

Ethnologue: Languages of Uruguay

Twenty-sixth edition data

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Contents

List of Abbreviations	3
How to Use This Digest	4
Country Overview	6
Language Status Profile	7
Statistical Summaries	8
Alphabetical Listing of Languages	10
Languages by Population	14
Languages by Status	16
Languages by Family	18
Language Code Index	19
Language Name Index	20
Bibliography	21

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List of Abbreviations

A	Agent in constituent word order
<i>alt.</i>	alternate name for
<i>alt. dial.</i>	alternate dialect name for
AOV	Agent-Object-Verb
C	Consonant in canonical syllable patterns
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)
<i>dial.</i>	primary dialect name for
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
<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

How to Use This Digest

This *Ethnologue* country digest provides an extract of the information about the language situation in Uruguay 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 12 languages listed in the *Ethnologue* for the country of Uruguay. 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 14) lists the languages in order of their first-language speaker populations. “Languages by Status” (page 16) 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 18) lists the languages by their linguistic classifications. “Language Code Index” (page 19) 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 20) lists every name that appears in the language listings as a primary or alternate name of a language or dialect. A total of 16 unique names are associated with the 12 languages described in this digest.

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

(page 21). 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.

The preferred method of submitting corrections and additions is to join our Contributor Program by applying at <http://www.ethnologue.com/contributor-program>. With a contributor account you will be entitled to complimentary access to the website and will be able to use the Contribute tab on the page for a language or country in order to propose corrections and additions. The advantage of giving feedback in this way is that it becomes part of the public record on the website. You will also be automatically notified of the editorial action.

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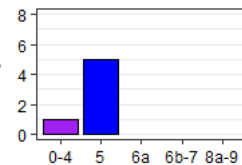
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Country Overview

Name of country	Uruguay
Population	3,485,000 (2021 UNDESA)
Principal language	Spanish
Literacy rate	99% (2018 UNESCO)
Deaf population	7,000–30,000
International conventions	CDE (2004), CPPDCE (2007), CSICH (2007), ICCPR (1970), UNCRPD (2009), UNDRIP (2007)

General references

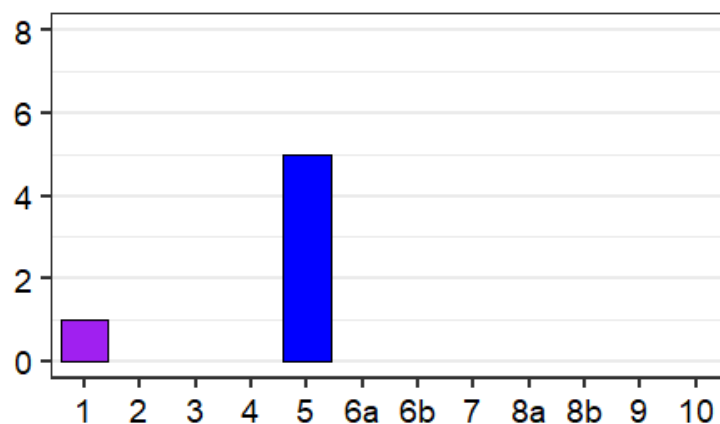
Language counts The number of established languages listed for Uruguay is 6. All are living languages. Of these, 1 is indigenous and 5 are non-indigenous. Furthermore, 1 is institutional and 5 are developing. Also listed are 6 unestablished languages.



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

Language Status Profile

The following histogram gives a graphic profile of the established languages in Uruguay 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 16) 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 Uruguay. 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 Uruguay 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 Uruguay 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 14) for a listing of the specific languages in each range category.

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

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

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

Population range	Living languages			Number of speakers		
	Count	Percent	Cumulative	Total	Percent	Cumulative
1,000,000 to 9,999,999	1	16.7	16.7%	3,430,000	97.98320	97.98320%
10,000 to 99,999	2	33.3	50.0%	61,600	1.75970	99.74290%
1,000 to 9,999	2	33.3	83.3%	9,000	0.25710	100.00000%
Unknown	1	16.7	100.0%			
<i>Totals</i>	6	100.0		3,500,600	100.00000	

Summary by language status

Table 2 summarizes the distribution of living established languages in Uruguay 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 16) 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 Uruguay. 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	16.7	16.7%	3,430,000	97.9832	97.9832%	3,430,000	3,430,000
5	5	83.3	100.0%	70,600	2.0168	100.0000%	14,120	18,800
<i>Totals</i>	6	100.0		3,500,600	100.0000			

Summary by language family

The genealogical classifications given in the language entries of the “Alphabetical Listing of Languages” (page 10) name 2 different top-level groups. Table 3 summarizes the distribution of living established languages and their L1 populations within these families. The columns are as for table 2, with the exception that *Cumulative* is excluded since there is no inherent ordering of the families.

Table 3: Distribution of languages by language family

Language family	Living languages		Number of speakers				
	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Median</i>	
Indo-European	5	83.3	3,493,600	99.8	698,720	30,800	
Sign language	1	16.7	7,000	0.2	7,000	7,000	
<i>Totals</i>	6	100.0	3,500,600	100.0			

Alphabetical Listing of Languages

English [eng]. Autonym: English. *Users*: 832,000 in Uruguay, all users. L1 users: 2,000 in Uruguay (2016). L2 users: 830,000 (2019 census). *Location*: Montevideo, Paysandú, and Río Negro counties. *Status*: 5* (Dispersed). *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*: 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]. Autonym: français. *Users*: 21,000 in Uruguay (2022 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Gallo-Romance, Gallo-Rhaetian, Oil, French. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final for common adjectives, numbers, possessives, but most attributive adjectives come after the noun; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; comparatives; 20 consonant and 14 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; syllable-timed stress. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Bible*: 1530–2000. *Writing*: Braille script. Duployan shorthand. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Andorra, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Monaco, Switzerland. Also established in 96 other countries and unestablished in 23 more.

Galician [glg]. Autonym: Galego. *Users*: 40,900 in Uruguay (2016). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Portuguese-Galician. *Lg Dev*: Dictionary. Grammar. *Bible*: 1989–1992. *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 3,127,900. Global EGIDS level: 2 (Provincial). Indigenous in: Portugal, Spain. Also established in: Argentina.

German, Standard [deu] (Alemán, Deutsch). Autonym: Deutsch. *Users*: 30,600 in Uruguay (2016). Ethnic population: 40,000 (2017). *Location*: Montevideo and Paysandú departments. *Status*: 5* (Dispersed). *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, High German, German, Middle German, East Middle German. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); definite and indefinite articles; case-marking (4 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; comparatives; 22 consonants, 22 vowels, 3 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on first syllable of the root. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Bible*: 1466–2016. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. Latin script, Fraktur variant,

used until 1940. Runic script, no longer in use. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 133,245,880 (as L1: 75,282,080; as L2: 57,963,800). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Austria, Belgium, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Italy. Also established in 39 other countries and unestablished in 23 more.

Greek [ell]. *Users*: 14,300 in Uruguay (2016). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Greek, Attic. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); definite and indefinite articles; case-marking (3 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives (active, medio-passive, passive); tense and aspect; comparatives; 18 consonant and 5 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; free stress. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Bible*: 1840–1994. *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, used in Ukraine. Greek script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 13,088,220 (as L1: 12,992,220; as L2: 96,000). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Albania, Greece. Also established in: Australia, Cyprus, Egypt, Hungary, Italy, Romania, Turkey, Ukraine. Unestablished in: Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Finland, Germany, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Panama, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Italian [ita]. *Autonym*: Italiano. *Users*: 89,900 in Uruguay (2016). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Italo-Dalmatian. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; comparatives; 23 consonant and 7 vowel phonemes; non-tonal; stress mostly on penultimate syllable. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Bible*: 1471–1985. *Writing*: Braille script, used since 1974. Latin script, primary usage. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 67,935,480 (as L1: 64,647,380; as L2: 3,288,100). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Croatia, Italy, San Marino, Slovenia, Switzerland. Also established in 12 other countries and unestablished in 34 more.

Plautdietsch [pdt]. *Autonym*: Plautdietsch. *Users*: 2,000 in Uruguay (Salminen 2007). *Status*: Unestablished. *Class*: Indo-European, Germanic, West, Low Saxon-Low Franconian, Low Saxon. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; genitives after noun heads; question word initial; 5 prefixes; 2 suffixes; nontonal. *Lg Dev*: Bible: 2003. *Writing*: Latin script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 362,560 (as L1: 356,860; as L2: 5,700). Global EGIDS level: 6a (Vigorous). Also established in 10 other countries and unestablished in 2 more.

Portuguese [por] (Portugués del Uruguay, Portunhol, Portuñol, Uruguayan Portuguese). *Autonym*: Português. *Users*: 31,000 in Uruguay (2021). *Status*: 5* (Dispersed). *Class*: Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Portuguese-Galician. *Type*: SVO; prepositions; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense; comparatives; 21 consonants, 13 vowels, 11 diphthongs; non-tonal. *Lg Dev*: Fully developed. *Bible*: 1751–2017.

Writing: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other:* Non-indigenous. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 263,638,850 (as L1: 236,266,650; as L2: 27,372,200). Global EGIDS level: 1 (National). Indigenous in: Portugal, Spain. Also established in 13 other countries and unestablished in 39 more.

Russian [rus]. *Users:* 14,300 in Uruguay (2016 J. Leclerc). *Status:* Unestablished. *Class:* Indo-European, Balto-Slavic, Slavic, East. *Type:* SVO; prepositions; genitives after noun heads; adjectives, numerals before noun heads; question word initial; 1 prefix on a word; recursive addition of suffixes allowed; gender (masculine/feminine/neuter); no articles; case-marking (6 cases); verb affixes mark person, number; passives; tense and aspect; comparatives; 32 consonants, 5 vowels, 4 diphthongs; non-tonal; free stress. *Lg Dev:* Fully developed. *Bible:* 1876–2011. *Writing:* Braille script. Cyrillic script, primary usage. *Other:* Non-indigenous. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 254,997,130 (as L1: 146,954,150; as L2: 107,987,980). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Ukraine. Also established in 17 other countries and unestablished in 29 more.

Spanish [spa] (Español). Autonym: Castellano, Español. *Users:* 3,485,800 in Uruguay, all users. L1 users: 3,430,000 in Uruguay (Instituto Cervantes 2021). L2 users: 55,800 (Instituto Cervantes 2021). *Status:* 1 (National). De facto national language. *Class:* Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Castilian. *Dialects:* Rioplatense Spanish (Argentine-Uruguayan Spanish, Español argentino-uruguayo, Español rioplatense), Lunfardo. *Type:* SVO; prepositions; genitives, relatives after noun heads; articles, numerals before noun heads; adjectives before or after noun heads depending on whether it is evaluative or descriptive; question word initial; gender (masculine/feminine); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark number, person; passives; tense; comparatives; 20 consonants, 5 vowels, 5 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on penultimate syllable. Silbo Gomero whistled variety of Spanish used in Canary Islands. *Lg Use:* All domains. Used by all. *Lg Dev:* Taught in all primary and secondary schools. Fully developed. *Bible:* 1553–2012. *Writing:* Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Other:* Non-indigenous. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930). Global EGIDS level: 0 (International). Indigenous in: Andorra, Gibraltar, Spain. Also established in 39 other countries and unestablished in 33 more.

Uruguayan Sign Language [ugy] (LSU, Lengua de Señas Uruguaya). *Users:* 7,000 (Belloso 2009). Approximately 0.2% of total population. *Location:* Scattered. *Status:* 5 (Developing). Recognized language (2001, Law no. 17.378). *Class:* Sign language, Deaf community sign language. *Type:* Finger-spelling system. *Lg Use:* Used in schools since 1910. Interpreters required in court. Instruction for parents of deaf children. Committee on national sign language, and an organization for sign language teachers. Used by all. Also use Spanish [spa]. *Lg Dev:* Literacy rate in L2: 50% in Spanish [spa]. TV. Videos. Dictionary. Agencies: Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Persona Sorda (CINDE); Asociación de Sordos del Uruguay (ASUR). *DLS:* Emerging (0.01).

Yiddish, Eastern [ydd]. *Location:* Scattered. *Status:* 5* (Developing). *Class:* Indo-European,

Germanic, West, High German, Yiddish. *Dialect*: Northeastern Yiddish (Litvish). *Type*: SVO; prepositions; noun head final; gender (masculine, feminine, neuter); definite and indefinite articles; verb affixes mark person, number; 20 consonant, 6 vowels and 3 diphthongs; non-tonal; stress on first syllable. *Lg Dev*: Periodicals. Radio. Grammar. Bible: 1821–1936. *Writing*: Hebrew script. *Other*: Non-indigenous. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 408,547 (as L1: 401,947; as L2: 6,600). Indigenous in: Ukraine. Also established in 19 other countries and unestablished in 3 more.

Languages by Population

In this section the languages of Uruguay 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

Spanish [[spa](#)] *Users*: 3,430,000 in Uruguay (Instituto Cervantes 2021). 3,485,800 in Uruguay, all users. L2 users: 55,800 (Instituto Cervantes 2021). *Status*: 1 (National). De facto national language. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930).

10,000 to 99,999

Italian [[ita](#)] *Users*: 89,900 in Uruguay (2016). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 67,935,480 (as L1: 64,647,380; as L2: 3,288,100).

Galician [[glg](#)] *Users*: 40,900 in Uruguay (2016). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 3,127,900.

Portuguese [[por](#)] *Users*: 31,000 in Uruguay (2021). *Status*: 5* (Dispersed). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 263,638,850 (as L1: 236,266,650; as L2: 27,372,200).

German, Standard [[deu](#)] *Users*: 30,600 in Uruguay (2016). Ethnic population: 40,000 (2017). *Status*: 5* (Dispersed). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 133,245,880 (as L1: 75,282,080; as L2: 57,963,800).

French [[fra](#)] *Users*: 21,000 in Uruguay (2022 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 309,804,220 (as L1: 80,770,190; as L2: 229,034,030).

Greek [[ell](#)] *Users*: 14,300 in Uruguay (2016). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 13,088,220 (as L1: 12,992,220; as L2: 96,000).

Russian [[rus](#)] *Users*: 14,300 in Uruguay (2016 J. Leclerc). *Status*: Unestablished. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 254,997,130 (as L1: 146,954,150; as L2: 107,987,980).

1,000 to 9,999

Uruguayan Sign Language [[ugy](#)] *Users*: 7,000 (Belloso 2009). Approximately 0.2% of total population. *Status*: 5 (Developing). Recognized language (2001, Law no. 17.378).

English [[eng](#)] *Users*: 2,000 in Uruguay (2016). 832,000 in Uruguay, all users. L2 users: 830,000 (2019 census). *Status*: 5* (Dispersed). *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 1,456,448,320 (as L1: 379,682,200; as L2: 1076,766,120).

Plautdietsch [pdt] *Users:* 2,000 in Uruguay (Salminen 2007). *Status:* Unestablished. *Worldwide:* Total users in all countries: 362,560 (as L1: 356,860; as L2: 5,700).

Unknown

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

Languages by Status

In this section the languages of Uruguay 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)

Spanish [[spa](#)] *Users*: 3,485,800 in Uruguay, all users. L1 users: 3,430,000 in Uruguay (Instituto Cervantes 2021). L2 users: 55,800 (Instituto Cervantes 2021). *Status*: De facto national language. *Lg Use*: All domains. Used by all. *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 559,078,890 (as L1: 485,063,960; as L2: 74,014,930).

5 (Developing)

Uruguayan Sign Language [[ugy](#)] *Users*: 7,000 (Belloso 2009). Approximately 0.2% of total population. *Status*: Recognized language (2001, Law no. 17.378). *Lg Use*: Used in schools since 1910. Interpreters required in court. Instruction for parents of deaf children. Committee on national sign language, and an organization for sign language teachers. Used by all. Also use Spanish [[spa](#)]. *Lg Dev*: TV. Videos. Dictionary.

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

5 (Dispersed)

English [[eng](#)] *Users*: 832,000 in Uruguay, all users. L1 users: 2,000 in Uruguay (2016). L2 users: 830,000 (2019 census). *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).

German, Standard [[deu](#)] *Users*: 30,600 in Uruguay (2016). Ethnic population: 40,000 (2017). *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. Latin script, Fraktur variant, used until 1940. Runic script, no longer in use. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 133,245,880 (as L1: 75,282,080; as L2: 57,963,800).

Portuguese [[por](#)] *Users*: 31,000 in Uruguay (2021). *Writing*: Braille script. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 263,638,850 (as L1: 236,266,650; as L2: 27,372,200).

Unestablished

French [[fra](#)] *Users*: 21,000 in Uruguay (2022 Joshua Project), based on ethnicity. *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).

Galician [[glg](#)] *Users*: 40,900 in Uruguay (2016). *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 3,127,900.

Greek [[ell](#)] *Users*: 14,300 in Uruguay (2016). *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, used in Ukraine. Greek script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 13,088,220 (as L1: 12,992,220; as L2: 96,000).

Italian [[ita](#)] *Users*: 89,900 in Uruguay (2016). *Writing*: Braille script, used since 1974. Latin script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 67,935,480 (as L1: 64,647,380; as L2: 3,288,100).

Plautdietsch [[pdt](#)] *Users*: 2,000 in Uruguay (Salminen 2007). *Writing*: Latin script. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 362,560 (as L1: 356,860; as L2: 5,700).

Russian [[rus](#)] *Users*: 14,300 in Uruguay (2016 J. Leclerc). *Writing*: Braille script. Cyrillic script, primary usage. *Worldwide*: Total users in all countries: 254,997,130 (as L1: 146,954,150; as L2: 107,987,980).

Languages by Family

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

Indo-European, Germanic, West, English

English [eng], [10](#)

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

German, Standard [deu], [10](#)

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

Yiddish, Eastern [ydd], [12](#)

Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Castilian

Spanish [spa], [12](#)

Indo-European, Italic, Romance, Italo-Western, Western, Gallo-Iberian, Ibero-Romance, West Iberian, Portuguese-Galician

Portuguese [por], [11](#)

Sign language, Deaf community sign language

Uruguayan Sign Language [ugy], [12](#)

Language Code Index

This index gives an alphabetical listing of all 12 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/>.

deu	German, Standard, 10	pdt	Plautdietsch, 11
ell	Greek, 11	por	Portuguese, 11
eng	English, 10	rus	Russian, 12
fra	French, 10	spa	Spanish, 12
glg	Galician, 10	ugy	Uruguayan Sign Language, 12
ita	Italian, 11	ydd	Yiddish, Eastern, 12

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.

- Alemán**, *alt.* German, Standard [deu], [10](#)
- Argentine-Uruguayan Spanish**, *alt. dial.* Spanish [spa], [12](#)
- Deutsch**, *alt.* German, Standard [deu], [10](#)
- English** [eng], [10](#)
- Español**, *alt.* Spanish [spa], [12](#)
- Español argentino-uruguayo**, *alt. dial.* Spanish [spa], [12](#)
- Español rioplatense**, *alt. dial.* Spanish [spa], [12](#)
- German, Standard** [deu], [10](#)
see German, Standard [deu], [10](#)
- Lengua de Señas Uruguaya**, *alt.* Uruguayan Sign Language [ugy], [12](#)
- Litvish**, *alt. dial.* Yiddish, Eastern [ydd], [12](#)
- LSU**, *alt.* Uruguayan Sign Language [ugy], [12](#)
- Lunfardo**, *dial.* Spanish [spa], [12](#)
- Northeastern Yiddish**, *dial.* Yiddish, Eastern [ydd], [12](#)
- Portugués del Uruguay**, *alt.* Portuguese [por], [11](#)
- Portuguese** [por], [11](#)
- Portunhol**, *alt.* Portuguese [por], [11](#)
- Portuñol**, *alt.* Portuguese [por], [11](#)
- Rioplatense Spanish**, *dial.* Spanish [spa], [12](#)
- Spanish** [spa], [12](#)
- Uruguayan Portuguese**, *alt.* Portuguese [por], [11](#)
- Uruguayan Sign Language** [ugy], [12](#), [0](#)
- Yiddish, Eastern** [ydd], [12](#)
see Yiddish, Eastern [ydd], [12](#)

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