

The **Federal Republic of Nigeria** /nɑːˈdʒɪriəɪ/ (listen), commonly referred to as **Nigeria**, is a federal republic in West Africa, bordering Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north. Its coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. It comprises 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory, where the capital, Abuja is located. Nigeria is officially a democratic secular country.^[6]

Nigeria is often referred to as the "Giant of Africa", owing to its large population and economy.^[8] With approximately 186 million inhabitants, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the seventh most populous country in the world. Nigeria has the third-largest youth population in the world, after India and China, with more than 90 million of its population under age 18.^{[9][10]} The country is viewed as a multinational state as it is inhabited by over 500 ethnic groups, of which the three largest are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba; these ethnic groups speak over 500 different languages and are identified with a wide variety of cultures.^{[11][12]} The official language is English. Nigeria is divided roughly in half between Christians, who live mostly in the southern part of the country, and Muslims, who live mostly in the north. A minority of the population practise religions indigenous to Nigeria, such as those native to the Igbo and Yoruba ethnicities.

Federal Republic of Nigeria

Jamhuriyar Taraiyar Nijeriya (Hausa)

Ọhàńjíkọ Ọhànézè Naìjíríyà (Igbo)

Orílẹ̀-èdè Olómìnira Àpap ọ

Nàìjíríà (Yoruba)



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto: "Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress"

Anthem: "Arise, O Compatriots"



Location of Nigeria shown in dark green

Capital	Abuja 9°4′N 7°29′E
Largest city	Lagos 6°27′N 3°23′E
Official languages	English
Major languages	Hausa • Igbo • Yoruba
Other languages ^[1]	Birom • Edo • Efik • Fulfulde • Gbagyi • Hyam • Ibibio • Idoma • Igala • Igbira • Ijaw • Ikwerre • Itsekiri • Jju • Jukun • Kanuri • Atyap • Margi • Nupe • Tiv • Urhobo-Isoko

of the [African Union](#) and a member of many other international organizations, including the [United Nations](#), the [Commonwealth of Nations](#) and [OPEC](#).

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Religion	See <i>Religion in Nigeria</i>
Demonym	Nigerian
Government	Federal presidential republic
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">PresidentVice PresidentSenate PresidentHouse SpeakerChief Justice</div>	Muhammadu Buhari <div>Yemi Osinbajo</div> <div>Bukola Saraki</div> <div>Yakubu Dogara</div> <div>W. S. Nkanu Onnoghen</div>
Legislature	National Assembly
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Upper houseLower house</div>	Senate <div>House of Representatives</div>
Independence from the United Kingdom	
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Unification of Southern and Northern NigeriaDeclared and recognisedRepublic declaredCurrent constitution</div>	1914 <div>1 October 1960</div> <div>1 October 1963</div> <div>29 May 1999</div>
Area	
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">TotalWater (%)</div>	923,768 km ² (356,669 sq mi) (32nd) <div>1.4</div>
Population	
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">2016 estimate2006 censusDensity</div>	185,989,640 ^[2] (7th) <div>140,431,790</div> <div>197.2/km² (510.7/sq mi) (71st)</div>
GDP (PPP)	2018 estimate
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">TotalPer capita</div>	\$1.161 trillion ^[3] (24th) <div>\$5,992^[3] (124th)</div>
GDP (nominal)	2018 estimate
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">TotalPer capita</div>	\$460.660 billion ^[3] (27th) <div>\$2,376^[3] (122nd)</div>
Gini (2010)	<div><div><div></div></div>43.0^[4]<div>medium</div></div>
HDI (2015)	<div><div><div></div></div>0.514^[5]<div>low · 152nd</div></div>
Currency	Naira (₦) (NGN)
Time zone	WAT (UTC+1)
Drives on the	right
Calling code	+234

Etymology

The name *Nigeria* was taken from the Niger River running through the country. This name was coined in the late 19th century by British journalist Flora Shaw, who later married Lord Lugard, a British colonial administrator. The origin of the name *Niger*, which originally applied only to the middle reaches of the Niger River, is uncertain. The word is likely an alteration of the Tuareg name *egerew* *n-igerewen* used by inhabitants along the middle reaches of the river around Timbuktu prior to 19th-century European colonialism.^{[27][28]}

History

Early (500 BC – 1500)

The Nok civilisation of Northern Nigeria flourished between 500 BC and AD 200, producing life-sized terracotta figures that are some of the earliest known sculptures in Sub-Saharan Africa.^{[29][30][31][32]} Further north, the cities Kano and Katsina have a recorded history dating to around 999 AD. Hausa kingdoms and the Kanem-Bornu Empire prospered as trade posts between North and West Africa.

The Kingdom of Nri of the Igbo people consolidated in the 10th century and continued until it lost its sovereignty to the British in 1911.^{[33][34]} Nri was ruled by the Eze Nri, and the city of Nri is considered to be the foundation of Igbo culture. Nri and Aguleri, where the Igbo creation myth originates, are in the territory of the Umeuri clan. Members of the clan trace their lineages back to the patriarchal king-figure Eri.^[35] In West Africa, the oldest bronzes made using the lost-wax process were from Igbo Ukwu, a city under Nri influence.^[33]

The Yoruba kingdoms of Ife and Oyo in southwestern Nigeria became prominent in the 12th^{[36][37]} and 14th^[38] centuries, respectively. The oldest signs of human settlement at Ife's current site date back to the 9th century,^[36] and its material culture includes terracotta and bronze figures.



Ceremonial Igbo pot from 9th-century Igbo-Ukwu.



Yoruba copper mask of Obalufon from the city of Ife, c.1300

Middle Ages (1500–1800)

Oyo, at its territorial zenith in the late 17th to early 18th centuries, extended its influence from western Nigeria to modern-day Togo. The Edo's Benin Empire is located in southwestern Nigeria. Benin's power lasted between the 15th and



Nok sculpture, terracotta

19th centuries. Their dominance reached as far as the city of Eko (an Edo name later changed to Lagos by the Portuguese) and further.^[39]

At the beginning of the 19th century Usman dan Fodio directed a successful *jihad* and created and led the centralised Fulani Empire (also known as the Sokoto Caliphate). The territory controlled by the resultant state included much of modern-day northern and central Nigeria; it lasted until the 1903 break-up of the Empire into various European colonies.



Benin City in the 17th century with the Oba of Benin in procession. This image appeared in a European book, *Description of Africa* published in Amsterdam in 1668.^[40]

For centuries, various peoples in modern-day Nigeria traded overland with traders from North Africa. Cities in the area became regional centres in a broad network of trade routes that spanned western, central and northern Africa. In the 16th century, Spanish and Portuguese explorers were the first Europeans to begin significant, direct trade with peoples of modern-day Nigeria, at the port they named Lagos and in Calabar.

Europeans traded goods with peoples at the coast; coastal trade with Europeans also marked the beginnings of the Atlantic slave trade.^[41] The port of Calabar on the historical Bight of Biafra (now commonly referred to as the Bight of Bonny) became one of the largest slave trading posts in West Africa in the era of the transatlantic slave trade. Other major slaving ports in Nigeria were located in Badagry, Lagos on

the Bight of Benin and on Bonny Island on the Bight of Biafra.^{[41][42]} The majority of those enslaved and taken to these ports were captured in raids and wars.^[43] Usually the captives were taken back to the conquerors' territory as forced labour; after time, they were sometimes acculturated and absorbed into the conquerors' society. A number of slave routes were established throughout Nigeria linking the hinterland areas with the major coastal ports. Some of the more prolific slave traders were linked with the Oyo Empire in the southwest, the Aro Confederacy in the southeast and the Sokoto Caliphate in the north.^{[41][42]}

Slavery also existed in the territories comprising modern-day Nigeria;^[44] its scope was broadest towards the end of the 19th century. According to the *Encyclopedia of African History* "It is estimated that by the 1890s the largest slave population of the world, about 2 million people, was concentrated in the territories of the Sokoto Caliphate. The use of slave labor was extensive, especially in agriculture."^[45]

A changing legal imperative (transatlantic slave trade outlawed by Britain in 1807) and economic imperative (a desire for political and social stability) led most European powers to support widespread cultivation of agricultural products, such as the palm, for use in European industry.

British Nigeria (1800–1960)

The slave trade was engaged in by European state and non-state actors such as Great Britain, the Netherlands, Portugal and private companies, as well as various African states and non-state actors. With rising anti-slavery sentiment at home and changing economic realities, Great Britain outlawed the international slave trade in 1807. Following the Napoleonic Wars, Great Britain established the West Africa Squadron in an attempt to halt the international traffic in slaves.^[46] It stopped ships of other nations that were leaving the African coast with slaves; the seized slaves were taken to Freetown, a colony in West Africa originally established for the resettlement of freed slaves from Britain. Britain intervened in the Lagos Kingship power struggle by bombarding Lagos in 1851, deposing the slave trade friendly Oba Kosoko, helping to install the amenable Oba Akitoye, and signing the Treaty between Great Britain and Lagos on 1 January 1852. Britain annexed Lagos as a Crown Colony in August 1861 with the Lagos Treaty of Cession. British missionaries expanded their operations and travelled further inland. In 1864, Samuel Ajayi Crowther became the first African bishop of the Anglican Church



Royal Benin ivory mask, one of Nigeria's most recognised artefacts. Benin Empire, 16th century



"Up-River Chiefs, Calabar", 19th century

In 1885, British claims to a West African sphere of influence received recognition from other European nations at the Berlin Conference. The following year, it chartered the Royal Niger Company under the leadership of Sir George Taubman Goldie. In 1900 the company's territory came under the control of the British government, which moved to consolidate its hold over the area of modern Nigeria. On 1 January 1901, Nigeria became a British protectorate, and part of the British Empire, the foremost world power at the time. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries the independent kingdoms of what would become Nigeria fought a number of conflicts against the British Empire's efforts to expand its territory. By war, the British conquered Benin in 1897, and, in the Anglo-Aro War (1901–1902), defeated other opponents. The restraint or conquest of these states opened up the Niger area to British rule.

In 1914, the British formally united the Niger area as the *Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria*. Administratively, Nigeria remained divided into the Northern and Southern Protectorates and Lagos Colony. Inhabitants of the southern region sustained more interaction, economic and cultural, with the British and other Europeans owing to the coastal economy

Christian missions established Western educational institutions in the Protectorates. Under Britain's policy of indirect rule and validation of Islamic tradition, the Crown did not encourage the operation of Christian missions in the northern, Islamic part of the country.^[47] Some children of the southern elite went to Great Britain to pursue higher education. By independence in 1960, regional differences in modern educational access were marked. The legacy, though less pronounced, continues to the present day. Imbalances between North and South were expressed in Nigeria's political life as well. For instance, northern Nigeria did not outlaw slavery until 1936 whilst in other parts of Nigeria slavery was abolished soon after colonialism.^[48]



Postage stamp with portrait of Queen Elizabeth II, 1953

Following World War II, in response to the growth of Nigerian nationalism and demands for independence, successive constitutions legislated by the British government moved Nigeria toward self-government on a representative and increasingly federal basis. By the middle of the 20th century a great wave for independence was sweeping across Africa. Nigeria achieved independence in 1960.

Independent Federation and First Republic (1960–1966)

The Federation of Nigeria gained independence from the United Kingdom on 1 October 1960, while retaining the British monarch, Elizabeth II, as nominal head of state and Queen of Nigeria. Nigeria's government was a coalition of conservative parties: the Nigerian People's Congress (NPC), a party dominated by Northerners and those of the Islamic faith, and the Igbo and Christian-dominated National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) led by Nnamdi Azikiwe. Azikiwe replaced the colonial governor-general in November 1960. The opposition comprised the comparatively liberal Action Group (AG), which was largely dominated by the Yoruba and led by Obafemi Awolowo.^[49] The cultural and political differences between Nigeria's dominant ethnic groups – the Hausa ('Northerners'), Igbo ('Easterners') and Yoruba ('Westerners') – were sharp.

An imbalance was created in the polity by the result of the 1961 plebiscite. Southern Cameroon opted to join the Republic of Cameroon while Northern Cameroons chose to remain in Nigeria. The northern part of the country was now far larger than the southern part. In 1963, the nation established a Federal Republic, with Azikiwe as its first president. When elections were held in 1965, the Nigerian National Democratic Party came to power in Nigeria's Western Region.

Civil war (1967–1970)

The disequilibrium and perceived corruption of the electoral and political process led, in 1966, to back-to-back military coups. The first coup was in January 1966 and was led by Igbo soldiers under Majors Emmanuel Ifeajuna and Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu. The coup plotters succeeded in murdering Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Premier Ahmadu Bello of the Northern Region and Premier Ladoke Akintola of the Western Region. But, the coup plotters struggled to form a central government. President Nwafor Orizu handed over government control to the Army, then under the command of another Igbo officer, General JTU Aguiyi-Ironsi



The Republic of Biafra in June 1967, when it declared its independence from the rest of Nigeria

Later, the counter-coup of 1966, supported primarily by Northern military officers, facilitated the rise of Lt. Colonel Yakubu Gowon to head of state. Tension rose between North and South; Igbos in Northern cities suffered persecution and many fled to the Eastern Region.

In May 1967, the Eastern Region declared independence as a state called the Republic of Biafra, under the leadership of Lt. Colonel Emeka Ojukwu.^[50] The Nigerian Civil War began as the official Nigerian government side (predominated by soldiers from the North and West) attacked Biafra (Southeastern) on 6 July 1967 at Garkem. The 30-month war, with a long siege of Biafra and its isolation from trade and supplies, ended in January 1970.^[51] Estimates of the number of dead in the former Eastern Region are between 1 and 3 million people, from warfare, disease, and starvation, during the 30-month civil war.^[52]

France, Egypt, the Soviet Union, Britain, Israel, and others were deeply involved in the civil war behind the scenes. Britain and the Soviet Union were the main military backers of the Nigerian government while France and others aided the Biafrans. Nigeria used Egyptian pilots for their air force.^{[53][54]}

Military juntas (1970–1999)

During the oil boom of the 1970s, Nigeria joined OPEC and the huge oil revenues it was generating enriched the economy. Despite these revenues, the military government did little to improve the standard of living of the population, help small and medium businesses, or invest in infrastructure. As oil revenues fueled the rise of federal subsidies to states, the federal government became the centre of political struggle and the threshold of power in the country. As oil production and revenue rose, the Nigerian government became increasingly dependent on oil revenues and on international commodity markets for budgetary and economic concerns. It did not develop alternate revenue sources in the economy for economic stability. That spelled doom to federalism in Nigeria.^[55]



Olusegun Obasanjo was a military president who ruled the country from 1976 to 1979.

Beginning in 1979, Nigerians participated in a return to democracy when Olusegun Obasanjo transferred power to the civilian regime of Shehu Shagari. The Shagari government became viewed as corrupt by virtually all sectors of Nigerian society. In 1983 the inspectors of the state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) began to notice "the slow poisoning of the waters of this country."^[56] The military coup of Muhammadu Buhari shortly after the regime's re-election in 1984 was generally viewed as a positive development.^[57] Buhari promised major reforms, but his government fared little better than its predecessor. His regime was overthrown by another military coup in 1985.^[58]

The new head of state, Ibrahim Babangida declared himself president and commander in chief of the armed forces and of the ruling Supreme Military Council. He set 1990 as the official deadline for a return to democratic governance. Babangida's tenure was marked by a flurry of political activity: he instituted the International Monetary Fund's Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) to aid in the repayment of the country's crushing international debt. At the time most federal revenue was dedicated to servicing that debt. He enrolled Nigeria in the Organization of the Islamic Conference which aggravated religious tensions in the country.^[59]

Babangida survived an abortive coup, then postponed a promised return to democracy to 1992. Free and fair elections were finally held on 12 June 1993, the first since the military coup of 1983, with a presidential victory for Moshood Kashimawo Olawale Abiola of the Social Democratic Party, who gained some 58% of the votes, defeating Bashir Tofa of the National Republican Convention.^[60] However, Babangida annulled the elections, leading to massive civilian protests that effectively shut down the country for weeks. Babangida finally kept his promise to relinquish office to a civilian government, but not before appointing Ernest Shonekan head of an interim government.^[61] Babangida's regime has been considered the most corrupt, and responsible for creating a culture of corruption in Nigeria.^[62]

In late 1993 Shonekan's caretaker regime was overwhelmed by the military coup of General Sani Abacha, who used military force on a wide scale to suppress the continuing civilian unrest. He shifted money to offshore accounts in western European banks and defeated coup plots by bribing army generals. In 1995 the government hanged environmentalist Ken Saro-Wiwa on trumped-up charges in the deaths of four Ogoni elders. Lawsuits under the American Alien Tort Statute against Royal Dutch Shell and Brian Anderson, the head of Shell's Nigerian operation, settled out of court with Shell continuing to deny liability.^[63]

Several hundred million dollars in accounts traced to Abacha were discovered in 1999.^[64] The regime came to an end in 1998, when the dictator died in the villa. His successor, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, adopted a new constitution on 5 May 1999, which provided for multiparty elections. On 29 May 1999 Abubakar transferred power to the winner of the elections, Obasanjo, who had since retired from the military.^[65]

Democratisation (1999–)

Nigeria regained democracy in 1999 when it elected Olusegun Obasanjo the former military head of state, as the new President of Nigeria. This ended almost 33 years of military rule (from 1966 until 1999), excluding the short-lived second republic (between 1979 and 1983) by military dictators who seized power in coups d'état and counter-coups during the Nigerian military juntas of 1966–1979 and 1983–1998. Although the elections that brought Obasanjo to power in 1999 and again in 2003 were condemned as unfree and unfair, Nigeria has shown marked improvements in attempts to tackle government corruption and to hasten development.



Bida Emirate durbar festival, 2001

Ethnic violence for control over the oil-producing Niger Delta region and inadequate infrastructures are some of the issues in the country. Umaru Yar'Adua of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) came into power in the general election of 2007. The international community has been observing Nigerian elections to encourage a free and fair process, and condemned this one as being severely flawed.^[66]

Yar'Adua died on 5 May 2010. Dr. Goodluck Jonathan was sworn in as Yar'Adua's replacement on 6 May 2010,^[67] becoming Nigeria's 14th Head of State, while his vice-president Namadi Sambo, an architect and former Kaduna State governor, was chosen on 18 May 2010, by the National Assembly. His confirmation followed President Jonathan's nomination of Sambo to that position.^{[68][69]}

Goodluck Jonathan served as Nigeria's president until 16 April 2011, when a new presidential election in Nigeria was conducted. Jonathan of the PDP was declared the winner on 19 April 2011, having won the election with a total of 22,495,187 of the 39,469,484 votes cast, to stand ahead of Muhammadu Buhari from the main opposition party, the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC), which won 12,214,853 of the total votes cast.^[70] The international media reported the elections as having run smoothly with relatively little violence or voter fraud, in contrast to previous elections.^[7]

In the March 2015 election, Muhammadu Buhari defeated Goodluck Jonathan by roughly 2 million votes. Observers generally praised the election as being fair. Jonathan was generally praised for conceding defeat and limiting the risk of unrest.^{[71][72][73][74]}

Government and politics

Nigeria is a federal republic modelled after the United States,^[75] with executive power exercised by the President. It is influenced by the Westminster System model in the composition and management of the upper and lower houses of the bicameral legislature. The president presides as both head of state and head of the federal government; the leader is elected by popular vote to a maximum of two 4-year terms.^[76] In the 28 March 2015 presidential election, General Muhammadu Buhari emerged victorious to become the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, defeating then-incumbent Dr Goodluck Jonathan



Nigerian National Assembly Abuja

The president's power is checked by a Senate and a House of Representatives, which are combined in a bicameral body called the National Assembly. The Senate is a 109-seat body with three members from each state and one from the capital region of Abuja; members are elected by popular vote to four-year terms. The House contains 360 seats, with the number of seats per state is determined by population.^[76]

Ethnocentrism, tribalism, religious persecution, and prebendalism have affected Nigerian politics both prior and subsequent to independence in 1960. Kin-selective altruism has made its way into Nigerian politics, resulting in tribalist efforts to concentrate Federal power to a particular region of their interests.^[77] Nationalism has also led to active secessionist movements such as MASSOB, Nationalist movements such as Oodua Peoples Congress, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta and a civil war. Nigeria's three largest ethnic groups (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) have maintained historical preeminence in Nigerian politics; competition amongst these three groups has fuelled corruption and graft.^[78]



Muhammadu Buhari President, 29 May 2015–current

Because of the above issues, Nigeria's political parties are pan-national and secular in character (though this does not preclude the continuing preeminence of the dominant ethnicities).^[78]^[79] The two major political parties are the People's Democratic Party of Nigeria and the All Progressives Congress. About twenty minor opposition parties are registered.

The then-president, Olusegun Obasanjo acknowledged fraud and other electoral "lapses" but said the result reflected opinion polls. In a national television address in 2007, he added that if Nigerians did not like the victory of his handpicked successor, they would have an opportunity to vote again in four years.^[80]

In the Nigerian general election, 2015, the victorious All Progressives Congress has 225 House seats and 60 in the Senate while the defeated People's Democratic Party of Nigeria became the opposition with 125 seats in the House and 49 in the Senate.

As in many other African societies, prebendalism and high rates of corruption continue to constitute major challenges to Nigeria. All major parties have practised vote-rigging and other means of coercion to remain competitive. In 1983, the policy institute at Kuru concluded that only the 1959 and 1979 elections to that time were conducted with minimal vote-rigging.^[81] In 2012, Nigeria was estimated to have lost over \$400 billion to corruption since independence.^[82]

Law

There are three distinct systems of law in Nigeria:

National symbols of Nigeria	
Flag	Bicolour
Emblem	Coat of arms of Nigeria
Anthem	"Arise, O Compatriots"
Animal	Eagle
Bird	Black crowned crane
Flower	<i>Costus spectabilis</i>

- Common law, derived from its British colonial past, and a development of its own after independence;
- Customary law, derived from indigenous traditional norms and practice, including the dispute resolution meetings of pre-colonial Yorubaland secret societies and the Ẹkpẹ and Ọkónkò of Igboland and Ibibioland;
- Sharia law, used only in the predominantly Muslim northern states of the country. It is an Islamic legal system that had been used long before the colonial administration. In late 1999, Zamfara emphasised its use, with eleven other northern states following suit. These states are Kano, Katsina, Niger, Bauchi, Borno, Kaduna, Gombe, Sokoto, Jigawa, Yobe, and Kebbi.^[83]

The country has a judicial branch, the highest court of which is the Supreme Court of Nigeria.^[76]

Foreign relations

Upon gaining independence in 1960, Nigeria made African unity the centrepiece of its foreign policy and played a leading role in the fight against the apartheid government in South Africa.^[84] One notable exception to the African focus was Nigeria's close relationship developed with Israel throughout the 1960s. The latter nation sponsored and oversaw the construction of Nigeria's parliament buildings.^[85]

Nigeria's foreign policy was tested in the 1970s after the country emerged united from its own civil war. It supported movements against white minority governments in the Southern Africa sub-region. Nigeria backed the African National Congress (ANC) by taking a committed tough line with regard to the South African government and their military actions in southern Africa. Nigeria was also a founding member of the Organisation for African Unity (now the African Union), and has tremendous influence in West Africa and Africa on the whole. Nigeria has additionally founded regional cooperative efforts in West Africa, functioning as standard-bearer for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and ECOMOG, economic and military organizations, respectively



Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan (center) poses with United States President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama in August 2014

With this Africa-centred stance, Nigeria readily sent troops to the Congo at the behest of the United Nations shortly after independence (and has maintained membership since that time). Nigeria also supported several Pan-African and pro-self government causes in the 1970s, including garnering support for Angola's MPLA, SWAPO in Namibia, and aiding opposition to the minority governments of Portuguese Mozambique and Rhodesia.

Nigeria retains membership in the Non-Aligned Movement. In late November 2006, it organised an Africa-South America Summit in Abuja to promote what some attendees termed "South-South" linkages on a variety of fronts.^[86] Nigeria is also a member of the International Criminal Court, and the Commonwealth of Nations. It was temporarily expelled from the latter in 1995 when ruled by the Abacha regime

Nigeria has remained a key player in the international oil industry since the 1970s, and maintains membership in Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which it joined in July 1971. Its status as a major petroleum producer figures prominently in its sometimes volatile international relations with both developed countries notably the United States, and the developing countries of China, Jamaica, and Ghana and Kenya in Africa.^[87]

Millions of Nigerians have emigrated during times of economic hardship, primarily to Europe, North America and Australia. It is estimated that over a million Nigerians have emigrated to the United States and constitute the Nigerian American populace. Individuals in many such Diasporic communities have joined the "Egbe Omo Yoruba" society, a national association of Yoruba descendants in North America.^[88]

Military

The Nigerian military are charged with protecting the Federal Republic of Nigeria, promoting Nigeria's global security interests, and supporting peacekeeping efforts, especially in West Africa. This is in support of the doctrine sometimes called Pax Nigeriana

The Nigerian Military consist of an army, a navy, and an air force.^[76] The military in Nigeria have played a major role in the country's history since independence. Various juntas have seized control of the country and ruled it through most of its history. Its last period of military rule ended in 1999 following the sudden death of former dictator Sani Abacha in 1998. His successor, Abdulsalam Abubakar, handed over power to the democratically-elected government oOlusegun Obasanjothe next year.

As Africa's most populated country, Nigeria has repositioned its military as a peacekeeping force on the continent. Since 1995, the Nigerian military, through ECOMOG mandates, have been deployed as peacekeepers in Liberia (1997), Ivory Coast (1997–1999), and Sierra Leone (1997–1999).^[89] Under an African Union mandate, it has stationed forces in Sudan's Darfur region to try to establish peace.

Geography



Map of Nigeria, showing state boundaries, cities, and waterways.

Nigeria is located in western Africa on the Gulf of Guinea and has a total area of 923,768 km² (356,669 sq mi),^[90] making it the world's 32nd-largest country (after Tanzania). It is comparable in size to Venezuela, and is about twice the size of the US state of California. Its borders span for 4,047-kilometre (2,515 mi)s, and it shares borders with Benin (773 km or 480 mi), Niger (1,497 km or 930 mi), Chad (87 km or 54 mi), Cameroon (1,690 km or 1,050 mi), and has a coastline of at least 853 kilometres (530 miles)s.^[91] Nigeria lies between latitudes 4° and 14°N, and longitudes 2° and 15°E.

The highest point in Nigeria is Chappal Waddi at 2,419 m (7,936 ft). The main rivers are the Niger and the Benue, which converge and empty into the Niger Delta. This is one of the world's largest river deltas, and the location of a large area of Central African mangroves.

Nigeria map of Köppen climate classification



Nigeria map of Köppen climate classification.

Nigeria has a varied landscape. The far south is defined by its tropical rainforest climate, where annual rainfall is 60 to 80 inches (1,500 to 2,000 mm) a year.^[92] In the southeast stands the Obudu Plateau. Coastal plains are found in both the southwest and the southeast.^[93] This forest zone's most southerly portion is defined as "salt water swamp," also known as a mangrove swamp because of the large amount of mangroves in the area. North of this is fresh water swamp, containing different vegetation from the salt water swamp, and north of that is rainforest.^[94]^[94]



The Zuma Rock near Suleja

Nigeria's most expansive topographical region is that of the valleys of the Niger and Benue river valleys (which merge into each other and form a "y" shape).^[93] To the southwest of the Niger is "rugged" highland. To the southeast of the Benue are hills and mountains, which form the Mambilla Plateau, the highest plateau in Nigeria. This plateau extends through the border with Cameroon, where the montane land is part of the Bamenda Highlands of Cameroon.

The area near the border with Cameroon close to the coast is rich rainforest and part of the Cross-Sanaga-Bioko coastal forests ecoregion, an important centre for biodiversity. It is habitat for the drill monkey, which is found in the wild only in this area and across the border in Cameroon. The areas surrounding Calabar, Cross River State, also in this forest, are believed to contain the world's largest diversity of butterflies. The area of southern Nigeria between the Niger and the Cross Rivers has lost most of its forest because of development and harvesting by increased population, with it being replaced by grassland (see *Cross-Niger transition forests*).

Everything in between the far south and the far north is savannah (insignificant tree cover, with grasses and flowers located between trees). Rainfall is more limited, to between 500 and 1,500 millimetres (20 and 60 in) per year.^[92] The savannah zone's three categories are Guinean forest-savanna mosaic, Sudan savannah, and Sahel savannah. Guinean forest-savanna mosaic is plains of tall grass interrupted by trees. Sudan savannah is similar but with shorter grasses and shorter trees. Sahel savannah consists of patches of grass and sand, found in the northeast.^[94] In the Sahel region, rain is less than 500 millimetres (20 in) per year and the Sahara Desert is encroaching.^[92] In the dry northeast corner of the country lies Lake Chad, which Nigeria shares with Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

Environmental issues

Nigeria's Delta region, home of the large oil industry, experiences serious oil spills and other environmental problems, which has caused conflict.

Waste management including sewage treatment, the linked processes of deforestation and soil degradation, and climate change or global warming are the major environmental problems in Nigeria. Waste management presents problems in a mega city like Lagos and other major Nigerian cities which are linked with economic development, population growth and the inability of municipal councils to manage the resulting rise in industrial and domestic waste. This huge waste management problem is also attributable to unsustainable environmental management lifestyles of Kubwa Community in the Federal Capital Territory, where there are habits of indiscriminate disposal of waste, dumping of waste along or into the canals, sewerage systems that are channels for water flows, and the like.

Haphazard industrial planning, increased urbanisation, poverty and lack of competence of the municipal government are seen as the major reasons for high levels of waste pollution in major cities of the country. Some of the 'solutions' have been disastrous to the environment, resulting in untreated waste being dumped in places where it can pollute waterways and groundwater.^[95]

In 2005 Nigeria had the highest rate of deforestation in the world, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).^[96] That year, 12.2%, the equivalent of 11,089,000 hectares had been forested in the country. Between 1990 and 2000, Nigeria lost an average of 409,700 hectares of forest every year equal to an average annual deforestation rate of 2.38%. Between 1990 and 2005, in total Nigeria lost 35.7% of its forest cover, or around 6,145,000 hectares.^[97]

In 2010, thousands of people were inadvertently exposed to lead-containing soil / ore from informal gold mining within the northern state of Zamfara. While estimates vary, it is thought that upwards of 400 children died of acute lead poisoning making this perhaps the largest lead poisoning fatality epidemic ever encountered.^[98] As of 2016, efforts to manage the exposure are ongoing.

Administrative divisions

Nigeria is divided into thirty-six states and one Federal Capital Territory, which are further sub-divided into 774 Local Government Areas (LGAs). In some contexts, the states are aggregated into six geopolitical zones: North West, North East, North Central, South East, South South, and South West.^{[99][100]}

As of the 2006 census Nigeria has eight cities with a population of over 1 million people (from largest to smallest: Lagos, Kano, Ibadan, Benin City and Port Harcourt. Lagos is the largest city in Africa, with a population of over 12 million in its urban area.^[101]

Major cities	
City	Population
<u>Lagos</u>	8,048,430
<u>Kano</u>	2,828,861
<u>Ibadan</u>	2,559,853
<u>Benin City</u>	1,147,188
<u>Port Harcourt</u>	1,005,904

A clickable map of Nigeria exhibiting its 36 states and the federal capital territory .



States

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <u>Abia</u> | 13. <u>Edo</u> | 25. <u>Nasarawa</u> |
| 2. <u>Adamawa</u> | 14. <u>Ekiti</u> | 26. <u>Niger</u> |
| 3. <u>Anambra</u> | 15. <u>Gombe</u> | 27. <u>Ogun</u> |
| 4. <u>Akwa Ibom</u> | 16. <u>Imo</u> | 28. <u>Ondo</u> |
| 5. <u>Bauchi</u> | 17. <u>Jigawa</u> | 29. <u>Osun</u> |
| 6. <u>Bayelsa</u> | 18. <u>Kaduna</u> | 30. <u>Oyo</u> |
| 7. <u>Benue</u> | 19. <u>Kano</u> | 31. <u>Plateau</u> |
| 8. <u>Borno</u> | 20. <u>Katsina</u> | 32. <u>Rivers</u> |
| 9. <u>Cross River</u> | 21. <u>Kebbi</u> | 33. <u>Sokoto</u> |
| | 22. <u>Kogi</u> | 34. <u>Taraba</u> |

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 10. <u>Delta</u> | 23. <u>Kwara</u> | 35. <u>Yobe</u> |
| 11. <u>Ebonyi</u> | 24. <u>Lagos</u> | 36. <u>Zamfara</u> |
| 12. <u>Enugu</u> | | |

Territory

Federal Capital Territory (FCT)

Economy

Nigeria is classified as a mixed economy emerging market, and has already reached lower middle income status according to the World Bank,^[102] with its abundant supply of natural resources, well-developed financial, legal, communications, transport sectors and stock exchange (the Nigerian Stock Exchange), which is the second largest in Africa.

Nigeria was ranked 21st in the world in terms of GDP (PPP) in 2015.^[103] Nigeria is the United States' largest trading partner in sub-Saharan Africa and supplies a fifth of its oil (11% of oil imports). It has the seventh-largest trade surplus with the US of any country worldwide. Nigeria is the 50th-largest export market for US goods and the 14th-largest exporter of goods to the US. The United States is the country's largest foreign investor.^[104] The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected economic growth of 9% in 2008 and 8.3% in 2009.^{[105][106][107]} The IMF further projects an 8% growth in the Nigerian economy in 2011.^[108]

In February 2011, Citigroup projected that Nigeria would have the highest average GDP growth in the world in 2010–2050. Nigeria is one of two countries from Africa among 11 Global Growth Generators countries.^[109]

Previously, economic development had been hindered by years of military rule, corruption, and mismanagement. The restoration of democracy and subsequent economic reforms have successfully put Nigeria back on track towards achieving its full economic potential. As of 2014 it is the largest economy in Africa, having overtaken South Africa.

During the oil boom of the 1970s, Nigeria accumulated a significant foreign debt to finance major infrastructural investments. With the fall of oil prices during the 1980s oil glut Nigeria struggled to keep up with its loan payments and eventually defaulted on its principal debt repayments, limiting repayment to the interest portion of the loans. Arrears and penalty interest accumulated on the unpaid principal, which increased the size of the debt. After negotiations by the Nigeria authorities, in October 2005 Nigeria and its Paris Club creditors reached an agreement under which Nigeria repurchased its debt at a discount of approximately 60%. Nigeria used part of its oil profits to pay the residual 40%, freeing up at least \$1.15 billion annually for poverty reduction programmes. Nigeria made history in April 2006 by becoming the first African country to completely pay off its debt (estimated \$30 billion) owed to the Paris Club.

Nigeria is trying to reach the first of the Sustainable Development Goals which is to end poverty in all its forms by 2030.



Maitama district, Abuja



Lagos Island as seen from Victoria Island.



Kuje market scene

Agriculture

As of 2010, about 30% of Nigerians are employed in agriculture.^[110] Agriculture used to be the principal foreign exchange earner of Nigeria.^[111]

Major crops include beans, sesame, cashew nuts, cassava, cocoa beans, groundnuts, gum arabic, kolanut, maize (corn), melon, millet, palm kernels, palm oil, plantains, rice, rubber, sorghum, soybeans and yams.^[112] Cocoa is the leading non-oil foreign exchange earner.^[112] Rubber is the second-largest non-oil foreign exchange earner.^[112]

Prior to the Nigerian civil war, Nigeria was self-sufficient in food.^[112] Agriculture has failed to keep pace with Nigeria's rapid population growth, and Nigeria now relies upon food imports to sustain itself.^[112] The Nigerian government promoted the use of inorganic fertilizers in the 1970s.^[113]

Oil

Nigeria is the 12th largest producer of petroleum in the world and the 8th largest exporter, and has the 10th largest proven reserves. (The country joined OPEC in 1971). Petroleum plays a large role in the Nigerian economy, accounting for 40% of GDP and 80% of Government earnings. However, agitation for better resource control in the Niger Delta, its main oil producing region, has led to disruptions in oil production and prevents the country from exporting at 100% capacity^[114]

The Niger Delta Nembe Creek Oil field was discovered in 1973 and produces from middle Miocene deltaic sandstone-shale in an anticline structural trap at a depth of 2 to 4 kilometres (1.2 to 2.5 miles).^[115] In June 2013, Shell announced a strategic review of its operations in Nigeria, hinting that assets could be divested. While many international oil companies have operated there for decades, by 2014 most were making moves to divest their interests, citing a range of issues including oil theft. In August 2014, Shell Oil Company said it was finalising its interests in four Nigerian oil fields.^[116]



The gates of the oil refinery in Port Harcourt

Overseas remittances

Next to petrodollars, the second biggest source of foreign exchange earnings for Nigeria are remittances sent home by Nigerians living abroad.^[117] In 2014, 17.5 million Nigerians resided in foreign countries, with the UK and the USA having more than 2 million Nigerians each.^[117]

According to the International Organization for Migration, Nigeria witnessed a dramatic increase in remittances sent home from overseas Nigerians, going from USD 2.3 billion in 2004 to 17.9 billion in 2007. The United States accounts for the largest portion of official remittances, followed by the United Kingdom, Italy, Canada, Spain and France. On the African continent, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Libya and South Africa are important source countries of remittance flows to Nigeria, while China is the biggest remittance-sending country in Asia.

Services

Nigeria has one of the fastest growing telecommunications markets in the world, major emerging market operators (like MTN, 9mobile, Airtel and Globacom) basing their largest and most profitable centres in the country.^[118] The government has recently begun expanding this infrastructure to space based communications. Nigeria has a space satellite that is monitored at the Nigerian National Space Research and Development Agency Headquarters in Abuja.

Nigeria has a highly developed financial services sector, with a mix of local and international banks, asset management companies, brokerage houses, insurance companies and brokers, private equity funds and investment banks.^[119]

Mining

Nigeria also has a wide array of underexploited mineral resources which include natural gas, coal, bauxite, tantalite, gold, tin, iron ore, limestone, niobium, lead and zinc.^[120] Despite huge deposits of these natural resources, the mining industry in Nigeria is still in its infancy.

Manufacturing

Nigeria has a manufacturing industry that includes leather and textiles (centred on Kano, Abeokuta, Onitsha, and Lagos), Nigeria currently has an indigenous auto manufacturing company; Innoson Vehicle Manufacturing located in Nnewi. It produces Buses and SUVs. car manufacturing (for the French car manufacturer Peugeot as well as for the English truck manufacturer Bedford, now a subsidiary of General Motors), T-shirts, plastics and processed food

Nigeria in recent years has been embracing industrialisation. It currently has an indigenous vehicle manufacturing company, Innoson Motors, which manufactures Rapid Transit Buses, trucks and SUVs with an upcoming introduction of cars.^[121] Nigeria also has few Electronic manufacturers like Zinox, the first Branded Nigerian Computer and Electronic gadgets (like tablet PCs) manufacturers.^[122] In 2013, Nigeria introduced a policy regarding import duty on vehicles to encourage local manufacturing companies in the country^{[123][124]} In this regard, some foreign vehicle manufacturing companies like *Nissan* have made known their plans to have manufacturing plants in Nigeria.^[125] Ogun is considered to be the current Nigeria's industrial hub, as most factories are located in Ogun and more companies are moving there, followed by Lagos.^{[126][127][128]}

Government satellites

The Nigerian government has commissioned the overseas production and launch of four satellites. The Nigeriasat-1 was the first satellite to be built under the Nigerian government sponsorship. The satellite was launched from Russia on 27 September 2003. Nigeriasat-1 was part of the worldwide Disaster Monitoring Constellation System.^[129] The primary objectives of the Nigeriasat-1 were: to give early warning signals of environmental disaster; to help detect and control desertification in the northern part of Nigeria; to assist in demographic planning; to establish the relationship between malaria vectors and the environment that breeds malaria and to give early warning signals on future outbreaks of meningitis using remote sensing technology; to provide the technology needed to bring education to all parts of the country through distant learning; and to aid in conflict resolution and border disputes by mapping out state and International borders.

NigeriaSat-2, Nigeria's second satellite, was built as a high-resolution earth satellite by Surrey Space Technology Limited, a United Kingdom-based satellite technology company. It has 2.5-metre resolution panchromatic (very high resolution), 5-metre multispectral (high resolution, NIR red, green and red bands), and 32-metre multispectral (medium resolution, NIR red, green and red bands) antennas, with a ground receiving station in Abuja. The NigeriaSat-2 spacecraft alone was built at a cost of over £35 million. This satellite was launched into orbit from a military base in China.^[129]

NigComSat-1, a Nigerian satellite built in 2004, was Nigeria's third satellite and Africa's first communication satellite. It was launched on 13 May 2007, aboard a Chinese Long March 3B carrier rocket, from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in China. The spacecraft was operated by NigComSat and the Nigerian Space Agency, NASRDA. On 11 November 2008, NigComSat-1 failed in orbit after running out of power because of an anomaly in its solar array. It was based on the Chinese DFH-4 satellite bus, and carries a variety of transponders: 4 C-band; 14 Ku-band; 8 Ka-band; and 2 L-band. It was designed to provide coverage to many parts of Africa, and the Ka-band transponders would also cover Italy

On 10 November 2008 (0900 GMT), the satellite was reportedly switched off for analysis and to avoid a possible collision with other satellites. According to Nigerian Communications Satellite Limited, it was put into "emergency mode operation in order to effect mitigation and repairs".^[130] The satellite eventually failed after losing power on 1 November 2008.

On 24 March 2009, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, NigComSat Ltd. and CGWIC signed another contract for the in-orbit delivery of the NigComSat-1R satellite. NigComSat-1R was also a DFH-4 satellite, and the replacement for the failed NigComSat-1 was successfully launched into orbit by China in Xichang on 19 December 2011.^{[131][132]} The satellite, according to

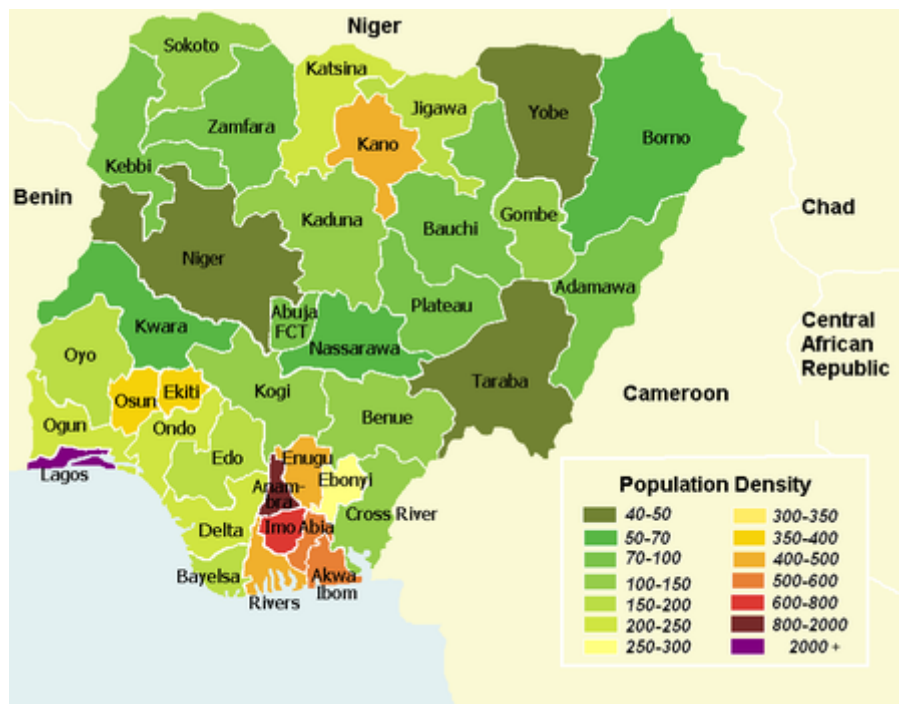
then-Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan was paid for by the insurance policy on NigComSat-1, which de-orbited in 2009. It was stated the satellite would have a positive impact on national development in various sectors such as communications, internet services, health, agriculture, environmental protection and national security^[133]

Society

Demographics

Population in Nigeria ^[134]	
Year	Million
1971	55
1980	71
1990	95
2000	125
2004	138
2008	151

Nigeria's population increased by 57 million from 1990 to 2008, a 60% growth rate in less than two decades.^[134] Almost half of Nigerians are 14 years old or younger^[135] Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and accounts for about 18% of the continent's total population; however, exactly how populous is a subject of speculation.^[136]



Population density in Nigeria

The United Nations estimates that the population in 2016 was at 185,989,640^[2], distributed as 51.7% rural and 48.3% urban, and with a population density of 167.5 people per square kilometre. National census results in the past few decades have been disputed. The results of the most recent census were released in December 2006 and gave a population of 140,003,542. The only breakdown available was by gender: males numbered 71,709,859, females numbered 68,293,08. In June 2012, President Goodluck Jonathan said that Nigerians should limit their number of children.^[137]

According to the United Nations, Nigeria has been undergoing explosive population growth and has one of the highest growth and fertility rates in the world. By their projections, Nigeria is one of eight countries expected to account collectively for half of the world's total population increase in 2005–2050.^[138] By 2100 the UN estimates that the Nigerian population will be between 505 million and 1.03 billion people (middle estimate: 730 million).^[139] In 1950, Nigeria had only 33 million people.^[140]

One in four Africans is a Nigerian.^[141] Presently, Nigeria is the seventh most populous country in the world. 2006 estimates claim 42.3% of the population is between 0–14 years of age, while 54.6% is between 15 and 65; the birth rate is significantly higher than the death rate, at 40.4 and 16.9 per 1000 people respectively^[142]

Nigeria's largest city is Lagos. Lagos has grown from about 300,000 in 1950^[143] to an estimated 15 million today^[144]

Ethnic groups

Nigeria has more than 500 ethnic groups, with varying languages and customs, creating a country of rich ethnic diversity. The largest ethnic groups are the Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and Fulani, together accounting for more than 70% of the population, while the Urhobo-Isoko, Edo, Ijaw, Kanuri, Ibibio, Ebira, Nupe, Gbagyi, Jukun, Igala, Idoma and Tiv comprise between 25 and 30%; other minorities make up the remaining 5%.^[146]

The middle belt of Nigeria is known for its diversity of ethnic groups, including the Pyem, Goemai, and Kofyar. The official population count of each of Nigeria's ethnicities has always remained controversial and

disputed as members of different ethnic groups believe the census is rigged to give a particular group (usually believed to be northern groups) numerical superiority^{[101][147][148]}

There are small minorities of British, American, East Indian, Chinese (est. 50,000),^[149] white Zimbabwean,^[150] Japanese, Greek, Syrian and Lebanese immigrants in Nigeria. Immigrants also include those from other West African or East African nations. These minorities mostly reside in major cities such as Lagos and Abuja, or in the Niger Delta as employees for the major oil companies. A number of Cubans settled in Nigeria as political refugees following the Cuban Revolution

In the middle of the 19th century, a number of ex-slaves of Afro-Cuban and Afro-Brazilian descent^[151] and emigrants from Sierra Leone established communities in Lagos and other regions of Nigeria. Many ex-slaves came to Nigeria following the emancipation of slaves in the Americas. Many of the immigrants, sometimes called Saros (immigrants from Sierra Leone) and Amaro (ex-slaves from Brazil)^[152] later became prominent merchants and missionaries in these cities.

Languages

There are 521 languages that have been spoken in Nigeria (nine of which are now extinct).

In some areas of Nigeria, ethnic groups speak more than one language. The official language of Nigeria, English, was chosen to facilitate the cultural and linguistic unity of the country, owing to the influence of British colonisation that ended in 1960.

Many French speakers from surrounding countries have influenced the English spoken in the border regions of Nigeria and some Nigerian citizens have become fluent enough in French to work in the surrounding countries. The French spoken in Nigeria may be mixed with some native languages but is mostly spoken like the French spoken in Benin. French may also be mixed with English as it is in Cameroon. Most of the population speaks English as their native language.

The major languages spoken in Nigeria represent three major families of languages of Africa: the majority are Niger-Congo languages, such as Igbo, Yoruba and Fulfulde; Kanuri, spoken in the northeast, primarily in Borno and Yobe State, is part of the Nilo-Saharan family; and Hausa is an Afroasiatic language.

Even though most ethnic groups prefer to communicate in their own languages, English as the official language is widely used for education, business transactions and for official purposes. English as a first language is used only by a small minority of the country's urban elite, and it is not spoken at all in some rural areas. Hausa is the most widely spoken of the 3 main languages spoken in Nigeria



Map of Nigeria's linguistic groups

itself (Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba) but unlike the Yorubas and Igbos, the Hausas tend not to travel far outside Nigeria itself.

With the majority of Nigeria's populace in the rural areas, the major languages of communication in the country remain indigenous languages. Some of the largest of these, notably Yoruba and Igbo, have derived standardised languages from a number of different dialects and are widely spoken by those ethnic groups. Nigerian Pidgin English, often known simply as "Pidgin" or "Broken" (Broken English), is also a popular lingua franca, though with varying regional influences on dialect and slang. The pidgin English or Nigerian English is widely spoken within the Niger Delta Regions, predominately in Warri, Sapele, Port Harcourt, Agenebode, Ewu, and Benin City.^[153]



Women in north Nigeria

Religion

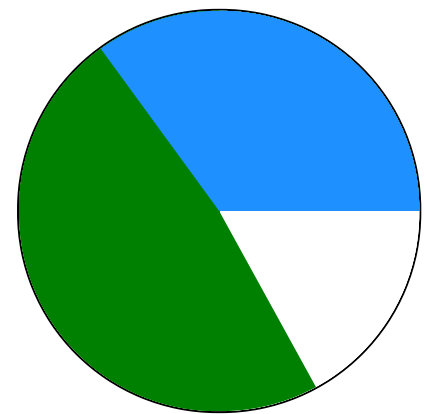
Nigeria is a religiously diverse society, with Christianity and Islam being the most widely professed religions. Nigerians are nearly equally divided into Christians and Muslims, with a tiny minority of adherents of Animism and other religions.

Islam dominated the north and had a number of supporters in the South Western, Yoruba part of the country. Nigeria has the largest Muslim population in sub-Saharan Africa. Protestantism and local syncretic Christianity are also in evidence in Yoruba areas, while Roman Catholicism is more prominent in south-eastern Nigeria. Both Protestantism and Roman Catholicism dominated in the Ibibio, Annang, and the Efik kiosa lands.

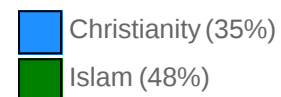
The 1963 census indicated that 47% of Nigerians were Muslim, 35% Christian, and 18% members of local indigenous congregations. If accurate, this indicated a sharp increase since 1953 in the number of Christians (up 23%); a decline among those professing indigenous beliefs, compared with 20%; and only a modest (6%) drop of Muslims which can likely be attributed to immigration, emigration, and birthrate.

The vast majority of Muslims in Nigeria are Sunni belonging to Maliki school of jurisprudence; however, a sizeable minority also belongs to Shafi madhhab. A large number of Sunni Muslims are members of Sufi brotherhoods. Most Sufis follow the Qadiriyya, Tijaniyyah and/or the Mouride movements. A significant Shia minority exists (see Shia in Nigeria). Some northern states have incorporated Sharia law into their previously secular legal systems, which has brought about some controversy.^[155] Kano State has sought to incorporate Sharia law into its constitution.^[156] The majority of Quranists follow the Kalo Kato or Quraniyyun movement. There are also Ahmadiyya and Mahdiyya minorities.^[157]

According to a 2001 report^[158] from The World Factbook by CIA, about 47% of Nigeria's population is Muslim, 43% are Christians and 10% adhere to local religions.^[159] But in some recent report, the Christian population is now slightly larger than the Muslim population. An 18 December 2012 report on religion and public life by the Pew Research Center stated that in 2010, 49.3 percent of Nigeria's population was Christian, 48.8 percent was Muslim, and 1.9 percent were followers of indigenous and other religions, or unaffiliated.^[160] Additionally, the 2010s census of Association of Religion Data Archives has reported that 46.5 percent of the total population is Christian, slightly bigger than the Muslim population of 45.5 percent, and that 7.7 percent are members of other religious groups.^[161]



Religion in Nigeria (Afrobarometer 2013)^[154]



The Abuja National Mosque

The 2010 census of Association of Religion Data Archives has also reported that 46.5% of the total population was Christian, slightly larger than the Muslim population of 45.5%, while 7.7% were members of other religions.^[161] However, these estimates should be taken with caution because sample data is mostly collected from major urban areas in the south, which are predominantly Christian.^{[162][163][164]}

Among Christians, the Pew Research survey found that 74% were Protestant, 25% were Catholic, and 1% belonged to other Christian denominations, including a small Orthodox Christian community.^[165] In terms of Nigeria's major ethnic groups, the Hausa ethnic group (predominant in the north) was found to be 95% Muslim and 5% Christian, the Yoruba tribe (predominant in the west) was 55% Muslim, 35% Christian and 10% adherents of other religions, while the Igbos (predominant in the east) and the Ijaw (south) were 98% Christian, with 2% practising traditional religions.^[166] The middle belt of Nigeria contains the largest number of minority ethnic groups in Nigeria, who were found to be mostly Christians and members of traditional religions, with a small proportion of Muslims.^{[167][168]}



National Church of Nigeria Abuja.

Leading Protestant churches in the country include the Church of Nigeria of the Anglican Communion, the Assemblies of God Church, the Nigerian Baptist Convention and The Synagogue Church Of All Nations. Since the 1990s, there has been significant growth in many other churches, particularly the evangelical Protestant ones. These include the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Winners' Chapel, Christ Apostolic Church (the first Aladura Movement in Nigeria), Deeper Christian Life Ministry, Evangelical Church of West Africa, Mountain of Fire and Miracles, Christ Embassy and The Synagogue Church Of All Nations. In addition, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Aladura Church, the Seventh-day Adventist and various indigenous churches have also experienced growth.^{[169][170]}

The Yoruba area contains a large Anglican population, while Igboland is predominantly Roman Catholic and the Edo area is composed predominantly of members of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God, which was introduced into Nigeria by Augustus Ehurie Wogu and his associates at Old Umuahia.

Further, Nigeria has become an African hub for the Grail Movement and the Hare Krishnas,^[171] and the largest temple of the Eckankar religion is in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, with a total capacity of 10,000.

The Church of Jesus Christ of LatterDay Saints (LDS) announced creation of new Owerri mission in Nigeria in 2016.^[172]

Health



A hospital in Abuja, Nigeria's capital

Health care delivery in Nigeria is a concurrent responsibility of the three tiers of government in the country, and the private sector.^[173] Nigeria has been reorganising its health system since the Bamako Initiative of 1987, which formally promoted community-based methods of increasing accessibility of

drugs and health care services to the population, in part by implementing user fees.^[174] The new strategy dramatically increased

accessibility through community-based healthcare reform, resulting in more efficient and equitable provision of services. A comprehensive approach strategy was extended to all areas of health care, with subsequent improvement in the health care indicators and improvement in health care efficiency and cost.^[175]

HIV/AIDS rate in Nigeria is much lower compared to the other African nations such as Kenya or South Africa whose prevalence (percentage) rates are in the double digits. As of 2012, the HIV prevalence rate among adults ages 15–49 was just 3.1 percent.^{[176][177]} As of 2014, life expectancy in Nigeria is 52.62 years on average according to CIA,^[178] and just over half the population have access to potable water and appropriate sanitation; As of 2010, the infant mortality is 8.4 deaths per 1000 live births.^[179]

Nigeria was the only country in Africa to have never eradicated polio, which it periodically exported to other African countries;^[180] Polio was cut 98% between 2009 and 2010. However, a major breakthrough came in December 2014, when it was reported that Nigeria hadn't recorded a polio case in 6 months, and was on its way to being declared Polio free. ^{[181][182]} In 2012, a new bone marrow donor program was launched by the University of Nigeria to help people with leukaemia, lymphoma, or sickle cell disease to find a compatible donor for a life-saving bone marrow transplant, which cures them of their conditions. Nigeria became the second African country to have successfully carried out this surgery.^[183] In the 2014 ebola outbreak, Nigeria was the first country to effectively contain and eliminate the Ebola threat that was ravaging three other countries in the West African region, the Nigerian unique method of contact tracing employed by Nigeria became an effective method later used by countries such as the United States, when ebola threats were discovered.^{[184][185][186]}

The Nigerian health care system is continuously faced with a shortage of doctors known as 'brain drain', because of emigration by skilled Nigerian doctors to North America and Europe. In 1995, it was estimated that 21,000 Nigerian doctors were practising in the United States alone, which is about the same as the number of doctors working in the Nigerian public service. Retaining these expensively trained professionals has been identified as one of the goals of the government.^[187]

Education

Education in Nigeria is overseen by the Ministry of Education Local authorities take responsibility for implementing policy for state-controlled public education and state schools at a regional level. The education system is divided into Kindergarten, primary education, secondary education and tertiary education. After the 1970s oil boom, tertiary education was improved so that it would reach every subregion of Nigeria. 68% of the Nigerian population is literate, and the rate for men (75.7%) is higher than that for women (60.6%).^[142]

Nigeria provides free, government-supported education, but attendance is not compulsory at any level, and certain groups, such as nomads and the handicapped, are under-served. The education system consists of six years of primary school, three years of junior secondary school, three years of senior secondary school, and four, five or six years of university education leading to a bachelor's degree.^[142]



Children at school in Ille-Ife, Nigeria

Crime

Nigeria is home to a substantial network of organised crime, active especially in drug trafficking. Nigerian criminal groups are heavily involved in drug trafficking, shipping heroin from Asian countries to Europe and America; and cocaine from South America to Europe and South Africa.^[188] The various Nigerian Confraternities or "campus cults" are active in both organised crime and in political violence as well as providing a network of corruption within Nigeria. As confraternities have extensive connections with political and military figures, they offer excellent alumni networking opportunities. The Supreme Vikings Confraternity, for example, boasts that twelve members of the Rivers State House of Assembly are cult members.^[189] On lower levels of society, there are the "area boys", organised gangs mostly active in Lagos who specialise in mugging and small-scale drug dealing. According to official statistics, gang violence in Lagos resulted in 273 civilians and 84 policemen killed in the period of August 2000 to May 2001.^[190]

Internationally, Nigeria is infamous for a form of bank fraud dubbed *419*, a type of advance fee fraud (named after Section 419 of the Nigerian Penal Code) along with the "Nigerian scam", a form of confidence trick practised by individuals and criminal syndicates.^[191] These scams involve a complicit Nigerian bank (the laws being set up loosely to allow it) and a scammer who claims to have money he needs to obtain from that bank. The victim is talked into exchanging bank account information on the premise that the money will be transferred to him, and then he'll get to keep a cut. In reality, money is taken out instead, and/or large fees (which seem small in comparison with the imaginary wealth he awaits) are deducted. In 2003, the Nigerian Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (or EFCC) was created, ostensibly to combat this and other forms of organised financial crime.^[192]

There is also some major piracy in Nigeria, with attacks directed at all types of vessels. Consistent with the rise of Nigeria as an increasingly dangerous hot spot, 28 of the 30 seafarers kidnapped as of January–June 2013 were in Nigeria. Additionally, the single death to date in 2013 occurred in Nigeria.^[193]

Nigeria has also been pervaded by political corruption. It was ranked 143 out of 182 countries in Transparency International's 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index, however, it improved to 136th position in 2014.^[194]

More than \$400 billion were stolen from the treasury by Nigeria's leaders between 1960 and 1999.^[195] In late 2013, Nigeria's then central bank governor Lamido Sanusi informed President Goodluck Jonathan that the state oil company, NNPC, had failed to remit US\$20 billion in oil revenues, which it owed the state. Jonathan, however, dismissed the claim and replaced Sanusi for alleged mismanagement of the central bank's budget. A Senate committee also found Sanusi's account to be lacking substance.^[196] After the conclusion of the NNPC's account audit, it was announced in January 2015 that NNPC's non-remitted revenue is actually US\$1.48 billion, which it needs to refund back to the Government.^[197]

In 2015, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari stated that corrupt officials have stolen \$150 billion from Nigeria in the last 10 years.^[198]

Culture

Literature

Nigerian citizens have authored many influential works of post-colonial literature in the English language. Nigeria's best-known writers are Wole Soyinka, the first African Nobel Laureate in Literature, and Chinua Achebe, best known for the novel *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and his controversial critique of Joseph Conrad

Other Nigerian writers and poets who are well known internationally include John Pepper Clark, Ben Okri, Cyprian Ekwensi, Buchi Emecheta, Helon Habila, T. M. Aluko, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Daniel O. Fagunwa, Femi Osofisan and Ken Saro Wiwa, who was executed in 1995 by the military regime. Nigeria has the second largest newspaper market in Africa (after Egypt) with an estimated circulation of several million copies daily in 2003.

Critically acclaimed writers of a younger generation include Chris Abani, Sefi Atta, Helon Habila, Helen Oyeyemi, Nnedi Okorafor, Kachi A. Ozumba, Sarah Ladipo Manyika, and Chika Unigwe

Media

Music and film



Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe is Africa's most popular and best selling literary piece ever translated into over 40 languages across Africa and around the world!^[199]

Nigeria has had a huge role in the development of various genres of African music, including West African highlife, Afrobeat, and palm-wine music, which fuses native rhythms with techniques that have been linked to the Congo, Brazil, Cuba, Jamaica and worldwide.

Many late 20th-century musicians such as Fela Kuti have famously fused cultural elements of various indigenous music with American jazz and soul to form Afrobeat which has in turn influenced hip hop music.^[200] JuJu music, which is percussion music fused with traditional music from the Yoruba nation and made famous by King Sunny Adé, is also from Nigeria. There is also Fuji music, a Yoruba percussion style, created and popularised by MrFuji, Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister.

There is also the Afan Music invented and popularised by the Ewu-born poet and musician Umuobuarie Igberaese. There is a budding hip-hop movement in Nigeria. Kennis Music, the self-proclaimed number-one record label in Africa, and one of Nigeria's biggest record labels, has a roster almost entirely dominated by hip-hop artists.

Notable musicians from Nigeria include: Sade Adu, King Sunny Adé, Onyeka Onwenu, Dele Sosimi, Adewale Ayuba, Ezebuiro Obinna, Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, Bennie King, Ebenezer Obey, Umobuarie Igberaese, Femi Kuti, Lagbaja, Dr. Alban, Wasiu Alabi, Bola Abimbola, Zaki Adze, Tuface Idibia, Aşa, Nneka, Wale, P Square and D'Banj.

In November 2008, Nigeria's music scene (and that of Africa) received international attention when MTV hosted the continent's first African music awards show in Abuja.^[201] Additionally, the very first music video played on MTV Base Africa (the 100th station in the MTV network) was Tuface Idibia's pan-African hit "African Queen".

The Nigerian film industry is known as Nollywood (a portmanteau of *Nigeria* and Hollywood^[202]) and is now the 2nd-largest producer of movies in the world. Nigerian film studios are based in Lagos, Kano and Enugu, forming a major portion of the local economy of these cities. Nigerian cinema is Africa's largest movie industry in terms of both value and the number of movies produced per year. Although Nigerian films have been produced since the 1960s, the country's film industry has been aided by the rise of affordable digital filming and editing technologies.

T.B. Joshua's Emmanuel TV, originating from Nigeria, is one of the most viewed television stations across Africa.^[203]



An Eyo Iga Olowe Salaye masquerade jumping

Cuisine

Nigerian cuisine, like West African cuisine in general, is known for its richness and variety. Many different spices, herbs and flavourings are used in conjunction with palm oil or groundnut oil to create deeply flavoured sauces and soups often made very hot with chili peppers. Nigerian feasts are colourful and lavish, while aromatic market and roadside snacks cooked on barbecues or fried in oil are plentiful and varied.^[204]

Sport

Football is largely considered Nigeria's national sport and the country has its own Premier League of football. Nigeria's national football team, known as the "Super Eagles", has made the World Cup on Six occasions 1994, 1998, 2002, 2010, 2014, and most recently in 2018. In April 1994, the Super Eagles ranked 5th in the FIFA World Rankings, the highest ranking achieved by an African football team. They won the African Cup of Nations in 1980, 1994, and 2013, and have also hosted the U-17 & U-20 World Cup. They won the gold medal for football in the 1996 Summer Olympics (in which they beat Argentina) becoming the first African football team to win gold in Olympic Football.

The nation's cadet team from Japan '93 produced some international players notably Nwankwo Kanu, a two-time African Footballer of the year who won the European Champions League with Ajax Amsterdam and later played with Inter Milan, Arsenal, West Bromwich Albion and Portsmouth. Other players that graduated from the junior teams are Nduka Ugbade, Jonathan Akpoborie, Victor Ikpeba, Celestine Babayaro, Wilson Oruma and Taye Taiwo. Some other famous Nigerian footballers include John Obi Mikel, Obafemi Martins, Vincent Enyeama, Yakubu Aiyegbeni, Rashidi Yekini, Peter Odemwingie and Jay-Jay Okocha

According to the official May 2010 FIFA World Rankings, Nigeria was the second top-ranked football nation in Africa and the 21st highest in the world. Nigeria is also involved in other sports such as basketball, cricket and track and field.^[205] Boxing is also an important sport in Nigeria; Dick Tiger and Samuel Peter are both former World Champions.

Nigeria's national basketball team made the headlines internationally when it qualified for the 2012 Summer Olympics as it beat heavily favoured world elite teams such as Greece and Lithuania.^[206] Nigeria has been home to numerous internationally recognised basketball players in the world's top leagues in America, Europe and Asia. These players include Basketball Hall of Famer Hakeem Olajuwon, and later NBA draft picks Solomon Alabi, Yinka Dare, Obinna Ekezie, Festus Ezeli, Al-Farouq Aminu and Olumide Oyedeji.

Nigeria made history by qualifying the first bobsled team for the Winter Olympics from Africa when their Women's 2-man team qualified for the bobsled competition at the XXIII Olympic Winter Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea.^[207]

Societal issues

Despite its vast government revenue from the mining of petroleum, Nigeria faces a number of societal issues, owing primarily to a history of inefficiency in its governance.

Human rights

Nigeria's human rights record remains poor;^[208] according to the US Department of State,^[208] the most significant human rights problems are: use of excessive force by security forces; impunity for abuses by security forces; arbitrary arrests; prolonged pretrial detention; judicial corruption and executive influence on the judiciary; rape, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of prisoners, detainees and suspects; harsh and life-threatening prison and detention centre conditions; human trafficking for the purpose of prostitution and forced labour; societal violence and vigilante killings; child labour, child abuse and child sexual exploitation; domestic violence; discrimination based on ethnicity, region and religion.

Under the Shari'a penal code that applies to Muslims in twelve northern states, offences such as alcohol consumption, homosexuality,^[209] infidelity and theft carry harsh sentences, including amputation, lashing, stoning and long prison terms.^[210]

Under a law signed in early 2014,^[211] same-sex couples who marry face up to 14 years each in prison. Witnesses or anyone who helps gay couples marry will be sentenced to 10 years behind bars. The bill also punishes the "public show of same-sex amorous relationships directly or indirectly" with ten years in prison. Another portion of the bill mandates 10 years in prison for those found guilty of organising, operating or supporting gay clubs, organizations and meetings.

In the Nigerian state of Akwa Ibom about 15,000 children were branded as witches and most of them end up abandoned and abused on the streets.^[212]



A friendly match between Nigeria and Algeria at the Abuja National Stadium in 2004

Strife and sectarian violence



Nigerian states that implement some form of sharia law (in green)

Because of its multitude of diverse, sometimes competing ethno-linguistic groups, Nigeria prior to independence was faced with sectarian tensions and violence, particularly in the oil-producing Niger Delta region, where both state and civilian forces employ varying methods of coercion in attempts gain control over regional petroleum resources. Some of the ethnic groups like the Ogoni, have experienced severe environmental degradation due to petroleum extraction.

Since the end of the civil war in 1970, some ethnic violence has persisted. There has subsequently been a period of relative harmony since the Federal Government introduced tough new measures against religious violence in all affected parts of the country. The 2002 Miss World pageant was moved from Abuja to London in the wake of violent protests in the Northern part of the country that left more than 100 people dead and over 500 injured.^[213] The rioting erupted after Muslims in the country reacted in anger to comments made by a newspaper reporter. Rioters in

Kaduna killed an estimated 105 men, women, and children with a further 521 injured taken to hospital.

Since 2002, the country has seen sectarian violence by Boko Haram, an Islamist movement that seeks to abolish the secular system of government and establish Sharia law in the country.^{[214][215]} In the 2010 Jos riots, more than 500 people were killed by religious violence.^[216]

Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan in May 2014 claimed that Boko Haram attacks have left at least 12,000 people dead and 8,000 people crippled.^[217] In May 2014 Benin, Chad, Cameroon and Niger joined Nigeria in a united effort to combat Boko Haram in the aftermath of the 2014 Chibok kidnapping of 276 schoolgirls.^[218] In April 2016, over 500 people in ten villages in predominantly Christian areas in Agatu were murdered by Fulani herdsmen. A visiting Nigerian Senator reported that all the primary and post-primary schools, health centres, worship centres as well as the police station in the area were destroyed. The UNHCR representative said in 20 years of work, she had "never seen such a level of destruction".^[219]

Media representation

- *Drilling and Killing: Chevron and Nigeria's Oil Dictatorship* an audio documentary produced by Amy Goodman first aired in 1998 on Democracy Now!
- *Sweet Crude*, a documentary film produced and directed by Sandy Cioffi about Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta.
- *Poison Fire*, a documentary exposing oil and gas abuses in Nigeria, featuring Friends of the Earth Nigeria volunteers, which premiered at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam.^[220]
- *Nollywood Babylon*, a 2008 documentary by Montrealers Ben Addelman and Samir Mallal about the Nigerian film industry, Nollywood. It premiered at the Festival de nouveau cinéma de Montréal 2008.

Women

Nigeria is a state party of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.^[221] It also has signed Maputo Protocol, an international treaty on women's rights, and the African Union Women's Rights Framework.^[222] Discrimination based on sex is a significant human rights issue, however Forced marriages are common.^[223]

Child marriage remains common in Northern Nigeria.^[224] 39% of girls are married before age 15, although the Marriage Rights Act banning marriage of girls below 18 years of age was introduced on a federal level in 2008.^[225]

There is polygamy in Nigeria.^[226] Submission of the wife to her husband and domestic violence are common. Women have less land rights.^[227] Maternal mortality was at 814 per 100,000 live births in 2015.^[228] Female genital mutilation is common. In 2015, there was a federal ban.^[229]

In Nigeria, at least half a million suffer from vaginal fistula, largely as a result of lack of medical care.^[230] Early marriages can result in fistula.^[231] Most workers in the informal sector are women.^[232]

See also

- Index of Nigeria-related articles
- Outline of Nigeria
- 2015 attack of Nigerian Army on Shi'a community
- Killing of Pro-Biafra Protesters (2015-2016)
- List of Languages in Nigeria
- Boko Haram in Context: The Terrorist Organizations's Roots in Nigeria's Social History

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