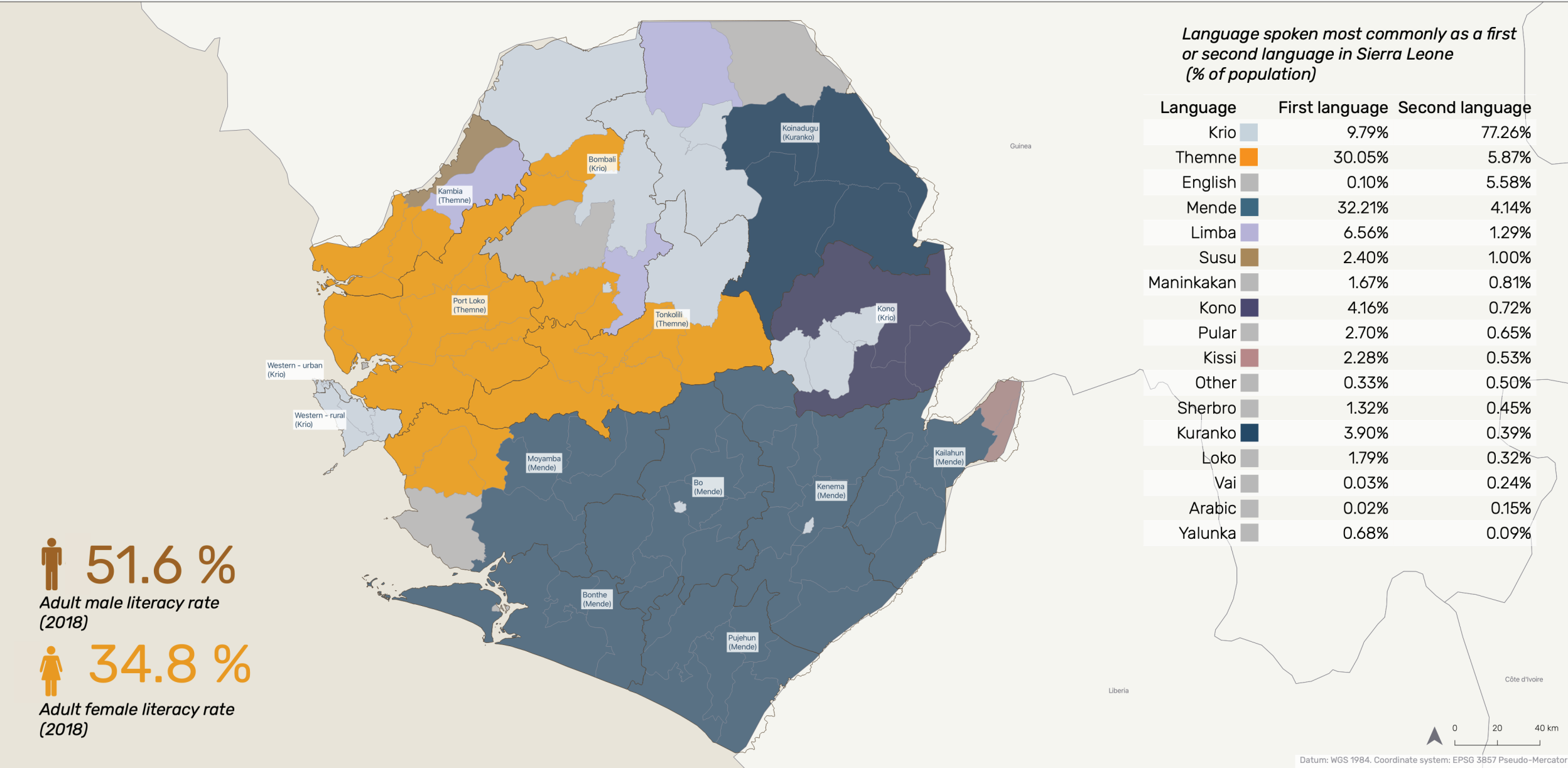


Language map of Sierra Leone



According to the 2004 Census of Sierra Leone, the country has 18 major languages. Krio is the most widely spoken language but it is only spoken by 10% of the population as their first language. The languages spoken most commonly as a first language as of 2005 were Mende (32%) and Themne (30%). Although English, as the official language, is spoken in schools, government administration and the media, Krio is widely spoken as a lingua franca. As of 2005, approximately 97% of the population speak the Krio language (either as first, second or third language).