

# Topic: States In Nigeria

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Population in Nigeria increased from 1990 to 2008 by 57 million, 60% growth rate. 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.

The United Nations estimates that the population in 2009 was at 154,729,000, distributed as 51.7% rural and 48.3% urban, and with a population density of 167.5 people per square kilometer. 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. On June 2012, President Goodluck Jonathan said that Nigerians should limit their number of children.

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 from 2005–2050.[135] By 2100 the UN estimates that the Nigerian population will be between 505 million and 1.03 billion people (middle estimate: 730 million). In 1950, Nigeria had only 33 million people.

One in four Africans is a Nigerian. 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 15–65; the birth rate is significantly higher than the death rate, at 40.4 and 16.9 per 1000 people respectively.

Nigeria's largest city is Lagos. Lagos has grown from about 300,000 in 1950 to an estimated 15 million today, and the Nigerian government estimates that city will have expanded to 25 million residents by 2015.

## **Ethnic groups**

Nigeria has more than 250 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, accounting for more than 70% of the population, while the Edo, Ijaw, Kanuri, Ibibio, Epira, Nupe, Gwari, Itsekiri, Jukun, Urhobo, Igala, Idoma and Tiv comprise between 25 and 30%; other minorities make up the remaining 5%.

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.

There are small minorities of British, American, East Indian, Chinese (est. 50,000), white Zimbabwean, 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 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) later became prominent merchants and missionaries in these cities.

## **Languages In Nigeria**

Women in north Nigeria

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.

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

## **Religion in Nigeria**

Islam (50.4%)

Christianity (48.2%)

Animist and Others (1.4%)

Nigeria is a religiously diverse society, with Islam and Christianity being the most widely professed religions. According to recent estimates, 50% of Nigeria's population adheres to Islam (mainly Sunni). Christianity is practiced by 48% of the population (74% Protestant, 25% Catholic, 1% other Christian). Adherents of Animism and other religions collectively represent 1.4% of the population. [

All religions represented in Nigeria were practiced in every major city in 1990. 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 Catholicism dominates the Igbo and closely related areas. Both Protestantism and Catholicism dominated in the Ibibio, Annang, and the Efik kiosa lands.

The contested 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 13%); a slight decline among those professing indigenous beliefs, compared with 20%; and only a modest (4%) increase of Muslims.