pcgn
The Permanent Committee on Geographical Names

Mauritius

Country name (English)	Mauritius
State title (English)	Republic of Mauritius
Name of citizen	Mauritian
Official languages	English, French *[de facto]*[1]
Script	Roman
Romanization System	Not needed
ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)	MU / MUS
Capital	Port Louis
Population / Area	1,310,504 (2024 est.) / 2,040 sq km

Introduction

Mauritius lies in the Indian Ocean about 800km east of Madagascar; it gained independence from the UK in 1968 and became a republic in 1992.

In 2024, after a long period of negotiations, the UK announced it would hand sovereignty of the Chagos Islands back to Mauritius; in May 2025 a treaty agreement was presented to Parliament but has not yet been ratified (see Territorial issues below).

Geographical names policy and sources

For HMG use, geographical names should be taken from official sources if they can be acquired, such as those of the Cartography Section of the Ministry of Housing and Lands. These products are available to purchase. Diacritical marks as used on such sources should be retained on HMG products.

The US Board on Geographic Names (BGN) Geographic Names Server can also be used as a source for names in Mauritius.

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[1] There are no official languages in Mauritius: English and French are used in government and education, while Mauritian Creole is the *lingua franca*.

Languages

Most Mauritians are multilingual. English and French are both used in official spheres (such as the National Assembly and education), though neither is specified as being an official language. The most widely-used language (and the country's *lingua franca*) is Mauritian Creole (Kreol Morisien: *mfe*, which is a French-based creole). Many minority languages, indicating the country's diverse immigration, are included in census returns; the largest of which are Bhojpuri and Hindi[2].

Inventory of characters (and their Unicode encodings[3])

French contains the following letter-diacritic combinations in addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman script:

Upper-case character	Unicode encoding	Lower-case character	Unicode encoding
À	00C0	à	00E0
Â	00C2	â	00E2
Ç	00C7	ç	00E7
È	00C8	è	00E8
É	00C9	é	00E9
Ê	00CA	ê	00EA
Ë	00CB	ë	00EB
Î	00CE	î	00EE
Ï	00CF	ï	00EF
Ô	00D4	ô	00F4
Œ	0152	œ	0153
Ù	00D9	ù	00F9
Û	00DB	û	00FB
Ü	00DC	ü	00FC
Ÿ[4]	0178	ÿ	00FF

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[2] The 2022 census records information on 'language of forefathers' as well as the current main language spoken at home. All the ancestral languages have lost speakers to the predominance of the *lingua franca*, and naturally it is the smaller language communities that have generally seen the greater decline in favour of Mauritian Creole.

[3] See www.unicode.org

[4] Rarely encountered.

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Administrative structure

Mauritius has 9 districts and 2 outer island dependencies; additionally, Rodrigues has autonomous status within the Republic of Mauritius.
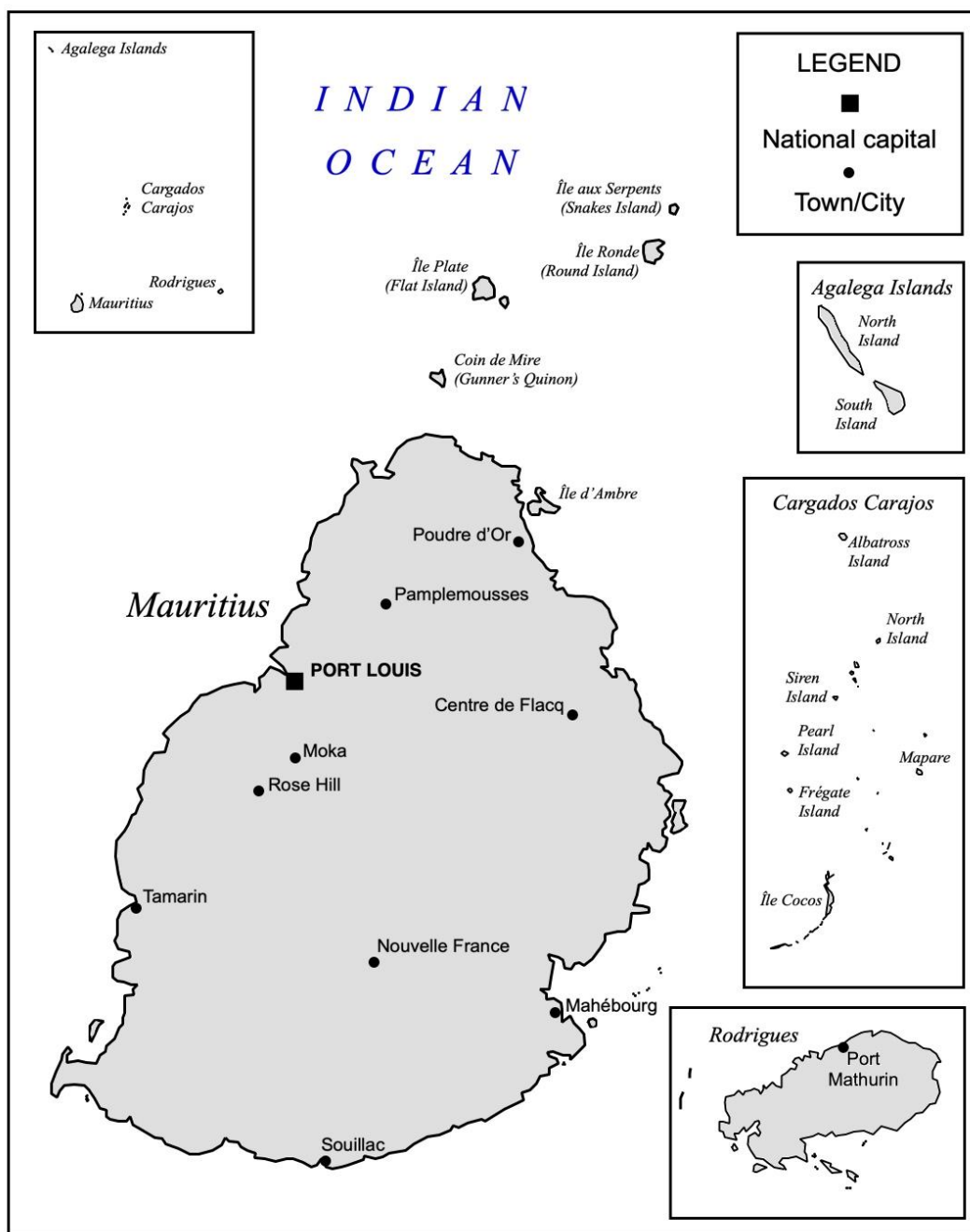
The districts are not usually recorded as having administrative centres and have been included without the 'main town' shown in the table below. The centre of administration for Rodrigues is Port Mathurin.

District	ISO 3166-2 code	District Location
Savanne	MU-SA	20°28'00"S 57°30'00"E
Rivière du Rempart	MU-RR	20°03'30"S 57°38'30"E
Port Louis	MU-PL	20°10'00"S 57°31'30"E
Plaines Wilhems	MU-PW	20°18'00"S 57°29'00"E
Pamplemousses	MU-PA	20°05'45"S 57°33'35"E
Moka	MU-MO	20°15'00"S 57°34'00"E
Grand Port	MU-GP	20°25'00"S 57°38'00"E
Flacq	MU-FL	20°14'00"S 57°43'00"E
Black River	MU-BL	20°20'00"S 57°25'00"E

Dependencies/Autonomous islands[5]	ISO 3166-2 code	Location
Agalega Islands	MU-AG	10°24'00"S 56°37'00"E
Cargados Carajos (St. Brandon)	MU-CC	16°38'00"S 59°38'00"E
Rodrigues	MU-RO	19°42'00"S 63°25'00"E

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[5] Rodrigues has autonomous status with its own Regional Assembly. The other two dependencies have populations of just 330 (Agalega) and 40 (Cargados Carajos) (2022 Census) and are run directly from the Prime Minister's office.

Map of Mauritius

Map produced by PCGN for illustrative purposes only, and is not to be taken necessarily as representing the views of the UK government on boundaries or political status.

Territorial issues

In 2024, after a long period of negotiations, the UK announced it would hand sovereignty of the Chagos Islands back to Mauritius, which since 1965 have been separated from Mauritius and administered as by the UK as the British Indian Ocean Territory. In May 2025, a treaty agreement was presented to the UK Parliament and this is expected to be ratified and come into force later in 2025. Under the agreement, Mauritius will regain sovereignty over the archipelago as a whole, while the UK will lease Diego Garcia from Mauritius to continue its operation as a joint UK/US military base.

Chagos islanders, who were removed from the archipelago, will be able to return to the islands, except Diego Garcia.

Mauritius also claims the island of Tromelin, which is administered by France as one of the *Îles Éparses* of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands. The island has no permanent resident population.

Other Significant Locations

PCGN recommended name	Location	Feature Type
Agalega Islands	10°24'54"S 56°38'06"E	Islands
Beau Bassin-Rose Hill	20°14'23"S 57°28'18"E	Town
Cargados Carajos Shoals (St. Brandon)	16°46'50"S 59°33'51"E	Shoals
Curepipe	20°19'08"S 57°31'35"E	Town
Mont Piton	20°06'56"S 57°37'14"E	Mountain (Mauritius high point 828m)
Quatre Bornes	20°15'55"S 57°28'45"E	Town
Rodrigues	16°35'00"S 59°37'00"E	Island
Vacoas-Phoenix	20°18'00"S 57°28'28"E	Town

Useful references

- BBC Country Profile: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13882233
- CIA World Factbook: https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/
- Ethnologue: www.ethnologue.com (for information on languages)
- FCDO Geographical Names Index: https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/0b412b57-6934-4f28-b495-640cdc7e8f7f/foreign-commonwealth-and-development-office-geographical-names-index/datafile/f9835358-6435-41da-803c-f7917db7fdad/preview
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO): www.iso.org
- ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP): https://www.iso.org/obp/ui#home
- Mauritius Ministry of Housing and Lands: Cartography Section
- Mauritius Census 2022, Demographics Chapter: https://statsmauritius.govmu.org/Documents/Census_and_Surveys/Census2022/HPC_TR_Vol2_Demography_Yr22.pdf
- PCGN Country Names list: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/country-names
- Unicode: www.unicode.org
- US Board on Geographic Names GEOnet Names Server: https://geonames.nga.mil/geonames/GNSHome/welcome.html

Compiled by PCGN
www.gov.uk/pcgn
July 2025