:* Courts, road signs. *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).

### 3 (Wider communication)

**French** [fra] *Users:* 926,000 in Mauritius, all users. L1 users: 51,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). L2 users: 875,000 (Marcoux et al 2022). *Status:* De facto national working language. *Lg Use:* Stores. Widely used by young people as L2. Older adults tend to use creole. Used as L2 by Morisyen [mfe]. *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).

**Morisyen** [mfe] *Users:* 976,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Status:* De facto language of national identity. Originated in 1721 in the colonial society in Bourbon and brought to Mauritius. Lingua franca between freed slaves, Indian and Chinese immigrants. *Lg Use:* Generally used at home while standard French [fra] is more commonly used in the workplace. Neutral attitudes. Lower prestige than French [fra] or English [eng]. Also use French [fra]. *Lg Dev:* Dictionary. Grammar. NT: 2010. *Writing:* Latin script. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 1,040,810 (as L1: 1,034,270; as L2: 6,540).

### 4 (Educational)

**Urdu** [urd] *Users:* 800 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Lg Use:* Government, politics, religion. *Writing:* Arabic script, Naskh variant. Arabic script, Nastaliq variant, primary usage. Braille script. Devanagari script, used in India (Ahmad 2011). *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 231,717,940 (as L1: 70,555,140; as L2: 161,162,800).

## 5 (Developing)

**Mauritian Sign Language** [[lsy](#)] *Users*: 1,000 (2021 DBS/DOOR/SIL). Estimated, assuming 0.1% of total population. *Lg Use*: Deaf schools. Used by all. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar.

## 5 (Dispersed)

**Bhojpuri** [[bho](#)] *Users*: 66,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Lg Use*: Government and politics. *Writing*: Devanagari script. Kaithi script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 52,463,000 (as L1: 52,303,000; as L2: 160,000).

**Chinese, Mandarin** [[cmn](#)] *Users*: 20,200 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *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).

**Punjabi, Eastern** [[pan](#)] *Users*: 25,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant. Gurmukhi script, primary usage. Khojki script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 52,077,070 (as L1: 48,299,070; as L2: 3,778,000).

**Tamil** [[tam](#)] *Users*: 1,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Lg Use*: Government, politics. *Writing*: Arabic script, Naskh variant, no longer in use. Braille script. Tamil script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 86,640,030 (as L1: 78,587,030; as L2: 8,053,000).

## Unestablished

**Bengali** [[ben](#)] *Users*: 6,660 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Writing*: Bengali (Bangla) script, primary usage. Braille script. Newa script, no longer in use. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 272,828,760 (as L1: 233,808,880; as L2: 39,019,880).

**Chinese, Hakka** [[hak](#)] *Users*: 4,100 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Writing*: Han script, Simplified variant. Han script, Traditional variant. Latin script, used since early 19th century. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 44,271,630 (as L1: 44,020,430; as L2: 251,200).

**Gujarati** [[guj](#)] *Users*: 2,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *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).

**Hindi** [[hin](#)] *Users*: 36,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Writing*: Braille script. Devanagari script, primary usage. Latin script, recent informal usage, especially online on social media. Mahajani script, no longer in use, historic usage. Newa script, no longer in use, historic usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 609,454,770 (as L1: 344,650,870; as L2: 264,803,900).

**Malagasy** [[plt](#)] *Users*: 1,300 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 7,549,160 (as L1: 7,548,360; as L2: 800).

800).

**Marathi** [[mar](#)] *Users*: 17,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Writing*: Braille script. Devanagari script, primary usage. Modi script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 99,216,870 (as L1: 83,201,270; as L2: 16,015,600).

**Telugu** [[tel](#)] *Users*: 19,000 in Mauritius (Leclerc 2018c). *Writing*: Braille script. Telugu script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 95,981,790 (as L1: 82,966,790; as L2: 13,015,000).

## Languages by Family

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

### **Creole, French based**

Morisyen [mfe], [13](#)

### **Dravidian, Southern, Tamil-Kannada, Tamil-Kodagu, Tamil-Malayalam, Tamil**

Tamil [tam], [13](#)

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

English [eng], [11](#)

### **Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Intermediate Divisions, Western, Panjabi**

Punjabi, Eastern [pan], [13](#)

### **Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Outer Languages, Eastern, Bihari**

Bhojpuri [bho], [10](#)

### **Indo-European, Indo-Iranian, Indo-Aryan, Western Hindi, Hindustani**

Urdu [urd], [14](#)

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

French [fra], [11](#)

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

Mauritian Sign Language [lsh], [13](#)

### **Sino-Tibetan, Chinese**

Chinese, Mandarin [cmn], [10](#)

## Language Code Index

This index gives an alphabetical listing of all 16 three-letter codes that are used in this work to uniquely identify languages. The referenced page contains the main entry that describes the language. All codes listed are part of the ISO 639-3 standard; see <http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/>.

<b>ben</b>	Bengali, <a href="#">10</a>	<b>lsy</b>	Mauritian Sign Language, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>bho</b>	Bhojpuri, <a href="#">10</a>	<b>mar</b>	Marathi, <a href="#">12</a>
<b>cmn</b>	Chinese, Mandarin, <a href="#">10</a>	<b>mfe</b>	Morisyen, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>eng</b>	English, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>pan</b>	Punjabi, Eastern, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>fra</b>	French, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>plt</b>	Malagasy, Merina, <a href="#">12</a>
<b>guj</b>	Gujarati, <a href="#">11</a>	<b>tam</b>	Tamil, <a href="#">13</a>
<b>hak</b>	Chinese, Hakka, <a href="#">10</a>	<b>tel</b>	Telugu, <a href="#">14</a>
<b>hin</b>	Hindi, <a href="#">12</a>	<b>urd</b>	Urdu, <a href="#">14</a>

## Language Name Index

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

- Anglais**, *alt.* English [eng], 11
- Bhojpuri** [bho], 10
- Bojpury**, *dial.* Bhojpuri [bho], 10
- Hakka Chinese**, *see* Chinese, Hakka [hak], 10
- Chinese, Mandarin** [cmn], 10  
*see* Chinese, Mandarin [cmn], 10
- Creolophone**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- English** [eng], 11
- français**, *alt.* French [fra], 11
- French** [fra], 11
- Kreol**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Kreol Mauricean**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Kreol Morisien**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Kreol Morisyin**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Kreole**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Maurisyen**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Mauritian**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Mauritian Bhojpuri**, *dial.* Bhojpuri [bho], 10
- Mauritian Creole**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Mauritian Sign Language** [lisy], 13, 0
- Mauritius Creole French**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Maurysen**, *alt.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Morisyen** [mfe], 13, 15
- MSL**, *alt.* Mauritian Sign Language [lisy], 13
- Punjabi, Eastern** [pan], 13  
*see* Punjabi, Eastern [pan], 13
- Rodrigues Creole**, *dial.* Morisyen [mfe], 13
- Tamil** [tam], 13
- Urdu** [urd], 14

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