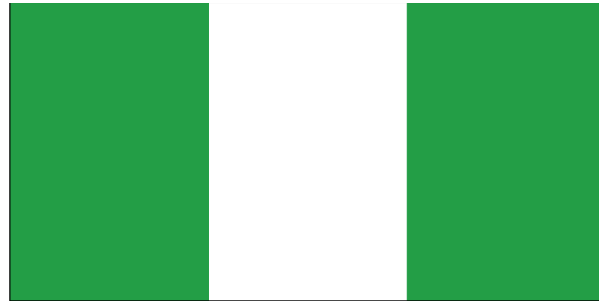


# NIGERIA OVERVIEW



## BASIC STATISTICS

- **Total population:** 126,635,626 (Ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in the world by the US Census Bureau; Africa's most populous country).
- **National GDP:** US \$106.2 billion (1998).
- **GDP per capita:** US \$960.
- **Median Age:** 17.9 years.
- **Infant Mortality:** 68.17 per 1,000 live births.

## GEOGRAPHY

- **Location:** The southern coast of West Africa.
- **Borders:** Benin, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger.
- **Capital:** Abuja.
- **Major cities and population:** Lagos 13,427,00 and Ibadan 1,731,00.
- **Area:** 356,700 square miles.
- **Topography divided into 4 east-west regions:** A coastal mangrove swamp, a tropical rainforest, a plateau of savanna and open woodland, and a semi-desert area in the north.
- **1 Territory and 36 States:** Abuja Federal Capital Territory, Abia, Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Ekiti, Enugu, Gombe, Imo, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Kogi, Kwara, Lagos, Nassarawa, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe, Zamfara.

## DEMOGRAPHY

- **Children 0-14:** 43.7%—55,356,422.
- **Teenage 10-19:** 23.3%—29,547,775.
- **Youth between 15-24:** 20.3%—25,684,752.
- **Seniors Over 70:** 1.6%—1,963,969.
- **Male to female ratio:** 102.4 males per 100 females.
- **Birth rate:** 40.16 per 1,000 people.

- **Life expectancy at birth:** 52.43 for males and 53.68 for females.
- **Infant mortality rate:** 68.17 per 1,000 live births.
- **Official Language:** English.
- **Other principal languages:** Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo.
- **Ethnic Groups:** More than 250; the following are the most populous and politically influential: Hausa and Fulani—29%, Yoruba—21%, Igbo (Ibo)—18%, Ijaw—10%, Kanuri—4%, Ibibio—3.5%, Tiv—2.5%.
- **Religious affiliations:** 50% Muslim, 40% Christian, 10% indigenous beliefs.
- **Religious group representation:** 45.9% Christian (51,123,167), 43.9% Muslim (48,999,663), and 9.8% Ethno-religionist (10,963,809). Less than one percent are Nonreligious, Atheist, Baha'i, Buddhist, Chinese folk-religionist, Jew, or other.
- **Education:** Free and compulsory from 6-15 years of age.
- **Literacy rate:** 57%.

## ECONOMY

- **Currency:** Naira.
- **GDP per capita:** US \$960.
- **National GDP:** US \$106.2 billion (1998).
- **Major Industries:** Crude oil, coal, palm oil, cotton, textiles.
- **Chief crops:** Cocoa, palm products, corn, rice, yams, cassava.
- **Electricity production:** 14.75 billion kWh (1998).
- **TV Sets:** 61 per 1,000 people.
- **Radios:** 197 per 1,000 people.
- **Telephones:** 407,000 main lines.
- **Daily newspaper circulation:** 24 per 1,000 people.

## POLITICS

- **Government type:** Republic.
- **Head of state and government:** President Olusegun Obasanjo.
- **International organization memberships:** United Nations (UN), the Commonwealth, Organization of African Unity (OAU), and Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
- **Historical Background:** Nigeria's early cultures can be dated back to at least 700 BC. In the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, more sophisticated cultures developed in the Yoruba area and in the north. In the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, Portuguese and British slavers appeared, and in 1861, Britain seized control of Lagos and extended their control inland. Nigeria became an independent republic in the 1960s, but since has been plagued by civil war and political unrest. In 1999, Olusegun Obasanjo became the head of Nigeria's first civilian government in 15 years. Recent Nigerian crises

include an exploding pipeline and the civil, religious, and political battles of the northern part of the country. On October 17<sup>th</sup>, 1998, an oil fire from a ruptured pipeline exploded and killed over 700 people. In the northern states, the imposition of Islamic law has fueled conflict in which over 800 people have died.

## **TRENDS AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

Understanding the trends and social issues of a particular country should always take into consideration the opinions of persons within the country. The Center for Youth Studies is looking for contributors from each country to add to our appreciation and understanding of its culture, potential, trends and critical issues. If you have insight as to what is important to Nigerians, please contact us.

We look forward to hearing the insights on what insiders consider the most important issues facing them. From an outsider's perspective current issues would include the role of the oil industry in the national economy, the inter-religious dialogue between different people groups, the evaluation of democracy and government leadership and the ever-pressing need for literacy education. What are the most important issues for Nigeria today? This will be added as we receive this information.

## **SOURCES**

### TEXT

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**Turner, B. (2000). *The World Today: Essential Facts in an Ever Changing World 2000*. New York, NY: St. Marten's Press.**

**McGeeveran, Jr., W. (Ed.). (2001). *The World Almanac and Book of Facts*. Mahwah, NJ: World Almanac Books.**

### WEB

**[US Census Bureau, International Database.](#)**

**[United Nation Statistics Division.](#)**

**[US Central Intelligence Agency. \*World Factbook\*.](#)**

## **QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION**

1. How important do you see Nigeria's role in Africa and in the world?
2. What most impresses you about the above information?
3. Do you take issue with any of the above? If so, how would you express it differently?
4. What strikes you most about the population of Nigeria? Why?
5. What do you see as the historical and cultural contributions of Nigeria to the world?
6. How has Nigeria handled its part in OPEC?
7. What can we learn from Nigeria and the Nigerian people?

Tammy Smith cCYS

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