








Languages of the World



NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service
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-  Free downloadable multilingual health information in up to 45 languages
-  Award winning multilingual campaigns
-  Free advice to government departments and NGOs on developing multicultural campaigns
-  Research - Multicultural media - Social marketing
-  Good practice guidelines on translations, checking translations and working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD)

A

- Afghanistan** Dari Persian, Pashtu (both official), other Turkic and minor languages
- Albania** Albanian (*Tosk is the official dialect*), Greek
- Algeria** Arabic (official), French, Berber dialects
- Andorra** Catalán (official), French, Castilian, Portuguese
- Angola** Portuguese (official), Bantu and other African languages
- Antigua and Barbuda** English (official), local dialects
- Argentina** Spanish (official), English, Italian, German, French
- Armenia** Armenian 98%, Yezidi, Russian
- Australia** English 79%, native and other languages
- Austria** German (official nationwide); Slovene, Croatian, Hungarian (each official in one region)
- Azerbaijan** Azerbaijani Turkic 89%, Russian 3%, Armenian 2%, other 6% (1995 est.)

B

- Bahamas** English (official), Creole (among Haitian immigrants)
- Bahrain** Arabic, English, Farsi, Urdu
- Bangladesh** Bangla (official), English
- Barbados** English
- Belarus** Belorussian (*White Russian*), Russian, other
- Belgium** Dutch (*Flemish*) 60%, French 40%, German less than 1% (all official)
- Belize** English (official), Spanish, Mayan, Garifuna (*Carib*), Creole

- Benin** French (official), Fon, Yoruba, tribal languages
- Bhutan** Dzongkha (official), Tibetan dialects (among Bhotes), Nepalese dialects (among Nepalese)
- Bolivia** Spanish, Quechua, Aymara (all official)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina** Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian
- Botswana** English 2% (official), Setswana 78%, Kalanga 8%, Sekgalagadi 3%, other (2001)
- Brazil** Portuguese (official), Spanish, English, French
- Brunei** Malay (official), English, Chinese
- Bulgaria** Bulgarian 85%, Turkish 10%, Roma 4%
- Burkina Faso** French (official); native African (*Sudanic*) languages 90%
- Burundi** Kirundi and French (official), Swahili

C

- Cambodia** Khmer 95% (official), French, English
- Cameroon** French, English (both official); 24 major African language groups
- Canada** English 59.3%, French 23.2% (both official); other 17.5%
- Cape Verde** Portuguese, Criuolo
- Central African Republic** French (official), Sangho (*lingua franca, national*), tribal languages
- Chad** French, Arabic (both official); Sara; more than 120 languages and dialects
- Chile** Spanish
- China** Standard Chinese (*Mandarin/Putonghua*), Yue

(Cantonese), Wu (Shanghaiese), Minbei (Fuzhou), Minnan (Hokkien-Taiwanese), Xiang, Gan, Hakka dialects, minority languages

Colombia Spanish

Comoros Arabic and French (both official), Shikomoro (Swahili/Arabic blend)

Congo, Democratic Republic of the French (official), Lingala, Kingwana, Kikongo, Tshiluba

Congo, Republic of French (official), Lingala, Monokutuba, Kikongo, many local languages and dialects

Costa Rica Spanish (official), English

Côte d'Ivoire French (official) and African languages (*Dioula esp.*)

Croatia Croatian 96% (official), other 4% (including Italian, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, German)

Cuba Spanish

Cyprus Greek, Turkish (both official); English

Czech Republic Czech

D

Denmark Danish, Faroese, Greenlandic (*Inuit dialect*), German; English is the predominant second language

Djibouti French and Arabic (both official), Somali, Afar

Dominica English (official) and French patois

Dominican Republic Spanish

E

East Timor Tetum, Portuguese (official); Bahasa Indonesia, English; other indigenous languages, including Tetum, Galole, Mambae, and Kemak

Ecuador Spanish (official), Quechua, other Amerindian languages

Egypt Arabic (official), English and French widely understood by educated classes

El Salvador Spanish, Nahua (among some Amerindians)

Equatorial Guinea Spanish, French (both official); pidgin English, Fang, Bubi, Ibo

Eritrea Afar, Arabic, Tigre and Kunama, Tigrinya, other Cushitic languages

Estonia Estonian 67% (official), Russian 30%, other (2000)

Ethiopia Amharic, Tigrigna, Orominga, Guaragigna, Somali, Arabic, English, over 70 others

F

Fiji English (official), Fijian, Hindustani

Finland Finnish 92%, Swedish 6% (both official); small Sami- (*Lapp*) and Russian-speaking minorities

France French 100%, rapidly declining regional dialects (*Provençal, Breton, Alsatian, Corsican, Catalan, Basque, Flemish*)

G

Gabon French (official), Fang, Myene, Nzebi, Bapounou/Eschira, Bandjabi

Gambia English (official), Mandinka, Wolof, Fula, other indigenous

Georgia Georgian 71% (official), Russian 9%, Armenian 7%, Azerbaijani 6%, other 7% (*Abkhaz is the official language in Abkhazia*)

Germany German

Ghana English (official), African languages (including Akan, Moshi-Dagomba, Ewe, and Ga)

Greece Greek 99% (official), English, French

Grenada English (official), French patois

Guatemala Spanish 60%, Amerindian languages 40% (23 officially recognized Amerindian languages, including Quiche, Cakchiquel, Kekchi, Mam, Garifuna, and Xinca)

Guinea French (official), native tongues (*Malinké, Susu, Fulani*)

Guinea-Bissau Portuguese (official), Criolo, African languages

Guyana English (official), Amerindian dialects, Creole, Hindi, Urdu

H

Haiti Creole and French (both official)

Honduras Spanish (official), Amerindian dialects; English widely spoken in business

Hungary Magyar (*Hungarian*) 94%, other 6%

I

Iceland Icelandic, English, Nordic languages, German widely spoken

India Hindi 30%, English, Bengali, Gujarati, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Kannada, Assamese, Sanskrit, Sindhi (all official); Hindi/Urdu; 1,600+ dialects

Indonesia Bahasa Indonesia (official), English, Dutch, Javanese, and more than 580 other languages and dialects

Iran Persian and Persian dialects 58%, Turkic and Turkic dialects 26%, Kurdish 9%, Luri 2%, Balochi 1%, Arabic 1%, Turkish 1%, other 2%

Iraq Arabic (official), Kurdish (official in Kurdish regions), Assyrian, Armenian

Ireland English, Irish (*Gaelic*) (both official)

Israel Hebrew (official), Arabic, English

Italy Italian (official); German-, French-, and Slovene-speaking minorities

J

Jamaica English, Jamaican Creole

Japan Japanese

Jordan Arabic (official), English

K

Kazakhstan Kazak (*Qazaq, state language*) 64%; Russian (official, used in everyday business) 95% (2001 est.)

Kenya English (official), Swahili (*national*), and numerous indigenous languages

Kiribati English (official), I-Kiribati (*Gilbertese*)

Korea, North Korean

Korea, South Korean, English widely taught

Kuwait Arabic (official), English

Kyrgyzstan Kyrgyz, Russian (both official)

L

Laos Lao (official), French, English, various ethnic languages

Latvia Latvian 58% (*official*), Russian 38%, Lithuanian, other (2000)

Lebanon Arabic (*official*), French, English, Armenian

Lesotho English, Sesotho (*both official*); Zulu, Xhosa

Liberia English 20% (*official*), some 20 ethnic-group languages

Libya Arabic, Italian, and English widely understood in major cities

Liechtenstein German (*official*), Alemannic dialect

Lithuania Lithuanian 82% (*official*), Russian 8%, Polish 6% (2001)

Luxembourg Luxembourgeois (*national*) French, German (*both administrative*)

M

Macedonia Macedonian 67%, Albanian 25% (*both official*); Turkish 4%, Roma 2%, Serbian 1% (2002)

Madagascar Malagasy and French (*both official*)

Malawi Chichewa 57.2% (*official*), Chinyanja 12.8%, Chiyao 10.1%, Chitumbuka 9.5%, Chisena 2.7%, Chilomwe 2.4%, Chitonga 1.7%, other 3.6% (1998)

Malaysia Bahasa Melayu (*Malay, official*), English, Chinese dialects (*Cantonese, Mandarin, Hokkien, Hakka, Hainan, Foochow*), Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Panjabi, Thai; several indigenous languages (*including Iban, Kadazan*) in East Malaysia

Maldives Maldivian Dhivehi (*official*); English spoken by most government officials

Mali French (*official*), Bambara 80%, numerous African languages

Malta Maltese and English (*both official*)

Marshall Islands Marshallese 98% (two major dialects from the Malayo-Polynesian family), English widely spoken as a second language (*both official*); Japanese

Mauritania Hassaniya Arabic (*official*), Pulaar, Soninke, French, Wolof

Mauritius English less than 1% (*official*), Creole 81%, Bojpoori 12%, French 3% (2000)

Mexico Spanish, various Mayan, Nahuatl, and other regional indigenous languages

Micronesia English (*official, common*), Chukese, Pohnpeian, Yapese, Kosrean, Ulithian, Woleaian, Nukuoro, Kapingamarangi

Moldova Moldovan (*official; virtually the same as Romanian*), Russian, Gagauz (*a Turkish dialect*)

Monaco French (*official*), English, Italian, Monégasque

Mongolia Mongolian, 90%; also Turkic and Russian (1999)

Montenegro Serbian/Montenegrin (*Ijekavian dialect-official*)

Morocco Arabic (*official*), Berber dialects, French often used for business, government, and diplomacy

Mozambique Portuguese 9% (*official; second language of 27%*), Emakhuwa 26%, Xichangana 11%, Elomwe 8%, Cisena 7%, Echuwabo 6%, other Mozambican languages 32% (1997)

Myanmar Burmese, minority languages

N

Namibia English 7% (*official*), Afrikaans is common language of most of the population and of about 60% of the white population, German 32%; indigenous languages: Oshivambo, Herero, Nama

Nauru Nauruan (*official*), English

Nepal Nepali 48% (*official*), Maithali 12%, Bhojpuri 7%, Tharu 6%, Tamang 5%, others. English spoken by many in government and business (2001)

Netherlands Dutch, Frisian (*both official*)

New Zealand English, Maori (*both official*)

Nicaragua Spanish 98% (*official*); English and indigenous languages on Atlantic coast (1995)

Niger French (*official*), Hausa, Djerma

Nigeria English (*official*), Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo, Fulani, and more than 200 others

Norway Bokmål Norwegian, Nynorsk Norwegian (*both official*); small Sami- and Finnish-speaking minorities (*Sami is official in six municipalities*)

O

Oman Arabic (*official*), English, Baluchi, Urdu, Indian dialects

P

Pakistan Urdu 8%, English (*both official*); Punjabi 48%, Sindhi 12%, Siraiki (*a Punjabi variant*) 10%, Pashtu 8%, Balochi 3%, Hindko 2%, Brahui 1%, Burushaski, and others 8%

Palau Palauan 64.7%, English 9.4%, Sonsoralese, Tobi, Angaur (*each official on some islands*), Filipino 13.5%, Chinese 5.7%, Carolinian 1.5%, Japanese 1.5%, other Asian 2.3%, other languages 1.5% (2000)

Palestinian State (*proposed*) Arabic, Hebrew, English

Panama Spanish (*official*), English 14%, many bilingual

Papua New Guinea Tok Pisin (*Melanesian Pidgin, the lingua franca*), Hiri Motu (*in Papua region*), English 1%-2%; 715 indigenous languages

Paraguay Spanish, Guaraní (*both official*)

Peru Spanish, Quéchua (*both official*); Aymara; many minor Amazonian languages

Philippines Filipino (*based on Tagalog*), English (*both official*); eight major dialects: Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pampango, and Pangasinense

Poland Polish 98% (2002)

Portugal Portuguese (*official*), Mirandese (*official, but locally used*)

Q

Qatar Arabic (*official*); English a common second language

R

Romania Romanian (*official*), Hungarian, German

Russia Russian, others

Rwanda Kinyarwanda, French, and English (*all official*); Kiswahili in commercial centers

S

St. Kitts and Nevis English
St. Lucia English (*official*), French patois
St. Vincent and the Grenadines English, French patois
Samoa Samoan, English
San Marino Italian
São Tomé and Príncipe Portuguese (*official*)
Saudi Arabia Arabic
Senegal French (*official*); Wolof, Pulaar, Jola, Mandinka
Serbia Serbian (*official*); Romanian, Hungarian, Slovak, and Croatian (*all official in Vojvodina*); Albanian (*official in Kosovo*)
Seychelles Seselwa Creole 92%, English 5%, French (*all official*) (2002)
Sierra Leone English (*official*), Mende (*southern vernacular*), Temne (*northern vernacular*), Krio (*lingua franca*)
Singapore Mandarin 35%, English 23%, Malay 14.1%, Hokkien 11.4%, Cantonese 5.7%, Teochew 4.9%, Tamil 3.2%, other Chinese dialects 1.8%, other 0.9% (2000)
Slovakia Slovak 84% (*official*), Hungarian 11%, Roma 2%, Ukrainian 1% (2001)
Slovenia Slovenian 91%, Serbo-Croatian 5% (2002)
Solomon Islands English 1%-2% (*official*), Melanesian pidgin (*lingua franca*), 120 indigenous languages

Somalia Somali (*official*), Arabic, English, Italian
South Africa IsiZulu 23.8%, IsiXhosa 17.6%, Afrikaans 13.3%, Sepedi 9.4%, English 8.2%, Setswana 8.2%, Sesotho 7.9%, Xitsonga 4.4%, other 7.2% (2001)
Spain Castilian Spanish 74% (*official nationwide*); Catalan 17%, Galician 7%, Basque 2% (*each official regionally*)
Sri Lanka Sinhala 74% (*official and national*), Tamil 18% (*national*), other 8%; English is commonly used in government and spoken competently by about 10%
Sudan Arabic (*official*), Nubian, Ta Bedawie, diverse dialects of Nilotic, Nilo-Hamitic, Sudanic languages, English
Suriname Dutch (*official*), Surinamese (*lingua franca*), English widely spoken, Hindustani, Javanese
Swaziland English, siSwati (*both official*)
Sweden Swedish, small Sami- and Finnish-speaking minorities
Switzerland German 64%, French 20%, Italian 7% (*all official*); Romansch 0.5% (*national*)
Syria Arabic (*official*); Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, Circassian widely understood; French, English somewhat understood

T

Taiwan Chinese (*Mandarin, official*), Taiwanese (*Min*), Hakka dialects
Tajikistan Tajik (*official*), Russian widely used in government and business

V

Tanzania Swahili, English (*both official*); Arabic; many local languages
Thailand Thai (*Siamese*), English (*secondary language of the elite*), ethnic and regional dialects
Togo French (*official, commerce*); Ewé, Mina (*south*); Kabyé, Dagomba (*north*); and many dialects
Tonga Tongan (*an Austronesian language*), English
Trinidad and Tobago English (*official*), Hindi, French, Spanish, Chinese
Tunisia Arabic (*official, commerce*), French (*commerce*)
Turkey Turkish (*official*), Kurdish, Dimli, Azeri, Kabardian
Turkmenistan Turkmen 72%; Russian 12%; Uzbek 9%, other 7%
Tuvalu Tuvaluan, English, Samoan, Kiribati (*on the island of Nui*)

U

Uganda English (*official*), Ganda or Luganda, other Niger-Congo languages, Nilo-Saharan languages, Swahili, Arabic
Ukraine Ukrainian 67%, Russian 24%, Romanian, Polish, Hungarian
United Arab Emirates Arabic (*official*), Persian, English, Hindi, Urdu
United Kingdom English, Welsh, Scots Gaelic
United States English 82%, Spanish 11% (2000)
Uruguay Spanish, Portunol, or Brazilerio
Uzbekistan Uzbek 74.3%, Russian 14.2%, Tajik 4.4%, other 7.1%

Vanuatu Bislama 23% (*a Melanesian pidgin English*), English 2%, French 1% (*all 3 official*); more than 100 local languages 73%
Vatican City (Holy See) Italian, Latin, French, various other languages
Venezuela Spanish (*official*), numerous indigenous dialects
Vietnam Vietnamese (*official*); English (*increasingly favored as a second language*); some French, Chinese, Khmer; mountain area languages (*Mon-Khmer and Malayo-Polynesian*)

W

Western Sahara (proposed state) Hassaniya Arabic, Moroccan Arabic

Y

Yemen Arabic

Z

Zambia English (*official*); major vernaculars: Bemba, Kaonda, Lozi, Lunda, Luvale, Nyanja, Tonga; about 70 other indigenous languages
Zimbabwe English (*official*), Shona, Ndebele (*Sindebele*), numerous minor tribal dialects