



CAPTIVE

Cultural Agent – Promoting and Targeting Interventions vs Violence and Enslavement



33 Countries of Origin' Profiles

AUTHORS

All CAPTIVE partners



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union



COUNTRIES of ORIGIN: PROFILES

List of CONTENTS

Afghanistan	Germany
Albania (Republic of)	France
Bangladesh	Italy
Bolivia	Spain
Central African Republic	France
Colombia	Spain
Democratic Republic of the Congo	France
Dominican Republic	Spain
Ecuador	Spain
Egypt	Malta
Eritrea (State of)	France
Gambia	Italy
India	UK
Iran	Germany
Iraq	UK
Ivory Coast	Italy
Kosovo	Germany
Libya	Malta
Mali	Italy
Morocco	Spain
Nigeria	Malta
Pakistan	UK
Peru	Spain
Romania	Spain



Russian Federation

Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic

Senegal

Somalia

Sri Lanka

Sudan

Syria

Ukraine

Vietnam

Germany

France

Italy

Malta

UK

Malta

Germany

Malta

UK



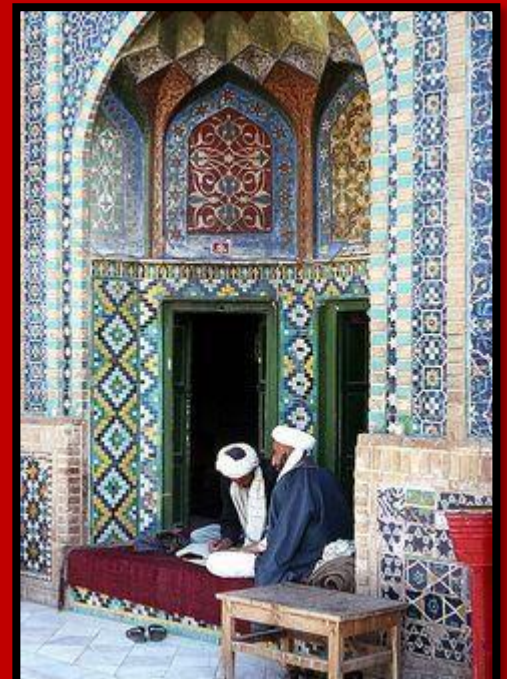
Facts about

Afghanistan

Produced by:

Justizvollzugsanstalt Zweibrücken

(DE)





Basic Data about Afghanistan

Area: 652,864 sq km

Population: 33 370 000

Life expectancy: females: 45,3 years; males: 44,8 years

Ethnic groups: Pashtun 42%, Tajik 27%, Hazara 9%, Uzbek 9%, Aimak 4%, Turkmen 3%, Baloch 2%, Pashai, Nuristani, Gujar, Arab, Brahui & Pamiri 4%

Religion: 99, 7% Islam; 90% Sunni Islam; minority of Shiites, Hindus & Sikhs

Unemployment: 8, 5%

Capital city: Kabul: 4635000 People

Major cities: Kandahar, Herat

Literacy: 38, 2%; females: 24, 2%; males: 52,2%

Language: Pashto & Dari Persian

Government/ President: Islamic Republic/ Aschraf Ghani



Flag of Afghanistan *C. K. Raju*

The current flag of Afghanistan has been used since 2004, when the Taliban regime was removed. Since gaining the independence in 1919, the flag has undergone many changes in relation to political events. The current form of the flag is inspired by the flag that was used during the monarchy and differs only in the national emblem in the middle of the flag.

Currently, it consists of a vertical tricolor of black, red, and green and national emblem in the middle of the red stripe. The yellow national emblem consists of a mihrab (a niche in a mosque) and minbar (pulpit) placed in a wreath bearing an inscription "God is great".

Black: symbolizes Afghanistan's troubled past

Red: blood shed for Afghanistan's independence

Green: represents hope for the future, prosperity and Islam as it is believed to be a favorite color of Prophet Muhammad and his daughter, Fatima. Green is also mentioned several times in the Quran, in relation to paradise.



Geography *Justin Dodge*

Afghanistan is a landlocked country that sits between the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia. It shares land borders with Iran to the west, Pakistan to the south and east, China to the east, and Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan to the north.

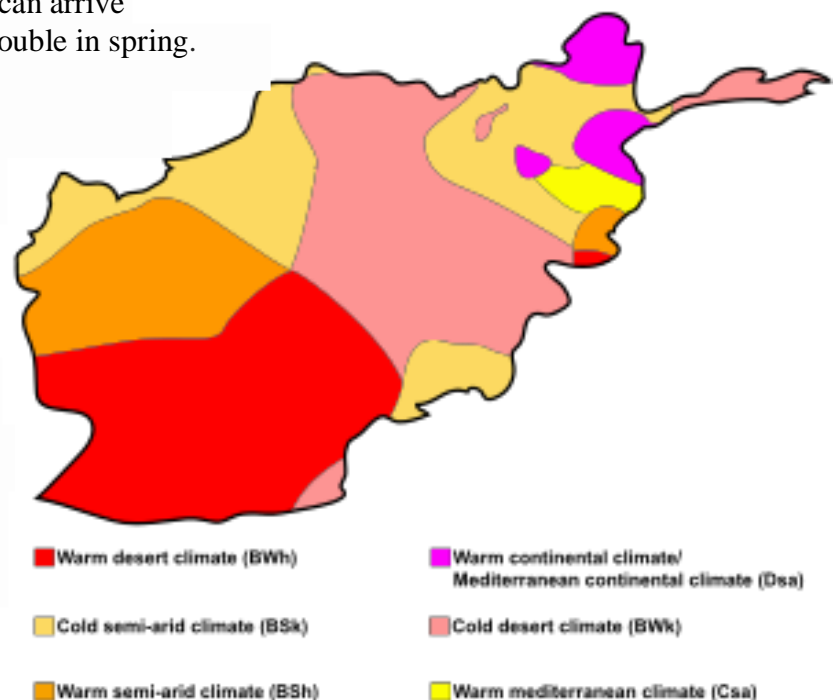
Much of Afghanistan is desert or mountain. The Hindu Kush Mountains in the country's east are some of the highest in the world. In this range and from this range there are numerous rivers and this region is the most densely populated part of the country. Outside the deserts and mountains, there are a few lower elevated valleys that are quite fertile and livable, primarily found in the country's northwest.



Climate *Justin Dodge*

Afghanistan has a number of weather variations based upon elevation and seasons. As a fairly mountainous country the elevation changes create vastly differing temperatures and weather patterns. Winters (November to February) in the mountains are very cold and can receive a great deal of snow; temperatures in the mountains in winter can average 15° F (-9° C), while in the lower valleys temperatures tend to move below and above the freezing point (32° F (0° C)). Summers in the mountains tend to warm up, but at elevation evening temperatures are still very low and can be near or below freezing, although day time temperatures can rise significantly. Again the valleys and low lands are warmer as Kabul receives daily highs of about 90° F (32° C) with nights falling to about 55° F (13° C) during the summer months. Springs and falls (autumns) are less predictable, especially in the mountains where snow can arrive in the fall and melting snow can cause trouble in spring.

Afghanistan map of Köppen climate classification



Afghan Population *World Population Review*

During 2017 Afghanistan population is projected to increased by 1,027,761 people and reach 35,070,843 in the beginning of 2018. The natural increase is expected to be positive, as the number of births will exceed the number of deaths by 921,206. If external migration will remain on the previous year level, the population will be increased by 106,555 due to the migration reasons. It means that the number of people who move into Afghanistan (to which they are not native) in order to settle there as permanent residents (immigrants) will prevail over the number of people who leave the country to settle permanently in another country (emigrants).

The population of Afghanistan will be increased by 2,816 persons daily in 2017.

Life expectancy

Life expectancy at birth is one of the most important demographic indicator. It shows the number of years a newborn infant would live assuming that birth and death rates will remain at the same level during the whole lifetime.

Total life expectancy (both sexes) at birth for Afghanistan is 45 years.

This is below the average life expectancy at birth of the global population which is about 71 years (according to Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations).

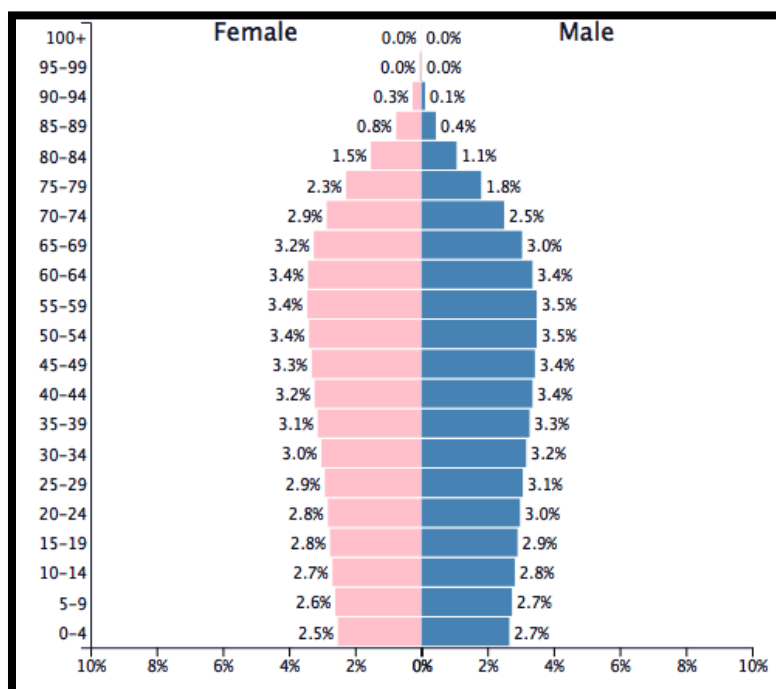
Male life expectancy at birth is 44.8 years.

Female life expectancy at birth is 45.3 years.

Literacy of population

According to our estimates 7,544,674 persons or 38.39% of adult population (aged 15 years and above) in Afghanistan are able to read and write. Accordingly about 12,106,014 adults are illiterate. Literacy rate for adult male population is 51.99% (5,226,361 persons). 4,825,880 are illiterate. Literacy rate for adult female population is 24.15% (2,318,313 persons). 7,280,134 are illiterate. Youth

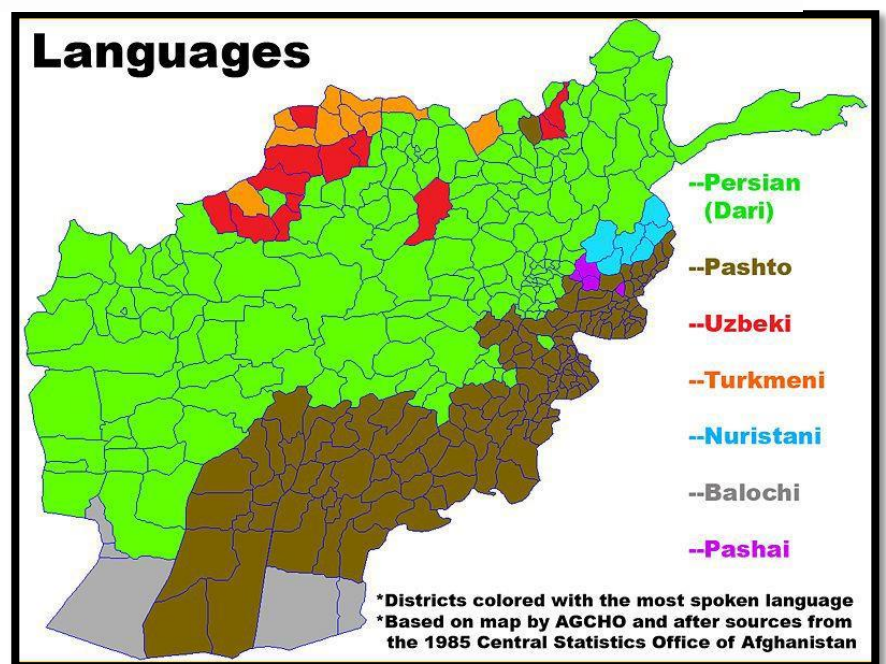
literacy rates are 69.59% and 46.33% for males and females accordingly. The overall youth literacy rate is 58.21%. Youth literacy rate definition covers the population between the ages of 15 to 24 years.



Language *Justin Dodge*

The two official languages of Afghanistan are Dari (or Afghan Persian) and Pashto. Dari is an eastern Iranian language, which is nearly identical to Persian (or Farsi), which is spoken in Iran and Tajik, which is spoken in Tajikistan. Dari has some slight differences from Persian and Tajik, but is spoken by most of the ethnic Tajiks in the country. Pashto is also an Iranian language, which is primarily spoken by the ethnic Pashtuns; it is more distantly related to Dari and Persian. Both languages are written in the Arabic script using the Persian alphabet.

The next most commonly spoken languages are Uzbek and Turkmen, both Turkic languages are spoken by minority groups. In addition to these languages, there are dozens of others spoken in Afghanistan by the many minority groups in the country.



Basic Words – Dari (Persian)

Hi – Salam

Welcome – Khash amadid

What's your name? – Esmeh shoma chist?

My name is... - Esmeh man ...ast.

How are you? – Hal e shoma chetoor ast/ Chetoori (polite)

I'm fine thank you! – Man khoobam, mersi!

And you? – Tu chetoori? / Va shoma? (polite)

Thank you – Mersi, mamnoon

Sorry – Bebahshid

No problem – Mohem nist

Have a nice day – Roozeh khoobi dashteh bashid

Good bye – Khodahafez

Culture of Afghanistan *Justin Dodge*

The culture and way of life in Afghanistan is varied, more than varied, it is so diverse there is no single way to define it. There are many more differences than there are similarities in the country and few defining characteristics are all inclusive. Most of the people are Muslim and this is probably the greatest similarity among the people. Next, comes a loyalty to the people's local tribe, but even this is not true among all people.

Many people in Afghanistan, or their ancestors, made their way to Afghanistan as a safe haven from political organizations or wars. The country made a good home due to the mountains and near isolation from mountain valley to mountain valley. This near isolation led to a dependence on local ties, family, friends, neighbors, and community or tribe. In fact, not even the people in the country are unified in terms of ethnicity or language so these local ties have always been the most important aspect of safety and identity. Additionally, this isolation has led to a bit of mistrust towards outsiders, including national-level offices like the government, encouraging closer ties to the local community.

Today less than a quarter of the Afghans are urbanized and over three quarters make a living in agriculture. The way of life is still reliant on the land and on community. For many of these farmers life revolves around the sunlight, weather, seasons, and also religion, which holds an important place in the lives of most people. The weekly and daily schedule is often dictated by the above mentioned items and there is little discretionary income to take time off of work, to travel, or to spend money on wants. Although farmers grow a huge number of crops, one of the easiest to grow in the country is opium, which is easy to sell and makes good money on relative terms. This has led to some outside groups to fight this industry, but for many people this is a traditional crop that has been grown for generations and is one that is sure to make money and support the people's livelihood.

In cities, such as Kabul, the culture and way of life is slowly changing. There are a very limited number of jobs in the industrial sector and a few in the services sectors. Some of these jobs have more regular hours and the weekly and daily schedule is more dependent on working hours than on the weather or seasons. In the few places working hours are regular the work day tends to run from about 9:00 am to about 4:00 pm. The work week is generally Saturday to Thursday morning, with Thursday afternoons and Fridays off of work as Friday is Islam's holy day.

Schools also provide some form of schedule in people's lives, but regulated schooling and national-level education is a relatively new concept in Afghanistan as the number of children attending schools is slowly increasing.



Sadly, some schools are targeted by radical groups, particularly those that educate girls, and many families are hesitant to send their children to schools with attacks, especially daughters due to attacks, poor facilities, and the lack of female teachers (some people feel uncomfortable have a male teacher teach girls). No matter the occupation, wages in Afghanistan remain low and many people struggle to survive from year to year. Due to this situation, it is common to again turn to family, friends, neighbors, and the local tribal affiliation for support. These community residents truly support each other and this support and trust in community is always at the core of the culture and way of life.

Identity

Rarely does a citizen of Afghanistan identify as "Afghan." Most people in the country first identify by their ethnicity, which includes Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, and more, although sometimes Pashtuns are referred to as Afghans. These ethnic-based identities tend to be attached to not only an ethnicity, but also a language, culture, foods, and a religion that defines that identity. Among the many groups it seems the only similarity across the people is that nearly all of them are Muslims.



Beyond this, each group is very different from the next and the lack of a national identity has led to vast differences among the people, except when minority groups unite to counter actions taken by the majority, the Pashtuns.

Behavior *Justin Dodge*

Islam also dictates a number of behavioral restrictions and requirements. For women traveling to Afghanistan, it is easiest (but not required) to travel with their husband, father, or brother. Single women travelers are looked at oddly and traveling with a man who is not related or married to you is widely considered inappropriate. Pretending you are married is not right, but most Afghans would consider it less offensive than a single man and women traveling together. It is also improper for a man to touch a woman, even holding your spouse's hand or offering to shake the hand of a person who is of the opposite sex can be considered inappropriate to a conservative Muslim.



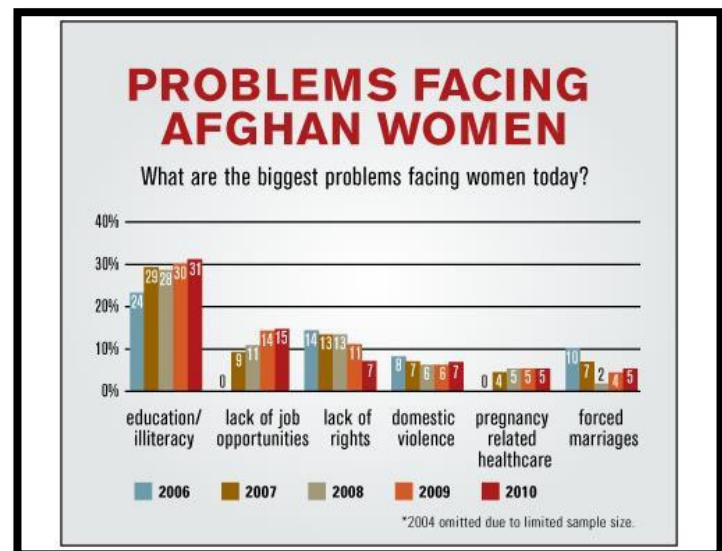
Islamic law forbids pork products and alcohol; however there is little worry about adhering to these rules since neither is available anywhere in Afghanistan. You should note that attempting to take either into the country is also strictly forbidden.

Gender roles *Sharifah Enayat Ali*

In Afghanistan, marriages are usually arranged, and women are usually less educated than men. They marry young, have many babies (preferably boys), generally do not work outside the home, and are usually restricted to socializing with female relatives. However, within the household they wield much power and influence in the decision making. The head matriarch is often the person who selects the brides for the family's sons. Nomadic women have far greater control over domestic affairs and the family finances than their village counterparts. Nomadic women have to take care of all family business while their husbands and sons are away for months at a time tending the herds. In all cases, females are highly deferential to all male family members, even when older females interact with younger male siblings and cousins.



For all Afghan women, maintaining a good reputation is a lifelong demand. Once a women's reputation is tarnished, she is no longer respected. Promiscuity, rape, divorce and the like will all tarnish a women's reputation. Once a women's reputation is tarnished, she is no longer respectable and society's respect cannot be re-attained. This is not true among men, who can redeem themselves through revenge or some honorable settlement. Afghan society regards unmarried women over the age of 25 and divorced women with disapproval. There is no dishonor in being widowed. However, for financial reasons, a brother or father of the deceased husband will often take the widow as another wife or otherwise provide for her.



Restrictions on women under the Taliban and fundamentalist mujahedeen groups were severe and included loss of jobs and educational opportunities. Since the fall of the Taliban, women are returning to work and schools are slowly opening for young girls. It has been estimated that almost half of the government workers are now women, including 25% of the parliament.^[3]

Western women may not be treated with the same respect as respectable Muslim/Afghan women. In fact, Western women may be treated as if they were prostitutes. This is because Western women are not held to the Islamic and tribal codes of honor and, in the minds of Afghan men, are already believed to be potentially (or likely) promiscuous. Afghan men may be quite forward in their interaction with Western women. Regardless of how a Western woman is dressed, Afghan men may leer, make inappropriate physical contact or



even directly proposition a non-Afghan woman for sex — either outright or in exchange for something of value.

Dress *Justin Dodge*

The clothing of the people of Afghanistan varies greatly from ethnic group to ethnic group, but there are many similarities as well. Nearly everyone in Afghanistan is Muslim and Islam has a number of religious dress restrictions that are closely followed by the people of Afghanistan. Since modesty is required, the dress tends to cover the arms and legs as well as the hair on women. However, in many of the valleys the weather can be quite hot so most of the clothes is light and tend to be loose-fitting, both to stay cool as well as to cover one's self. For women the dress was traditionally quite colorful, but today basic earth-toned colors are more common, which is also true for men. Most men also wear simple vests and a hat, of which there are numerous versions.



Although some people in Afghanistan do wear western-styled clothing they are a minority. Foreigners in Afghanistan should dress conservatively with both arms and legs covered; additionally, women should cover their hair whenever in public (although this is not a legal requirement). More importantly, due to the violence, it is recommended that you wear nothing that makes you stand out as a foreigner. Most visitors to Afghanistan today go with a larger organization, whether that is a military, a non-governmental organization, or another group, which is best suited to assist in what and how to dress.

Food *Justin Dodge*

Despite the mountainous landscape, Afghanistan is also home to numerous valleys and lowlands that are the grateful recipient of rains, rivers, and fertile soils, which make much of the country quite ideal when it comes to food. For much of time these foods and the animals that they attracted have made up the historic diet of the earliest settlers.

Fruits and vegetables are available throughout the country; however the styles in each region vary. Some of the more historic foods found in the region include onions, garlic, pomegranate, apricot, berries, pistachios, walnuts, coriander, and saffron among others. The fertile landscape also encourages animals and again these animals have been an important part of the people's historic diet. Sheep, chicken, and horses are all present in the region and these animals have provided both meat as well as dairy products to the people. Due to being a landlocked country, there is very little fish found in Afghanistan, although many lakes and rivers provided fish for the nearby people.



Culinary Influences

There were few major culinary influences in Afghanistan for much of the region's history since the local foods and animals present created a diverse historic diet, from which the people had



little interest in changing. Additionally, most of the region's historic diet and local foods still form the base of the local diet and over time the greatest changes have been primarily in the introduction of new spices and vegetables. As Islam arrived to Afghanistan in the 600s a couple dietary restrictions were placed on the new adherents: pork cannot be consumed and alcohol is forbidden. Although these two restrictions didn't vastly alter the local diet at the time, they have since given the cuisine a specific direction due to these restrictions.

Through the 600s and later the greatest influences came with traders from all directions, but primarily from India, the Mediterranean, and to a lesser degree China. These traders arrived to modern day Afghanistan as well as to the surrounding regions; most notably the north along the historic Silk Road and to the west where the historic power of Persia dominated. The Silk Road had power centers in the cities of Bukhara and Samarkand (both in modern day Uzbekistan) and the influence from this trade changed the cuisine of the entire region. The base foods remained quite firm as few major or noticeable alterations were made to the diet, however the addition of new spices forever altered the local flavors in a very subtle way. Although the external traders from faraway lands influenced the cuisine, it was the neighboring Persians that more strongly influenced the Afghan diet. The people adopted many dishes and took many ingredients and foods from Persia that were integrated into the local diet.

As the Silk Road slowly fell due to opening water routes between Europe and the Far East, the Ottoman Turks rose to power in the region and influenced Afghanistan's diet. The Turks brought yogurt, stuffed grape leaves (*dolma*), kebabs, and coffee while the Arabs, also in the west, brought a greater prevalence of figs and dates, around which new dishes were centered.

In the past century the foods have changed slightly in Afghanistan, but only slightly.

Although much of the world has adopted fast foods and pre-packaged meals, Afghanistan has not experienced many of these changes in great numbers. Isolated both geographically and politically for much of the past century the country has few fast food restaurants and almost no pre-packaged foods. For the little that does exist, it is almost entirely limited to the capital of Kabul.



Staple Foods

Khameerbob: a cooked dough that's sort of a combination between dumplings and pasta

Naan: thin oval-shaped bread served with most meals; sometimes topped with seeds

Rice: served as a base in many dishes and is prepared in numerous ways

Regional Variations, Specialties, & Unique Dishes

Ashak: dumplings filled with leeks topped with garlic and yogurt

Kebab: generally seasoned lamb meat served in naan with rice

Mantu: dumplings with onions and beef topped with a tomato sauce and yogurt

Palao/Pilaf: dozens of varieties exist, but the national dish is *qabili palao*, which is a rice-based meat, carrot, pistachio, and raisin dish

Qorma: onion-based stews, usually with meat; again numerous styles exist

Dining Etiquette

When eating in Afghanistan, remember that you are in a Muslim country and with that comes a couple etiquette rules you must know and follow. First, dress on the conservatively side.

Second, in conservative homes and even most restaurants, it is not acceptable to eat with a person of the opposite sex unless it is your child, sibling, or spouse. To many conservative Muslims this is important so observe the local restaurant's situation and follow their lead. This may mean that if you are with someone of the opposite sex who is not in your family (a co-worker for example), you shouldn't eat together.

If you get by those first rules, try to arrive on time for a meal and if eating in a local's home remove your shoes at the door if others have done so. Greet the elders first, but men should not touch the hand of a woman (as this is considered inappropriate to many Afghans), although you should greet and acknowledge everyone. Let your host seat you and when sitting be sure to keep your feet flat on the floor or pointed behind you as pointing the soles of your feet at another can be offensive; you may be asked to sit on the floor around the *dastarkhan*.

Once sitting, someone should come around with a wash basin so you can wash your hands prior to eating.

Once the food begins to arrive the more special foods will likely be placed near you as their guest, something you may not notice if you don't know the local foods. Be sure to try these foods as these are the dishes your host is most proud of and placing them near you is to ensure you have easy access to them. Your host will likely insist you eat certain dishes as well, but try to take a small amount of food at first as you will later be offered more food and you should accept. Also, many times all

dishes are brought out at the same time, but avoid taking desserts or fruits with your entree as these foods are reserved for after the main meal.

Eat as the locals eat; in some settings this means eating directly with your right hand (and your right hand only), but in other settings you may be offered dining utensils (cutlery), in which case eat in the continental style (knife or spoon in the right hand, fork in the left). If a knife is not present, most locals will hold the spoon in their

right hand and eat primarily from the spoon. No matter which utensil you hold in which hand, be sure to only bring food to your mouth with the utensil in your right hand. As you finish your food, and your second helping of food, leave a bit on your plate to show there was more than enough then place your fork and knife together in the 5:00 position. You may be offered tea prior to dessert and tea again prior to fruits, which usually ends a large meal. After everyone gets up from the table, you should again follow the lead of others and wash your hands once more, which again may come from a water basin passed around the table or you may be asked to use a faucet.

Dining in a restaurant with local Afghans is somewhat unusual as the locals rarely eat out and in most areas there are no restaurants so dining is always at home. More likely, if meeting a local out, you'll do so for tea at a teahouse. Either way, there will most likely be no service charge on your bill so be sure to add about 5% for a tip to the server.



Celebrations & Events

Afghanistan has a huge number of celebrations that are tied to foods, both religious and secular events. Two of the most important are religious though. *Eid al Fitr* is a celebration

that occurs immediately after Ramadan, a religious holiday that requires fasting for 30 days. *Eid al Fitr* is celebrated with numerous filling and more expensive dishes eaten, often containing meat, to celebrate the end of the long fast. However what makes this celebration even more loved is the heavy use of sweets in the celebration.

The second major religious food celebration in Afghanistan is *Eid e Qurban*, which is only celebrated after a pilgrim returns from *haj*, the mandatory journey for every able Muslim to go to Mecca. During this celebration an animal is usually sacrificed, usually a sheep or goat. Additionally, desserts, nuts, and tea are essential items.

Another event with religious undertones is called *nazer*, which is an event to celebrate a religious event or thanks for the safety of a loved one; it is usually celebrated after a pilgrimage or a holy day. A lamb or calf is usually sacrificed and the meat, along with *naan* is distributed to the poor and people passing by.

Births, wedding, and other events are also celebrated with food. Births are celebrated over 40 days with differing foods offered on particular days in celebration. Lamb kebabs are a common dish in these celebrations. Marriage engagements are brought to fruition with *pilau*, other main dishes, and numerous sweets. This is followed with more sweets as well as rice at the wedding itself to symbolize prosperity and fruitfulness.

The final important celebration tied to foods is the New Year festival, called *Nauroz*, which is celebrated on the spring equinox. This celebration is meant to celebrate the end of the winter and the beginning of new life so fresh produce is commonly eaten as are other foods. Fruits, rice dishes, and wheat dishes are included in the celebration; this event is often celebrated outdoors as the country seems to get out to picnic on this day each year.

Drinks

In Afghanistan the drink everyone seems drawn to is tea as the people drink it throughout the day every day. *Dugh*, rose-flavored yogurt with salt, is a more traditional drink, but less popular than tea. If you are seeking something you're more used to, there are plenty of options as soft drinks, juices, and coffee are available in most cities and even in some less traveled areas.

As a primarily Muslim country, Afghanistan has no alcohol available and it is illegal to consume in the country.

The tap water in Afghanistan should not be consumed. Be sure to also avoid anything with ice as it may have been made from the tap water. Salads and fruits could have also been washed in the tap water so be careful with those foods as well.



Religion *Justin Dodge*

Nearly every citizen of Afghanistan is Muslim. 80% of the population is Sunni Muslim while about 19% is Shia Muslim. Islam is a monotheistic religion, whose holy book is called the Qur'an. The Qur'an is believed to be the word of God spoken through the prophet Muhammad from 609-632 CE since the



Islamic world doesn't believe Jesus was the messiah). Islam believes Muhammad was the last prophet sent to earth by God, the last in a long line of prophets, which includes Moses, Abraham, and Jesus among others.

Muslims follow five pillars of their faith: testimony, prayer, alms-giving, fasting, and pilgrimage. These pillars, and other tenants of their faith, can give great structure to their lives as some foods, like pork, are forbidden and every Muslim is expected to pray five times a day. However, the level of participation in each of these pillars and to what degree Islam influences an individual's life varies from person to person and community to community.

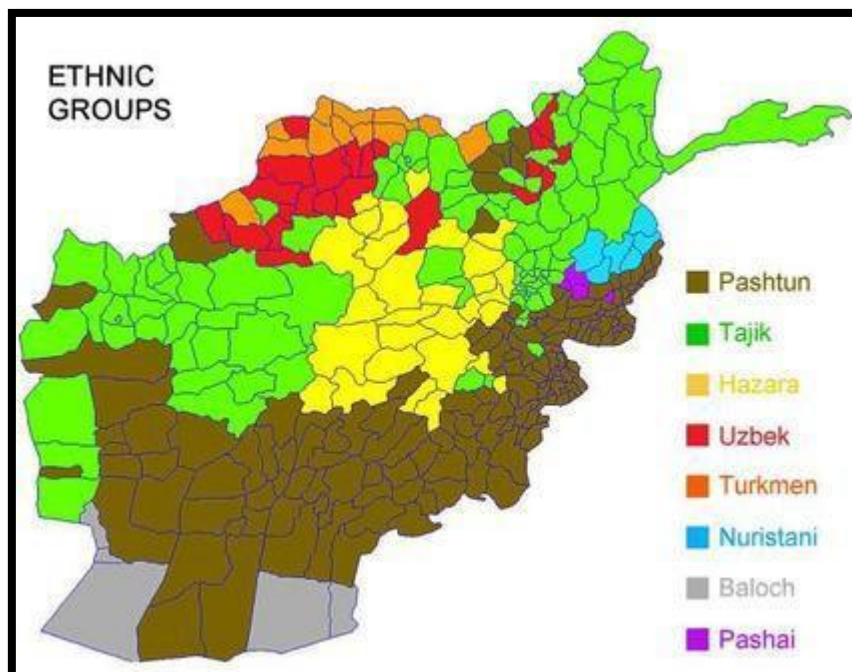
Generally speaking, Afghanistan is fairly conservative in how they practice Islam.

Most Muslims are Sunni, which is the branch of Islam that closely follows the teachings of Muhammad and accepts Abu Bakr as the first Caliph (a ruler of an Islamic community); the Sunni Muslims are sometimes referred to Orthodox. Shia Muslims believe only God can chose who heads the Islamic community and believed it was Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law who was first chosen; Ali became the first Imam (according to Shia Muslims, this term only refers to the leaders of the faith, to Sunni Muslims Imam is often times used in reference to the prayer leader in mosques).



Ethnicity *Justin Dodge*

Afghanistan is a fairly diverse country ethnically as their largest ethnic group is Pashtuns, but this group makes up less than half the country's population. The Pashtuns are related to the eastern Iranian or Persian groups, making their closest relatives the Balochs and more distantly related to the Persians. The next largest ethnic group is the Tajiks, who make up nearly a third of the country's population and are more closely related to the Persians. Among the numerous other ethnic groups in the country are the Hazara (Iranian people), Uzbeks (Turkic people), Balochs (Iranian people), and Turkmen (Turkic people) among many others.



Economy *Heritage Foundation*

Afghanistan's economic freedom is graded for the first time in the 2017 Index, reflecting the improved availability of key economic data. Over the past decade, the country has achieved rapid yet volatile economic growth. Construction and agriculture have been the key contributors to economic expansion. Afghanistan became a member of the World Trade Organization in 2016.

Political uncertainty and security challenges remain formidable. The rule of law continues to be fragile and uneven across the country; the inability to deliver even basic services reliably has eroded public confidence in the government; and systemic corruption has undermined the effectiveness of the courts, the banking sector, and other parts of the economy.

Afghan Government *Joshua Foust*

The politics of Afghanistan consists of the council of ministers, provincial governors and the national assembly, with a president serving as the head of state and commander-in-chief of the Afghan Armed Forces. The nation is currently led by President Ashraf Ghani who is backed by two vice presidents, Abdul Rashid Dostum and Sarwar Danish. In the last decade the politics of Afghanistan have been influenced by NATO countries, particularly the United States, in an effort to stabilise and democratise the country. In 2004, the nation's new constitution was adopted and an executive president was elected. The following year a general election to choose parliamentarians took place.

Hamid Karzai was declared the first ever democratically elected head of state in Afghanistan in 2004, winning a second five-year term in 2009. The National Assembly is Afghanistan's national legislature. It is a bicameral body, composed of the House of the People and the House of Elders. The first legislature was elected in 2005 and the current one in 2010. Members of the Supreme Court were appointed by the president to form the judiciary. Together, this new system is to provide a new set of checks and balances that was unheard of in the country.



Afghan Refugees *Norah Niland*

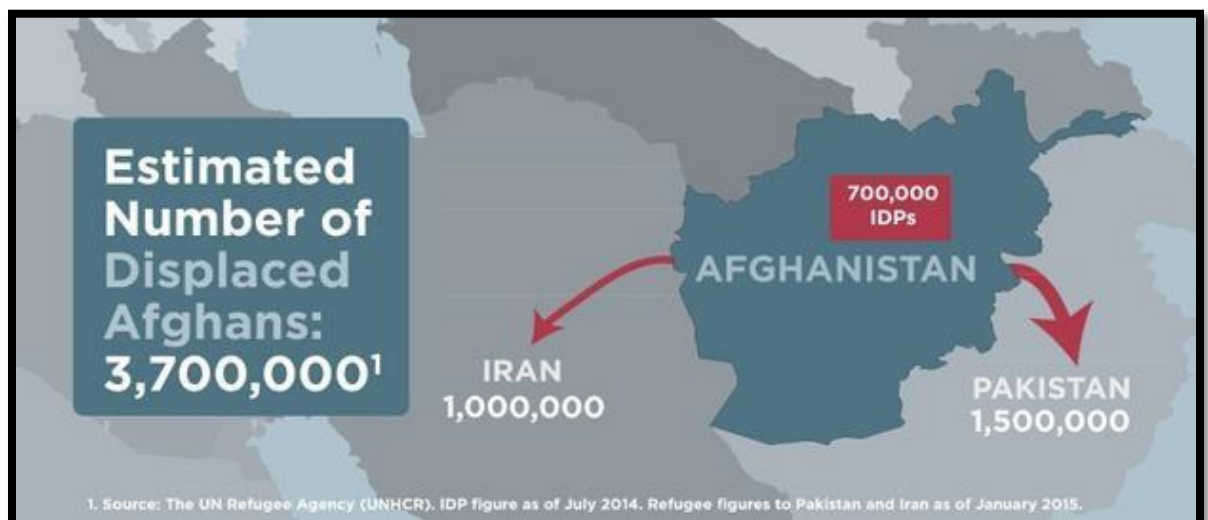
At the end of 2015, the UNHCR estimated there are approximately 1.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Afghanistan. Violence has been the major factor in involuntary population movements among Afghans.



An additional 2.7 million Afghans are refugees abroad, primarily in Pakistan and Iran, where they face an uncertain political situation, according to Human Rights Watch (HRW). Iranian officials, for example, deport thousands of undocumented Afghans without allowing them the opportunity to demonstrate a legal right to remain in Iran, or to lodge an asylum application.



When Afghan refugees do repatriate, they return to a country that remains plagued by war, poverty, and lawlessness. According to a 2012 report by the Feinstein International Center, one in three Afghan children are malnourished, with rates far higher in conflict-affected regions. Access to health care remains very limited, with 15 percent of the population without access to even basic healthcare services. In areas where fighting continues, militants lack respect for the neutrality of health care facilities, making visiting these facilities dangerous.



References

- <http://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/costs/human/refugees/afghan> View: 12.09.2017
- http://www.like2do.com/learn?s=Politics_of_AfghanistanView: 12.09.2017
- https://theodora.com/wfbcurrent/afghanistan/afghanistan_government.html View: 12.09.2017
- <http://uwf.edu/atcdev/afghanistan/Society/Lesson3GenderRoles2Women.html> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/afghanistan/culture/social-life/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/afghanistan/culture/food-drinks/> View: 12.09.2017
- http://mylanguages.org/dari_phrases.php View: 12.09.2017
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Afghanistan View: 12.09.2017
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_literacy_rate View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.infolaso.com/english/geography/114-countries-world/620-afghanistan> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.17-minute-world-languages.com/en/dari/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/afghanistan/geography-weather-wildlife/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/afghanistan/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://flagpedia.net/afghanistan> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/syria/culture/> View: 12.09.2017
- <https://tradingeconomics.com/afghanistan/unemployment-rate> View: 12.09.2017
- <https://data.worldbank.org/country/afghanistan> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://afghanistanflag.facts.co/afghanistanflagof/afghanistanflag.php> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.heritage.org/index/country/afghanistan> View: 12.09.2017



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Republic of ALBANIA

Geography



This flag is official since March 15, 1946, but was adopted in 1912 when the country was proclaimed independent. The eagle is above all a Byzantine symbol, but would also be an extraordinary beast of Albanian folk myths.

Why two eagles with a red background?

There are several answers to this question. One of them explains that if the eagle has two heads it is because there existed two religions for a single origin: Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Which would explain one body and two heads. Today, we could take this image of religion by uniting Catholicism and Orthodoxy in one head and Islam in the other. One of the other versions says that it would be more for the two dialects of Albanian, the Guegue being spoken north of the Shkumbin River and the Tosque to the south. As for colors, people more or less agree that red represents blood shed in the struggle for independence and black represents death and strength.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Population	2,876,591 inhabitants (January 2017)
Capital city	Tirana (726,547 inhabitants)
Other cities	Durrës - Vlorë - Shkodër - Elbasan - Fier
Total area	28,748 km ²

Languages

Albanian is the official language of the Republic of Albania. Its standard spoken and written form is revised and merged from the two main dialects, Gheg and Tosk, though it is notably based more on the Tosk dialect. The Shkumbin river is the rough dividing line between the two dialects. Also a dialect of Greek that preserves features now lost in standard modern Greek is spoken in areas inhabited by the Greek minority. Other languages spoken by ethnic minorities in Albania include Aromanian, Serbian, Macedonian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Gorani, and Roma. Macedonian is official in the Pustec Municipality in East Albania.

Greek is the second most-spoken language in the country, with two thirds of families having at least one member that speaks Greek. Francophony states 320,000 French speakers can be found in Albania. Other spoken languages include Italian, English, French, German, and Turkish.

According to the 2011 population census, 2,765,610 (98.77 %) of the population declared Albanian as their mother tongue (*mother tongue is defined as the first or main language spoken at home during childhood*).

Literacy rate 99.2% for males and 98.3% for females (overall of 98.7%)

Ethnicity / Minorities

Issues of ethnicity are a delicate topic and subject to debate. Contrary to official statistics that show an over 97% Albanian majority in the country, minority groups (such as Greeks, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Roma and Aromanians) have frequently disputed the official numbers, asserting a higher percentage of the country's population.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



According to the disputed 2011 census, ethnic affiliation was as follows: Albanians 2,312,356 (82.6% of the total), Greeks 24,243 (0.9%), Macedonians 5,512 (0.2%), Montenegrins 366 (0.01%), Aromanians 8,266 (0.30%), Romani 8,301 (0.3%), Balkan Egyptians 3,368 (0.1%), other ethnicities 2,644 (0.1%), no declared ethnicity 390,938 (14.0%), and not relevant 44,144 (1.6%). On the quality of the specific data the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities stated that "the results of the census should be viewed with the utmost caution and calls on the authorities not to rely exclusively on the data on nationality collected during the census in determining its policy on the protection of national minorities."

Albania recognizes nine national or cultural minorities: Greek, Macedonian, Wallachian, Montenegrin, Serb, Roma, Egyptian, Bosnian and Bulgarian peoples. Other Albanian minorities are Gorani, Aromanians and Jews. Regarding the Greeks, "it is difficult to know how many Greeks there are in Albania. The Greek government, it is typically claimed, says that there are around 300,000 ethnic Greeks in Albania, but most western estimates are around the 200,000 mark." The Albanian government puts the number at only 24,243." The CIA World Factbook estimates the Greek minority at 0.9% of the total population and the US State Department uses 1.17% for Greeks and 0.23% for other minorities. However, the latter questions the validity of the data about the Greek minority, due to the fact that measurements have been affected by boycott.

Macedonian and some Greek minority groups have sharply criticized Article 20 of the Census law, according to which a \$1,000 fine will be imposed on anyone who will declare an ethnicity other than what is stated on his or her birth certificate. This is claimed to be an attempt to intimidate minorities into declaring Albanian ethnicity, according to them the Albanian government has stated that it will jail anyone who does not participate in the census or refuse to declare his or her ethnicity. Genc Pollo, the minister in charge has declared that: "Albanian citizens will be able to freely express their ethnic and religious affiliation and mother tongue. However, they are not forced to answer these sensitive questions". The amendments criticized do not include jailing or forced declaration of ethnicity or religion; only a fine is envisioned which can be overturned by court.

Greek representatives form part of the Albanian parliament and the government has invited Albanian Greeks to register, as the only way to improve their status. On the other hand, nationalists, various organizations and political parties in Albania have expressed their concern that the census might artificially increase the numbers of the Greek minority, which might be then exploited by Greece to threaten Albania's territorial integrity.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Religion / Beliefs

Albania is a secular state without an official religion, with the freedom of religion being a constitutional right. The 2011 census, for the first time since 1930, included an optional open-ended question on religion; the census recorded a majority of Muslims (58.79%), which include Sunni (56.70%) and Bektashi Muslims (2.09%). Christians, making up 16.92% of the population, include Roman Catholics (10.03%), Orthodox (6.75%) and Evangelicals (0.14%). Atheists accounted for 2.5% of the population and 5.49% were non-affiliated believers, while 13.79% preferred not to answer.

During modern times, the Albanian republican, monarchic and later communist regimes followed a systematic policy of separating religion from official functions and cultural life. The country has never had an official religion either as a republic or as a kingdom. In the 20th century, the clergy of all faiths was weakened under the monarchy and ultimately eradicated during the 1950s and 1960s, under the state policy of obliterating all organized religion from the territories of Albania. The communist regime persecuted and suppressed religious observance and institutions and entirely banned religion. The country was then officially declared to be the world's first atheist state. Although, the country's religious freedom has returned, since the end of communism.

Albania was the only country in Europe where the Jewish population increased significantly during the Holocaust. Following the mass emigration to Israel, since the fall of communism, only 200 Albanian Jews are left in the country.

Religious tolerance is one of the most important values of the tradition of the Albanians. This is widely accepted, that Albanians are well known about those values, about a peaceful coexistence among the believers of different religious communities in Albania, which are mostly Muslims and Christians. During an official visit in Tirana, Pope Francis hailed Albania as model of religious harmony, due to the long tradition of religious coexistence and tolerance. The country is ranked among the least religious countries in the world. Furthermore, religion plays an important role in the lives of only 39% of the country's population.

Political Situation

Politics in the country operate under a framework laid out in the Constitution of Albania. First in 1913, Albania was constituted as a monarchy, briefly a republic in 1920, then into a democratic monarchy in 1928. Succeeding, it became a socialist republic, until the restoration of capitalism and democracy, after the end of communism. Nowadays, Albania is a unitary parliamentary constitutional republic in



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



which the president serves as the head of state and the prime minister as the head of government.

President is Ilir META and Prime Minister, Edi RAMA.

The parliament is the unicameral representative body of the citizens of Albania and is elected by the people to a four-year term on the basis of direct, universal, periodic and equal suffrage by secret ballot. There are 140 deputies in the parliament, which are elected through a party-list proportional representation system. The parliament has the power to decide the direction of domestic and foreign policy, approve or amend the constitution, declare war on another state, ratify or annul international treaties, elect the president, the supreme court, the attorney general and their deputies and control the activity of state radio and television, state news agency and other official information media.

The judicial system of Albania is a civil law system divided between courts with regular civil and criminal jurisdiction and administrative courts. It is codified and based on the French law. Major institutions of the branch include the supreme court, constitutional court, court of appeal, and the administrative court. Law enforcement in the country is primarily the responsibility of the Albanian Police. It is the main and largest state law enforcement agency in the country. It carries nearly all general police duties that includes criminal investigation, patrol activity, traffic policing and border control.

Cultural Traditions

Lekë Dukagjini's kanun is an ethnological and cultural wealth of Albania. In a people whose history is marked by foreign administration, local customs spread over dozens or even hundreds of centuries are welcome to reinforce national identity.

The work of Lekë Dukagjini's kanun is composed of 12 books. Note however that through the articles and the reading of the corpus the environment in which people most likely adopted the customs of Kanun seems to correspond to a period between the fourteenth and eighteenth century.

The word "kanun" would be passed in Albanian by the Turkish "kanôn", it comes etymologically from the Greek "kanon" and means "rule". Failing to be the archetype of the code of honor of the perfect little mafia Albanian kanun is primarily and above all a collection of manners, customs, traditions, rules passed on orally from generation to generation. The kanun of Lekë Dukagjini has no place in practical life, it must and is moreover more or less developed only from a folkloric, patrimonial point of view. It is part of a past cultural heritage that once ruled the daily life of Albanian mountaineers.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Socialization

Albanians have always lived in a world of extreme hardship and deprivation. Underdevelopment and a high incidence of infant mortality have been compounded by warring and blood feuding that at times decimated the male population. Reproduction, as the key to survival, therefore took on a more elementary significance among Albanians than it did among neighboring peoples. Even today, Albanian birthrates are significantly higher than those anywhere else in Europe. As in other third world cultures, it is believed that the more children, especially male children, one raises, the more security one will have in one's old age. A childless marriage is considered a great misfortune, and a woman living without a husband and children is inconceivable.

Given the extremely patriarchal nature of Albanian society, greater importance is attributed to the birth of sons than to that of daughters. Even today, pregnant women are greeted with the expression *të lindtënjëdjalë* ("May a son be born"). It was often the custom in the north of Albania for a woman to be wed officially only after she had given birth to her first son. In Berat, the main beam of a house was painted black at the birth of a girl as a token of the family's disappointment.

Gender and Family relations

The Relative Status of Women and Men. Albania is a patriarchal society based on male predominance. Women are accorded subordinate roles. The communist Party of Labor did much to emancipate women during a revolutionary campaign in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but many of the gains of that social revolution have been reversed since the introduction of democracy and a free market economy. Old traditions have revived, and despite legal equality and acceptance in the workforce, women have much less representation in public life than they did under the former regime.

Marriage, family and kinship. Marriages in Albania are socially and legally restricted to heterosexual couples. They often are arranged at an early age in the countryside, traditionally by the parents of the groom with the help of a matchmaker rather than by the couple. Remaining unmarried is looked on as a great misfortune. In some mountain regions, the bride was stolen from her family, that is, spirited away by an armed bridegroom or by his male relatives and companions. This usually symbolic though occasionally real theft of a bride was also a common custom among the Italo-Albanians of Calabria. In other regions, it was customary to purchase a wife. In zones such as Mirditë and the northern mountains, the father, brother, or another male



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



relative of the bride still presents the groom with a bullet wrapped in straw. The new husband is thus free to kill his wife with the approval of her family if she proves to be disobedient.

Albanian women were as a rule faithful to their husbands. Since a wife was considered the property of her husband, adultery amounted to theft. Thus, cases of adultery were punished severely under traditional law. Premarital and extramarital sex was more prevalent in the northern highlands, the part of the country with the most rigid moral code. Divorce is now a common phenomenon.

Monogamy was always the rule in Albania, but polygamous marriages existed up to the beginning of the twentieth century in some areas, particularly if the first wife was not able to bear a son.

Gender Based Violence

http://www.legislationline.org/download/action/download/id/6713/file/Albania_Ombudsman_special_report_violence_against_women_2012_en.pdf

http://www.legislationline.org/download/action/download/id/6709/file/Albania_National_strategy_gender_equality_gender_based_violence_2011-2015_eng.pdf

With regards to Albanian legal frameworks and mechanisms, some of the key developments include the Law on Domestic Violence (2006), the Law on Gender Equality (2008) and the coordination mechanism for the treatment of domestic violence cases, established in 2011 (National Referral Mechanism). Criminal legislation was also amended in 2012 and 2013, criminalizing some forms of violence against women within the scope of the Istanbul Convention. In addition, recent amendments to the Code on Criminal Procedures in the context of a broader justice reform, improve the status of victims in criminal proceedings in accordance with international standards and include a specific provision for victims of sexual abuse and human trafficking.

However, political turbulence and a transition to a market economy have created unstable conditions in Albania in recent years. Although Albanian women have some rights before the law, these rights are not always enforced. While Albania had acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and had adopted national strategies or plans of action against gender-based violence and for gender equality, the Commissioner for Human Rights said that all three programs could be more comprehensively implemented.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a serious problem in Albania. The transition to a free market has left women in a particularly vulnerable position, as they have become increasingly economically dependent on men due to a lack of jobs and social support. The Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights reported that domestic violence was under-reported, -investigated, -prosecuted and -sentenced. Part of the problem seems to be that the victims themselves do not see domestic violence as a crime, and even if they do, they fear reporting incidents will bring shame onto their families.

According to INSTAT's Women and Men in Albania 2016, in the course of 2010 to 2014, a significant increase in the number of women victims who reported domestic violence has been observed. The highest share of reported cases of domestic violence is found in the prefecture of Tirana, where the figure stands at 34.3 per cent, followed by the prefecture of Durrës with 18.3 per cent. The lowest numbers of reported DV cases are in Kukës and Dibra (1.2 per cent respectively). Comparing the number of reported DV cases with the total female population, the rates of reporting are highest in the prefectures of Durrës, Berat, and Tirana (36.6, 24.1 and 23.1 per cent per 10,000 inhabitants, respectively). The prefectures of Dibra (5.2), Kukës (8.2) and Shkodra (9.1) have the lowest rates of women victims who report domestic violence. These figures are significantly below the Albanian average rate of women who report domestic violence, at 19.1 per cent. Therefore, interventions that aim at raising awareness and effectiveness of the Referral Mechanism are particularly needed in these regions.

2015 Statistics for DV cases

	Total
Reported	3867
Prepared the Request for Protection Order	2148
Protection Orders broken/violated	112
Initiated the Criminal Process	1719
Continued the criminal process according to the Article 130/a of the Criminal Code	1300
Arrested	730
Detained	130
Murdered	18

Source: General Directory of Albanian State Police.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Trafficking

Albania is still a source country for trafficking in persons, but is no longer considered a major transit country. The Albanian police reported that trafficking of women and children decreased sharply but NGOs suspect that there are many more cases that go unreported.

https://www.un.org.al/sites/default/files/National_Action_Plan_eng%20Web.pdf

Sexual assault

Spousal rape incidents are not so often reported or prosecuted, as many Albanian citizens and government authorities do not consider it as a crime.

Sexual Harassment

There is very little information available on the prevalence of sexual harassment toward women in Albania.

Hereunder are some main reasons why women/girls do not report to authorities:

- Lack of information about the institutions that they can address to make denouncement;
- Lack of trust in institutions that they can protect them and that they are not going to be judgmental;
- Fear of retaliation, behaviour of spouse or household member perpetrator of violence, after denouncing the case in the police;
- Lack of a safe house for them and their children, after denouncing violence;
- Lack of ability to distinguish between violence and then denounce it.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Rate of crime, by sex and victim (2009 – 2015)

<https://www.un.org.al/sites/default/files/Femra%20meshkuj%202016%20web.pdf>

TOTAL

12	6	5	9	21	15	1	Acts for the terrorist purposes
300	255	440	457	375	260	116	Crime in the area of illegal trafficking
	1998	2181	2526	3020	4121	3542	Domestic violence

MEN

12	6	5	9	21	15	1	Acts for the terrorist purposes
227	124	355	350	278	120	32	Crime in the area of illegal trafficking
	338	402	490	674	1031	817	Domestic violence

WOMEN

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Acts for the terrorist purposes
73	131	85	107	97	140	84	Crime in the area of illegal trafficking
	1660	1779	2036	2346	3090	2725	Domestic violence

Sexual crimes happened (2009 – 2015)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Male	96	NA	49	NA	89	100	180
Female	1	NA	0	NA	0	1	26

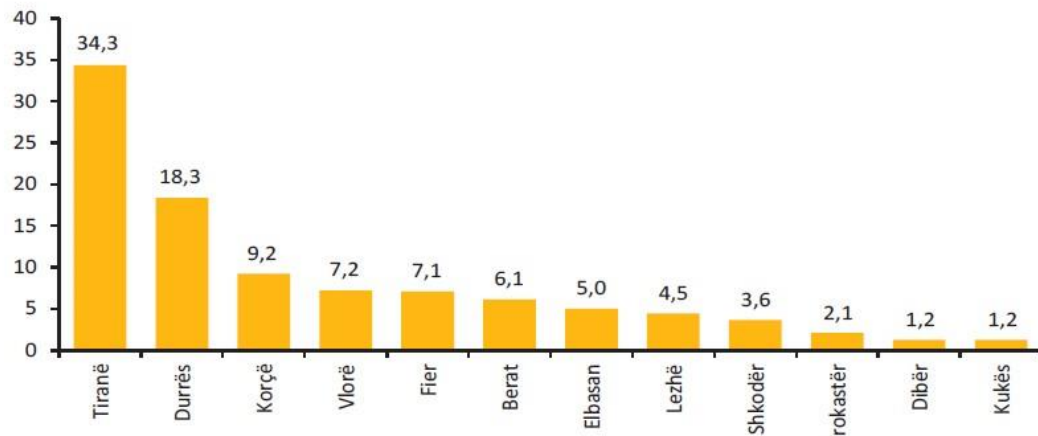


Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Femra që denoncojnë dhunën në familje për vitin 2015, në %

Women who experience domestic violence per year 2015, %



Burimi: Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë së Shtetit

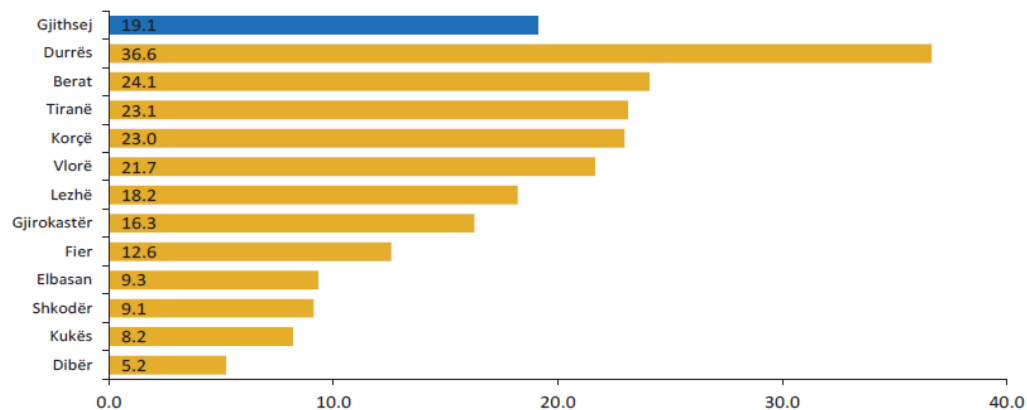
Source: General Directorate of State Police

Shënim: Grafiku tregon %jen e femrave të dhunuara për çdo qark në raport me totalin e gjithë femrave të dhunuara për një vit të caktuar

Note: Figure illustrate %age of battered women of each prefecture in relation with total of all battered women in a specific year

Norma e femrave që denoncojnë dhunë në familje shprehur për 10 mijë banorë, 2015

The rate of women who denounce domestic violence per 10 thousand inhabitants, 2015



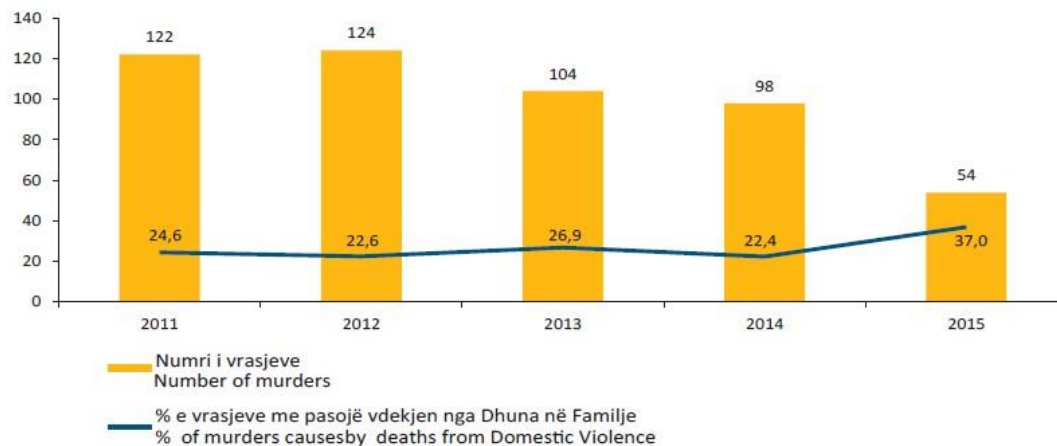


Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Përqindja e vrasjeve me pasojë vdekjen nga Dhuna në Familje

Percentage of murders where death was a result of Domestic Violence



Burimi: Drejtoria e Përgjithshme e Policisë së Shtetit
Source: General Directorate of State Police

Migrations

https://ofpra.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/rapport_de_mission_albanie_2014.pdf

Unaccompanied minors

The problem of emigration of isolated (unaccompanied) minors to Western Europe is of particular concern to the Albanian authorities. This type of emigration is motivated by economic considerations, as young migrants are often supported or even encouraged by their families.

An increase in this phenomenon has been observed since the visa liberalization agreement concluded between the European Union and Albania in 2010. In most cases, these minors enter the European soil accompanied by their parents, then stay there after the departure of the latter. Parents give them a notarized statement that they have left their child with a family member living abroad, which protects them from further prosecution by the Albanian justice for child abandonment. IOM works in partnership with the countries of destination of these minors to organize their voluntary return. With respect to failed asylum seekers, the organization cooperates with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Women victims of human trafficking

In its 2013 Annual Report on Trafficking in Human Beings (THB), the US State Department presents Albania as a source country for trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation, or at work. The victims of THB are men, women or children. In recent years, the Albanian authorities have taken several important steps to combat this phenomenon.

The victims of THB, for the purpose of sexual exploitation, are mainly young women, or very young, from poor families living in rural areas, often in the grip of important social problems (split or blended families, violence, incest, illiteracy). A close link has been found between domestic violence and prostitution of young girls. These girls are sometimes under very strong pressure from their parents to accept early marriage; this situation makes them particularly vulnerable to any promise of a better life, and therefore easily manipulated. The Executive Director of the Albanian Center for Human Rights confirmed that a precarious economic situation is undeniably a risk factor for young women. For example, the fact that young Roma women do not register in the civil registry makes them particularly vulnerable to the risk of being victims of a trafficking network, as their disappearance is more easily overlooked.

The exploitation of Albanian women abroad

For a long time, Albania remained only a transit country for the exploitation of foreign women, especially from Moldavia, Romania or Bulgaria. In recent years, Albania has become a country of origin for victims of human trafficking. The main destination country for the trafficking of women for prostitution are currently Belgium, Germany and France. With the economic crisis in Greece and Italy, many young women were transferred by their traffickers to the current prostitution countries. Some years ago, the price of a young Albanian girl taken to Italy was between \$ 2,500 and \$ 4,000 and could even reach \$ 10,000 if she was a virgin.

In the networks, young women are regularly subjected to violence. They can be raped and drugged to make them more docile. To prevent them from fleeing, traffickers are threatening their relatives in Albania with retaliation, or they are resorting to blackmail, threatening to reveal their true activities abroad.

It is unfortunate that women prostituted in Albania remain in the eyes of the Courts guilty of an offense when they are usually and above all victims of trafficking. When they go to complain about their pimp by explaining that they prostitute themselves, they are often sued.

The mode of recruitment of young women has evolved in recent years. In the early days, traffickers did not use physical or psychological violence. In the majority of cases, these traffickers do not really belong to prostitution networks and recruit victims by promising them marriage. Once in Western Europe, young women are forced into



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



prostitution by violence on behalf of their "companion". Some women manage to break all links with their pimps and continue to prostitute themselves but on their own. The Albanian authorities have found that these prostitutes sometimes tend to become pimps themselves by recruiting new young women into their families or acquaintances.

In most cases, once seduced, young women are more or less brutally forced into prostitution. Some are sometimes blackmailed by the young man they frequented, threatening to give their family photographs or make compromising revelations. To protect their family from dishonor, they then agree to prostitute themselves. It can also happen that these girls are training their friends or former classmates in the network. The phenomenon of the kidnapping of girls on the street by traffickers, which was important in the 1990s, has become marginal at the present time, although it has not completely disappeared. In some cases, extremely poor families incite their daughter to prostitute themselves; cases of sales of young girls by their parents or family members have been reported, but they remain rare and almost exclusively affect the Roma community. On the other hand, in the poorest families, girls may be married to almost unknown individuals, even if there is a risk of seeing the girl join a prostitution ring. It's like, for the family, to get rid of a "mouth to feed".

Other official sources about S/GBV in Albania

UNICEF

https://www.unicef.org/albania/domviol_eng.pdf

UNITED NATIONS / Albania

<https://www.un.org.al/sites/default/files/SKGJB-EN-web.pdf> (2016/2020)

https://www.un.org.al/sites/default/files/UNW%20Gender%20Brief%20Albania%202016_EN_web_1.pdf

UNFPA Albanian Country Office.

- **Type of Document:** Website/portal
- **Language:** English
- **Available at :** <https://data.unfpa.org/docs/alb>

The Advocates for Human Rights. Stop Violence Against Women. Country Page - Albania.

- **Type of Document:** Website/portal.
- **Language:** English.
- **Available at:** <http://www.stopvaw.org/Albania.html>



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), UNDP (2013), Domestic violence in Albania: National Population Based Survey

- **Type of document:** Survey/prevalence study.
- **Language:** English.
- **Available at:** <http://www.in.undp.org/content/dam/albania/docs/Second%20Domestic%20Violence%20Survey%202013%20english.pdf>

Albanian Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) (2009), Violence against Women Prevalence Study (2007-2008), Domestic Violence in Albania: A National Population-based Survey.

- **Type of document:** Survey/prevalence study.
- **Language:** English.
- **Available at:** http://mdhamo.files.wordpress.com/2010/01/domestic_violence_robin_fin_al_5_24_09.doc

Refleksione Association (2010), Report on establishment and effectiveness of functioning of the cross-sectoral referral system of domestic violence cases at the local level.

- **Type of document:** Research report.
- **Language:** English.
- **Available at:** <http://www.stopdhunes.com/eng/adresa-te-tjera-ne-internet>

Albanian Coalition for the Preparation of Alternative Reports (ACPAR) (2006), CEDAW shadow report on situation of women and girls in the republic of Albania

- **Type of document:** Research report
- **Language:** English
- **Available at:** http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/ACPAR_Albania46.pdf



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



BANGLADESH

Produced by ANFE Italia (Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti)



GEOGRAPHY: The state is located in the north-eastern region of the Indian subcontinent, in South Asia. It borders to the west, to the north and east with India, to the southeast with Burma (Myanmar) and faces south on the Bay of Bengal.

CAPITAL: Dhaka .

POPULATION: 157,826,578 millions ¹.

LANGUAGE: The official language is Bangla, also known as Bengali written in a script, derived from that of Sanskrit. Many people in Bangladesh also speak English and Urdu.



LITERACY RATE: total population is 72.8%, male 75.6% and female 69.9%².

BELIEF: Islam is the official religion in Bangladesh, practiced by 89% of the country's inhabitant, most of them pursue the Sunni branch while a small group are Shia; in some rural areas adherence to certain rituals and tenets may vary because people incorporated other beliefs into the religion. Other religions include Hinduism (10%), Christianity, Buddhism, Animism and tribal belief systems.³

ETHNIC GROUPS: The government recognizes 27 ethnic group even if 98% of the population is Bengalis⁴.

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html>

² ibidem

³ <http://www.bangladesh.com/religion/>

⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/bg.html>

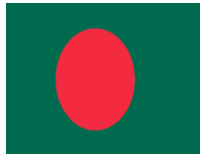


BANGLADESH

POLITICAL SITUATION: With the independence of India and the establishment of Pakistan in 1947, the Bengal region was divided into two parts: the western, Hindu, which remains under the Indian government, and the eastern Muslim one, annexed to Pakistan and referred to as East Pakistan, today called Bangladesh. Since the 50s autonomous aspirations have found expression in the Awami League and led to the rebellion against the western part, which ended in 1971 with the proclamation of independence and the creation of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. After independence, a parliamentary democracy is established, with Mujibur as prime minister. A period of serious political instability followed by the rise to power of Ziaur Rahman, founder of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which establishes an executive presidency with a one-party system, Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League. In May 1981, Zia was assassinated in Chittagong by dissident elements of the military and one year later, H.M. Ershad assumed power in a new “coup d’etat”. The return to constitutional legality was repeatedly postponed and only in 1986 were general elections, held in a climate of violence and fraud, which confirmed Ershad president and assigned to his Jatiya Party the absolute majority in Parliament (reconfirmed in 1988). In 1990, however, the rise of popular protest led to the resignation of Ershad and the victory of the centre-right BNP which re-established the parliamentary system with the new government led by Begum Khaleda Zia. In '96 another woman won the elections, Sheikh Hasina, head of the Awami League, the party whose father Mujibur was the founder. In the last 20 years these two women have alternated in power, respectively head of the BNP and the Awami League, with a strong political polarization which led to a tense atmosphere.⁵ despite serious problems related to a dysfunctional political system, weak governance, and pervasive corruption, Bangladesh remains one of the few democracies among the Muslim countries.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: The Bengali traditions and dresses reflects the different racial and cultural origins of Bangladesh. In rural areas, Hindu men wear the Kurta with the “dhoti” , a rectangular unstitched cloth wrapped around the waist and the legs and knotted at the waist while and Muslim men wear “lungi which is like a sarong. Shari is the most common dress for Bangladeshi women, Muslim women dress “*Salwar Kameez*” (long tunic or kameez with pants) , very popular, especially among the teen girls . Some girls in urban areas also wear pants, skirts and tops, In urban areas, Bengali men prefer to wear either western style business suits or safari suits. Almost all the Bangladeshi women like *jewellery*; high or high middle classes people wear diamond or platinum jewelleryes as a symbol of their status . Costume Jewelleryes are also most popular not only among the low earning group people but also educated and cultured guys. Hindu married women are easily identified by her wrist accessories and their Shidur which is dark red.

⁵ <https://2009-2017.state.gov/outofdate/bgn/bangladesh/74099.htm>



BANGLADESH

chemicals use in their middle of upper forehead. ⁶ Shake hand is not customary except in case of female. Eye contact, especially in rural area, is not unacceptable whether male or female. Touching someone when speaking is not common unless the relationship is become more close but this is not acceptable in case of female⁷.

GENDER RELATIONS: Bangladesh ranked 74th out of 144 countries worldwide for gender equality in the 2017 Global Gender Gap Index⁸. The State has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1984) and established the National Human Rights Commission of Bangladesh, a statutory institution (2009) to protect and promote human rights⁹. Also if the constitution of Bangladesh has provided very progressive and gender friendly governance institutions, at the present, because of discriminatory laws and policies and socio-political conditions (poverty and a traditional patriarchal society), women does not have equal opportunities, equal access to resources or power and they face daily obstacles in almost every aspect of their lives, including access to health services, economic opportunities, political participation and financial control¹⁰. According to reports in the national labour force survey just the 58.7% of women participate compared to 82.5% of male, female participation is also concentrated in lower-level jobs and wages are about half of the male wage rate.. Both Muslim and Hindu religion prioritizes the role of man. Women do not have real influence in decision making processes and they bear most responsibility for *household chores mostly in* sub-urban and rural areas. Forced marriage is very common especially among Muslims and they are used to improve family status or to protect girls' sexuality in an environment that is perceived to be unsafe ¹¹. In Muslim Law, a woman can divorce if only it's delegated by the husband and according to Hindu religion a woman does not have any rights to divorce. Maternal mortality rate is still high and an estimated 30% of adult women chronically malnourished.¹² In recent years, gender equality has been achieved in enrolment in primary and secondary education (although drop-out rates are higher for girls than for boys); women started to participate in local governance with important responsibilities for rural and urban development; thanks to the rapid growth of the industry, many women have had the opportunity to participate more actively in labour market opportunities and the public participation of women is changing significantly.

⁶ <http://aboutbangladesh71.blogspot.it/2013/04/culture-and-customs-of-bangladesh.html>

⁷ <https://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/bangladesh-guide>

⁸ <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=GMB>

⁹ <http://bdlawdigest.org/protection-of-women-in-bangladesh.html>

¹⁰ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309425557_Gender_inequality_in_Bangladesh

¹¹ <https://www.vsinternational.org/news/blog/marriage-family-and-tradition-in-bangladesh>

¹² <https://www.adb.org/documents/country-gender-assessment-bangladesh>



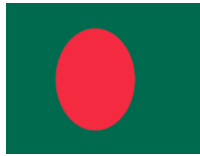
BANGLADESH

GBV: Bangladesh is a member of the South Asian Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) and there are many laws to prevent violence against women but the enforcement is still not enough. In addition to the Penal Code, the Nari-o-Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain 2000 is the most important special criminal law to prevent violence against women; this act prescribe life imprisonment for the offence of causing death after rape and imprisonment for life or smaller rigorous imprisonment in case of injuries caused by corrosive substance, rape or sexual oppression. The law makes no mention of marital rape. Poor and illiterate women accept spousal physical violence as a general norm; according to some research, 87% of married women have experienced form of violence in their life¹³. The rape conviction rates are nor very high because police investigations are not effective, there is a lack of evidences and victims are reluctant to report because of social stigmatization ¹⁴. The Nation has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world (average age of marriage is 16.4 years and child marriage is more prevalent in rural areas) ¹⁵ ; the government developed an action plan to end child marriage and adopted the Child Marriage Restraint Act, introducing stricter punishment and allowing child marriage just in “special cases” (without any explication about the nature of those “special cases”).¹⁶ In the last years acid attack become a common form of violence so Bangladesh enacted two laws in 2002— one that heightens criminal penalties and improves criminal procedures and another that attempts to decrease the availability of acid (despite the provisions purchasing acid is still not very difficult).

¹³ <http://bangladesh.unfpa.org/en/topics/gender-based-violence>

¹⁴ https://www.ecoi.net/local_link/336450/466061_en.html

¹⁵ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/where-does-it-happen/>



BANGLADESH

¹⁶ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/bangladesh/>



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



BOLIVIA

Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)

Geography

West-Central South America. Bolivia is bordered to the north and east by Brazil, to the southeast by Paraguay, to the south by Argentina, to the southwest and west by Chile, and to the northwest by Peru.¹



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Population 11,052,864 (2017)²

Population distribution A high altitude plain in the west between the Andes, known as the 'Altiplano', is the focal area for most of the population; a dense settlement pattern is also found in and around the city of Santa Cruz, located on the eastern side of the Andes.³

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Bolivia>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>

³ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Bolivia/Languages-and-religion#toc21685>



BOLIVIA

Capital La Paz



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Language Spanish (official) 60.7%, Quechua (official) 21.2%, Aymara (official) 14.6%, foreign languages 2.4%, Guarani (official) 0.6%, other native languages 0.4%, none 0.1% (2001 est.)⁴

Literacy Rate 92 % (2015)⁵ **GPI** 0.92 (2015)⁶

Ethnic Groups Mestizo (mixed White and Amerindian ancestry) 68%, Indigenous 20%, White 5%, Cholo/Chola 2%, Black 1%, other 1%, unspecified 3% ; 44% of respondents indicated feeling part of some indigenous group, predominantly Quechua or Aymara (2009 est.)⁷

Religion/Beliefs Roman Catholic 76.8%, Evangelical and Pentecostal 8.1%, Protestant 7.9%, other 1.7%, none 5.5% (2012 est.)⁸

⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2098.html#bl>

⁵ Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175>)

⁶ The *gender parity index (GPI)* of the adult literacy rate is the ratio of the female to male literacy rates of the population aged 15 years and over. A GPI value between 0.97 and 1.03 is usually interpreted to indicate gender parity. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175/3>)

⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/fields/2075.html#bl>

⁸ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/fields/2122.html#bl>



BOLIVIA

Political Situation

Bolivia is a constitutional republic with an elected president and national congress. There is a centralized political system, that means the president has always had the power to appoint the governors (*prefectos*) of the departments.⁹ Evo Morales has been the president since 2005 being re-elected several times until today¹⁰. Morales is the first Indian President in Bolivia and his politics are specially praised for rural issues and indigenous communities rights.

Regarding international disputes, Chile and Peru rebuff Bolivia's reactivated claim to restore the Atacama corridor, ceded to Chile in 1884; contraband smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal narcotic trafficking are problems in the porous areas of its border regions with all of its neighbors¹¹

Bolivia's income inequality is the highest in Latin America and one of the highest in the world. Public education is of poor quality, and educational opportunities are among the most unevenly distributed in Latin America, with girls and indigenous and rural children less likely to be literate or to complete primary school. Lack of access to education and family planning services helps sustain Bolivia's high fertility rate - approximately three children per woman. Bolivia's lack of clean water and basic sanitation, especially in rural areas, contributes to health problems¹²

In general, medical services and hospitals are adequate in the cities but not in rural areas, where doctors and nurses are scarce. Folk medicine thrives in some rural areas. Social control is exercised informally at the local level (neighborhood and village) and within networks of acquaintances and kin, and recourse to the police and the judiciary is rare.¹³

Cultural Traditions

There is an unequal access to political, economic, and sociocultural resources based on class, culture (including ethnicity and language), and race (physical characteristics). Class boundaries are permeable, even though abandoning the Andean cultural heritage is a prerequisite for social mobility. At the bottom of the hierarchy are unskilled workers, and those who live in urban peripheries working on informal sector. Most of them are "Indians", who are likely to be monolingual in an indigenous language or speak broken Spanish, have low educational level and low incomes, display Andean phenotypic characteristics (dark-skinned, relatively short, high cheekbones). Almost identical in appearance to Indians, nonindigenous "Cholos" or Mestizos and usually have more formal education. "Whites belong to the affluent elite.

⁹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bl.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-18727507>

¹¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bl.html>

¹² *ibid*

¹³ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Bolivia/>



BOLIVIA

A poor command of Spanish and some linguistic terms of reference is an important marker of lower class position. Clothing, coca chewing and participation in Andean religious rites are also significant markers of low class hierarchy.¹⁴

Cultural mores dictate that one stand very close to the person with whom one is interacting, and looking directly in the eye is acceptable. In rural areas, physical greetings are simple, short, firm handshakes; a hug, followed by a short pat on the back, is expected between kin and close friends. In rural settings, public touching, caressing, and kissing among couples are frowned on. Generosity and reciprocity are required in all social interactions, many of which involve the sharing of food and alcoholic beverages.¹⁵

Gender and family relations

Important positions of public authority are invariably held by men, while the domestic arena (symbolically associated with fire, kitchen, and hearth) is a female realm. The high status of women is bolstered in many rural communities by matrilineal ideology and inheritance, matrikin groups, and access to resources independent of the male spouse. Nevertheless, in many rural areas, the balance is tipping toward greater inequality as the economic position of women deteriorates. Recent research has focused on how notions of masculinity and the symbolism that center on the giving and taking of wives are linked to violence against women, often in highly ritualized contexts.¹⁶

Marriage, a fundamental rite of passage and a marker of adult status and is expected of all Bolivians. Women have the primary responsibility for child care. Few deliver their babies in hospitals, relying instead on the help of midwives. Most rural and low-income women breastfeed, wrap, and swaddle their babies, sometimes for as long as two years. Young infants always accompany their mothers during productive activities such as cooking, gardening, and selling goods at marketplaces.¹⁷

Recent research has focused on how notions of masculinity and the symbolism that center on the giving and taking of wives (the metaphors of bull and condor, respectively) are linked to violence against women, often in highly ritualized contexts.

GBV

¹⁴ www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Bolivia.html

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ *ibid*



BOLIVIA

Bolivia's position on Gender Inequality Index Rank is 98¹⁸, and its position for Global Gender Gap Index Rank is 23¹⁹.

In Bolivia, almost 45% of married women have experienced situations of violence in their relationship in the last 12 months, being more frequent in the rural area than in the urban area. Psychological violence (39%) and physical violence (21%) are the most common. 15% of women report having suffered sexual violence and 15% of economic violence²⁰. Ten women are killed every month in Bolivia - one woman every three days. Other data suggests that the problem is even bigger²¹.

Bolivia is a country of origin for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking domestically and abroad. Rural and poor Bolivians, most of whom are indigenous, and LGBT youth are particularly vulnerable. Women and girls are sex trafficked within Bolivia and in neighboring countries, such as Argentina, Peru, and Chile. A limited number of women from nearby countries are sex trafficked in Bolivia²².

In Bolivia there exist some measures focused on the eradication of gender-based violence. The National Plan to Combat Trafficking and Trafficking in Persons is an instrument that guides the implementation of public policies to combat trafficking in persons.²³ Also the Constitution contemplates some laws, such as Law No. 348, to guarantee prevention, care, protection and recovering for women in situations of violence or Law No. 243, to eliminate manifestations of harassment and violence that directly or indirectly affect women²⁴

¹⁸ *Gender Inequality Index*: A composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Source: Human Development Report, UNDP (2016)

¹⁹ The *Global Gender Gap* Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria. Source: World Economic Forum, the Global Gender Gap Report 2016.

²⁰ INESAD (2016) *Encuesta de Prevalencia y Características de la Violencia Contra las Mujeres. Resultados*. <http://inesad.edu.bo/dslm/2017/06/algunas-cifras-actuales-sobre-la-violencia-contra-las-mujeres-en-bolivia/>

²¹ <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/07/bolivia-measures-counteract-gender-violence-160711135302912.html>

²² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bl.html>

²³ Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia, Consejo Plurinacional Contra la Trata y Tráfico de Personas, "Plan Nacional de Lucha contra la Trata y Tráfico de personas, 2015-2019, La Paz, 2015, ps. 5, 8

²⁴ <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/bolivia-plurinational-state-of>



BOLIVIA



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)



Geography

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country in Central Africa. It is bordered by Chad to the north, Sudan to the northeast, South Sudan to the east, the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the south, the Republic of the Congo to the southwest and Cameroon to the west.

Most of the CAR consists of Sudano-Guinean savannas, but the country also includes a Sahelo-Sudanian zone in the north and an equatorial forest zone in the south. Two thirds of the country is within the Ubangi River basin (which flows into the Congo), while the remaining third lies in the basin of the Chari, which flows into Lake Chad.

Despite its significant mineral deposits and other resources, such as uranium reserves, crude oil, gold, diamonds, cobalt, lumber, and hydropower, as well as significant quantities of arable land, the Central African Republic is among the ten poorest countries in the world. As of 2015, according to the Human Development Index (HDI), the country had the lowest level of human development, ranking 188th out of 188 countries. It is also estimated to be the unhealthiest country as well as the worst country in which to be young.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Population

The population of the Central African Republic has almost quadrupled since independence. In 1960, the population was 1,232,000; as of a 2016 UN estimate, it is approximately 4,594,621.

Capital city

Bangui with 542,393 inhabitants (2016)

Other cities

Bimbo (129,655) – Mbaiki (67,132) – Berbérati (61,815)
Kaga Bandoro (56,520)

Total area

The CAR covers a land area of about 620,000 km²
(240,000 sq mi)

Official languages The Central African Republic's two official languages are French and Sangho, a creole developed as an inter-ethnic lingua franca based on the local Ngbandi language. CAR is one of the few African countries to have an African language as their official language.

Ethnic groups

The nation is divided into over 80 ethnic groups, each having its own language. The largest ethnic groups are the Baya, Banda, Mandjia, Sara, Mboum, M'Baka, Yakoma, and Fula or Fulani, with others including Europeans of mostly French descent.

Religions / Beliefs

According to the 2003 national census, 80.3% of the population was Christian—51.4% Protestant and 28.9% Roman Catholic—and 15% is Muslim. Indigenous belief (animism) is also practiced, and many indigenous beliefs are incorporated into Christian and Islamic practice. A UN director described religious tensions between Muslims and Christians as being high.

There are many missionary groups operating in the country, including Lutherans, Baptists, Catholics, Grace Brethren, and Jehovah's Witnesses. While these missionaries are predominantly from the United States, France, Italy, and Spain, many are also from Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and other African countries. Large numbers of missionaries left the country when fighting broke out between rebel and government forces in 2002–3, but many of them have now returned to continue their work.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Political Background



David Dacko became the country's first president after the CAR had formally received independence from France in 1960; the Central African Republic was then ruled by a series of autocratic leaders, including an abortive attempt at a monarchy.

On 31 December 1965, Dacko was overthrown in the Saint-Sylvestre coup d'état by Colonel Jean-Bédel Bokassa, who suspended the constitution and dissolved the National Assembly.

President Bokassa declared himself President for Life in 1972, and named himself Emperor Bokassa I of the Central African Empire (as the country was renamed) on 4 December 1976. A year later, Emperor Bokassa crowned himself in a lavish and expensive ceremony that was ridiculed by much of the world. In April 1979, young students protested against Bokassa's decree that all school attendees would need to buy uniforms from a company owned by one of his wives. The government violently suppressed the protests, killing 100 children and teenagers. Bokassa himself may have been personally involved in some of the killings. In September 1979, France overthrew Bokassa and "restored" Dacko to power (subsequently restoring the name of the country to the Central African Republic); Dacko, in turn, was again overthrown in a coup by General André Kolingba on 1 September 1981.

By the 1990s, calls for democracy led to the first multi-party democratic elections in 1993. Ange-Félix Patassé became president, but was later removed by General François Bozizé in the 2003 coup. The Central African Republic Bush War began in 2004 and, despite a peace treaty in 2007 and another in 2011, fighting broke out between various factions in December 2012.

Much of the tension is over religious identity between Muslim Seleka fighters and Christian anti-Balaka as well as over historical antagonism between agriculturalists, who largely comprise anti-Balaka and nomadic groups, who largely comprise Seleka fighters and ethnic differences among ex-Seleka factions. More than 1.1 million people have fled their homes in a country of 4,5 million people, the highest ever recorded in the country.

Politics in the Central African Republic formally take place in a framework of a semi-presidential republic. In this system, the President is the head of state, with a Prime



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Minister as head of government. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and parliament.

Changes in government have occurred in recent years by three methods: violence, negotiations and/or elections. A new constitution was approved by voters in a referendum held on 5 December 2004. The government was rated 'Partly Free' from 1991 to 2001 and from 2004 to 2013.

The president is elected by popular vote for a six-year term, and the prime minister is appointed by the president. The president also appoints and presides over the Council of Ministers, which initiates laws and oversees government operations. The National Assembly has 105 members, elected for a five-year term using the two-round system. Like many other former French colonies, the Central African Republic's legal system is based on French law. The Supreme Court is made up of judges appointed by the president. There is also a Constitutional Court and its judges are also appointed by the president who presently is Faustin-Archange Touadéra elected on 30 March 2016 after being Prime Minister from 2008 to 2013.

Economic situation

Agriculture is dominated by the cultivation and sale of food crops such as cassava, peanuts, maize, sorghum, millet, sesame, and plantain. The annual real GDP growth rate is just above 3%. The importance of food crops over exported cash crops is indicated by the fact that the total production of cassava, the staple food of most Central Africans, ranges between 200,000 and 300,000 tonnes a year, while the production of cotton, the principal exported cash crop, ranges from 25,000 to 45,000 tonnes a year. Food crops are not exported in large quantities, but still constitute the principal cash crops of the country, because Central Africans derive far more income from the periodic sale of surplus food crops than from exported cash crops such as cotton or coffee. Much of the country is self-sufficient in food crops.

The Republic's primary import partner is the Netherlands (19.5%). Other imports come from Cameroon (9.7%), France (9.3%) and South Korea (8.7%). Its largest export partner is Belgium (31.5%), followed by China (27.7%), the Democratic Republic of Congo (8.6%), Indonesia (5.2%) and France (4.5%). But these figures are based mostly on reported sales of exports and largely ignore the unregistered sale of foods, locally produced alcoholic beverages, diamonds, ivory, bushmeat, and traditional medicine.

Currency The CAR currency is the CFA franc, which is accepted across the former countries of French West Africa and trades at a Euro fixed rate .



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Education

Public education in the CAR is free and compulsory from ages 6 to 14. There is no equal access to primary school for girls. For the first year of school, 65% of girls are enrolled in primary school. This dropped to 23% of girls after six years of primary school (2007). Many girls drop out of school in their early teens due to societal pressures to marry and have children. The literacy rate for men between the ages of 15-24 is 72,3 %, for the same age group for women has a literacy rate of 59,1 %.

Nearly 1 in 5 children is a refugee or internally displaced. In Nov.2016 UNICEF reported that in the CAR more than 850,000 people -half of them children- are still on the move, either internally displaced or refugees in neighbouring countries. Violence and widespread displacement have made children especially vulnerable to health risks, exploitation and abuse. At that time, UNICEF was working with government and partners to strengthen the education system by training 1,300 teachers and building/repairing 172 schools.

Migrations

The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) has a protocol of free movement and the right of establishment of its citizens. While some measures facilitating the free movement of ECCAS citizens are in place, free movement and establishment has not been a priority for ECCAS Member States. In addition, the oil windfall and the lumber industry have transformed countries such as Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea into countries of destination, with Gabon hosting the largest number of migrant workers in Central Africa.

Political and/or religious conflicts inevitably cause humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic have led to internal and regional displacement of people. As intraregional mobility is limited by dense vegetation and the lack of interconnecting roads, the majority of migrants move to Europe or other African regions.

Large populations of longstanding refugees from CAR are found in Cameroon, Chad and the Republic of the Congo. Chad also witnesses the arrival of migrants from around the region attempting to reach Libya and being expelled at the border, returnees fleeing insecurity in northern Nigeria, as well as returnees and refugees fleeing inter-communal clashes in Sudan and the crisis in the Central African Republic.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



In May 2014, it was reported that around 600,000 people in CAR were internally displaced with 160,000 of these in the capital Bangui. The Muslim population of Bangui dropped 99% from 138,000 to 900. By May 2014, 100,000 people had fled to neighbouring Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad. As of 2017, there are more than 1.1 million displaced people in a country of about 4,5 million people, the highest ever recorded in the country, with about half a million refugees outside CAR and about 600,000 internally displaced. Cameroon hosted the most refugees, more than 135,000, about 90% of whom are Fulani, even though they constituted 6% of CAR's population.

Statistics on migration in CAR are lacking. For the most part, the successive governments have not collected/safeguarded information neither on its population nor their movements. Further, government offices have been severely damaged and looted by the multiple rebellions and conflicts.

In 2010, the World Bank estimated the number of CAR emigrants to be 129,300 reflecting about 2.9 % of the population. CAR nationals have mostly departed from Bangui or across the borders in the northwest to Chad and Cameroon and left towards France, Cameroon, Chad and the Republic of Congo, but also towards Mali, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Italy and Belgium.

Internally, the estimated numbers of displaced persons have fluctuated between 527,000 and 922,000 since December 2013.

<https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/Migration-Dimensions-of-the-Crisis-in-CAR.pdf>

http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mpafricaregionaloverview_6march2012_0.pdf

Gender and Family relations

Central African society is patriarchal. The man is the head of the family; he chooses the family home, exercises parental authority, and, according to the law, provides for the material needs of his family. Society assigns the role of wife and mother at home to the woman; this role is instilled in girls by their mothers during life cycle rituals (excision in certain ethnic groups, wedding). Fathers, through rituals such as circumcision, teach their sons to be the future bearers of power and authority within the family and community. This is how gender relations are established, that means relations between men and women as social constructs. In attributing their respective roles to men and women, Central African society establishes between them unequal relations, which are perpetuated by manners and customs, and by which man generally has the power of decision, and the woman must submit to him. Particular



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



emphasis is placed on the supervision of the eldest son, who is generally considered as successor of his father in the management of the family patrimony. In Muslim communities (10.1% of the total population), the close links between tradition, culture and religion have a particular influence on the behavior and relationships between men and women, where the authority and power of decision belong almost exclusively to man.

The dignity of a woman is dependent on her marital status. In the eyes of the Central African society, it is a disgrace for a woman, and, by extension, for her family, not to be married or not to live in a union. After her marriage, the woman will live with her husband who owns the house. She leaves the family home in the event of marital conflict or separation, with or without her personal property - the latter case being a direct violation of the provisions of the Family Code (Article 88).

The dowry is a practice "formalized" by the Family Code (Article 208) and having paid is the condition for the husband to be able to give his surname to his own children. The payment of the dowry marks the union of two persons, even if it is often a "known concubinage", expression used by the women met to speak of common-law unions.

Many Central African couples are not legally married: in a 2014 survey, 59% of 15-19-year-old women in union reported living in a union or joint relationship with a man. The consequence of this practice is the precariousness of the unions and the frequency of the separations, leading to the dislocation of the family unit. The woman and the children are the main victims because, often, they do not benefit any more from the material and financial support of the father of family for their subsistence, contrary to what happens under legal marriage, where the father of family is forced by law to provide for his wife and children, and can be brought to justice for family abandonment and sanctioned if he does not do so. In addition, divorce can only be obtained by a court decision, and the father is required by law to pay maintenance to his family even after the divorce. The interests of women and children are not protected in the same way depending on whether they are common-law unions or customary marriages, since the customary rules are not so restrictive for the father. For example, a common-law union puts women and children in a more vulnerable position than in the context of legal marriage.

Early marriage is another characteristic of unions: the same survey found that one in five women aged 15-49 was married before the age of 15 (and approximately 68% of girls are married before they turn 18); the 1st ratio is relatively higher in rural areas (22%) than in urban areas (18%). Early marriage threatens the development of girls, often at risk of early pregnancy and higher fertility, maternal mortality, school drop-out and domestic violence.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Women have a low level of education and vocational training. And with low qualification, they are less likely than men to enter the professional world, which helps to accentuate and perpetuate their vulnerability and poverty.

In matters of inheritance, it is customary for sons to be the first heirs of their parents. Girls have the opportunity to inherit as long as there are no male heirs; they may also inherit some property left by their mothers. According to the legislation in force, the legal share of the surviving spouse on the commons should be reserved, before proceeding to the settlement of the succession (in case of community property regime). But in practice, widowers, and especially widows, are systematically dispossessed by their in-laws, both of their legal share of these common goods, and of their share of inheritance. Thus, in the event of the death of the husband, an agent chosen by the family council manages the estate of both spouses, thereby robbing the widow and her children of their rights.

Finally, the custom advocates levirate and sororate (recognized by the Family Code in Article 1059). The case of the levirate is a true illustration. After the death of her husband, the widow, if she is endowed, must be given in marriage to one of the deceased's brothers. If it is the woman who dies, the parents of the deceased must designate a daughter of the family to give to the surviving spouse. It is the "objectification of the woman". These practices constitute a violation of the freedom of choice for the man and the woman, but in addition, the rites of widowhood which accompany them are true acts of violence. These rites consist, for example, in forbidding the widow or widower to drink at will, to talk, to force him to keep his gaze fixed on the wall ... The violence of these practices varies according to the ethnic groups and the relations with the law-family.

Customary practices such as levirate, "purification of the widow", early marriage, "duty of hospitality" ... are all acts of violence against women.

Gender Based Violence (GBV)

In Central Africa, gender-based violence appears to be a taboo subject, as is the evidence that there is very little data available on this phenomenon. The same is true for the structures set up to assist or accommodate female victims, despite the law on the protection of women against violence. Following the horrors of armed conflict, the culture of violence seems so deeply rooted in the population that gender-based violence has become commonplace and only provokes the community's indifference and even blaming of the victim. For all these reasons, it is necessary to treat it first and foremost in relation to other gender-specific actions, because it is a violation of the human fundamental right, and even sometimes of human life.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



An important advantage in the fight against GBV is the existence of a law protecting women against violence. It is then a question of elaborating a strategy of communication relative to this law, centered on the "denunciation" of the violent practices towards the women in the country, in order to break the "law of silence" that is established around this problem. It will consist mainly of information and public awareness campaigns on the realities of GBV, their manifestations, and ways of eradicating them, including the application of the law to punish them. Awareness of the importance of this issue will be the first step in the process to eliminate GBV.

The 2009 Human Rights Report by the United States Department of State noted that human rights in CAR were poor and expressed concerns over numerous government abuses. The U.S. State Department alleged that major human rights abuses such as extrajudicial executions by security forces, torture, beatings and rape of suspects and prisoners occurred with impunity. It also alleged harsh and life-threatening conditions in prisons and detention centres, arbitrary arrest, prolonged pretrial detention and denial of a fair trial, restrictions on freedom of movement, official corruption, and restrictions on workers' rights. The State Department report also cites widespread mob violence, the prevalence of female genital mutilation, discrimination against women and Pygmies, human trafficking, forced labour, and child labour. Freedom of movement is limited in the northern part of the country "because of actions by state security forces, armed bandits, and other nonstate armed entities", and due to fighting between government and anti-government forces, many persons have been internally displaced. Violence against children and women in relation to accusations of witchcraft has also been cited as a serious problem in the country.

Prostitution in the Central African Republic is legal and commonplace. Procuring or profiting off the prostitution of others is illegal, as is coercing people into prostitution. Punishment is a fine and up to one year in prison, or 5 years if the case involves a minor.

Human trafficking and Child prostitution are a problem in the country.

Child prostitution

A study published in 2017 found that about two thirds of the prostitutes in the capital city, Bangui, worked part-time to supplement their income or to pay school and college fees. Some of the full-time prostitutes that visit hotels, bars and nightclubs looking for wealthy clients, especially French men, are ranged from 16 to 30 and most (90%) came from the Central African Republic. Others came from the Congo, Chad and Cameroon. They are known as "pupulenge" (dragonflies) or "gba moundjou" (look at the white). Those who work in the poorer neighbourhoods are known as "kata".



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



There is also evidence of commercial sexual exploitation of children, either internally or to and from other countries in the area.

Human trafficking

The Central African Republic is a source and destination country for children subjected to trafficking in persons including forced prostitution. Most child victims are trafficked within the country, but a smaller number move back and forth from Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan.

There are no specific laws in the country to deal with human trafficking, but traffickers can be prosecuted under legislation dealing with prostitution, slavery, sexual exploitation, labour code violations, and mandatory school age.

The Central African Republic is a source and destination country for children subjected to trafficking in persons, specifically various forms of forced labour and forced prostitution. Most child victims are trafficked within the country, but a smaller number move back and forth from Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan. Trafficking offenders, including members of expatriate communities from Nigeria, Sudan, and Chad, as well as transient merchants and herders, subject children to involuntary domestic servitude, commercial sexual exploitation, or forced labour in agriculture, diamond mines, and street vending. The groups most at risk for trafficking are children for forced labour, Ba'aka (Pygmy) minorities for forced agricultural work, and girls for the sex trade in urban centres. The Lord's Resistance Army continues to abduct and harbour enslaved Sudanese, Congolese, Central African, and Ugandan children in the CAR for use as cooks, porters, and combatants; some of these children are also taken back and forth across borders into Sudan or the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Human rights observers reported that opposition militia groups in the north of the country continued to unlawfully conscript children as young as 12 years old in armed service. Two of the main rebel groups, however, the Union of Democratic Forces for Unity (UFDR) and the Army for the Restitution of Democracy (APRD), ceased all recruitment of children during the reporting period as a result of disarmament, demobilization, and reinsertion activities. UNICEF reported that the APRD released 711 child soldiers in 2009; approximately 30 percent were between 10 and 14 years old, and of those, 70 percent had served in armed combat. The UFDR demobilized 180 child soldiers during the same year. Though the UFDR and APRD deny the presence of additional children in their ranks, some observers believe they still harbour children between the ages of 15 and 17 years old. Village self-defence units, some of which are government-supported, used children as combatants, lookouts, and porters during the year; UNICEF estimates that children comprise one-third of the self-defence units.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



The Government of the Central African Republic does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so, despite limited resources, cross-border incursions from three neighbouring countries, and chronic political instability. In 2010, the government enacted an amendment to its penal code prohibiting and prescribing punishments for human trafficking offenses. The Minister of Justice, however, suspended the activities of the Inter-ministerial Committee to Fight Child Exploitation, pending a review of the draft Family Code to ensure that the legislation authorizes such a committee to exist and act effectively; this new code will determine the legal framework of the inter-ministerial committee's work. The government did not take law enforcement action against traffickers, identify or provide protective services to child trafficking victims, or adequately raise public awareness of the phenomenon during the reporting period.

Domestic violence

In addition, data from the same survey reveal the extent of domestic violence against women: about one in five women (18%) reported having experienced at least one form of physical violence in the last 12 months' investigation; 12% of the women surveyed were victims of sexual violence, 7% of these women were forced by their husbands/partners to have sex, and 3% were forced to perform other sexual acts against their will. At the national level, four out of five women (81%) have experienced psychological violence with numerous causes. The following reasons are listed in order of priority:

- a) anger of the spouse if the woman speaks to other men (60%);
- b) the husband who insists on knowing where the woman is at all times (56%);
- c) lack of confidence in the management of money (41%);
- d) accusations of infidelity (38%) and the ban on meeting friends.

Many women are victims of gender-based violence outside their homes. It is primarily rape used as a weapon of war, during times of armed conflict. To sexual violence with the resulting physical and psychological trauma, we must add the transmission of the AIDS virus. There is also sexual harassment in the workplace, school and even prison, these harassment can go as far as rape. Of particular note is the blackmail carried out on young girls applying for jobs, to whom a "new contract" is imposed, which conditions the obtaining of the requested position. Finally, there are new forms of slavery, such as domestic servants and street vendors.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.

CAPTIVE/JUST/2015/RDAP/AG/VICT/9243



COLOMBIA

Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)

Geography

Northern South America, bordering the Caribbean Sea, between Panama and Venezuela, and bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Ecuador and Panama¹



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Population 49,067,981 (2017)²

Population distribution The majority of people live in the north and west where agricultural opportunities and natural resources are found; the vast grasslands of the llanos to the south and east, which make up approximately 60% of the country, are sparsely populated³

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2266.html>



COLOMBIA

Capital Bogotá



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Language The official language is Spanish.

Literacy Rate 94% (2015)⁴ **GPI** 1.00⁵

Ethnic Groups Mestizo and White 84.2%, Afro-Colombian (includes mulatto, Raizal, and Palenquero) 10.4%, Amerindian 3.4%, Romani <.01, unspecified 2.1% (2005 est.)

Religion/Beliefs Catholic 79%, Protestant 14% (includes Pentecostal 6%, mainline Protestant 2%, other 6%), other 2%, unspecified 5% (2014 est.)

Political Situation

The government has an executive branch led by an elected president (Juan Manuel Santos Calderon since 2010), a bicameral legislative branch, and a judicial branch. The president is elected to a four-year term by popular vote and may not be re-elected.

⁴ Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175>)

⁵ The *gender parity index (GPI)* of the adult literacy rate is the ratio of the female to male literacy rates of the population aged 15 years and over. A GPI value between 0.97 and 1.03 is usually interpreted to indicate gender parity. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175/3>)



COLOMBIA

Under the constitution of 1991, the Constitutional Court and Council of State were added to the Supreme Court.

One of the most important informal decision-making groups among the upper class is referred to as *roscas*. *Roscas* link influential individuals and institutions so that universities, banks, industries, and agricultural interests may be coordinated and controlled by a few people. Inclusion in these such groups is limited to members of the upper-middle and upper classes.⁶

In Colombia violent criminal attacks and murders related to activity by drug cartels that primarily affect men under age forty-five, are commonplace. The increase in guerilla activities also has resulted in many deaths, especially in remote areas. This conflict framework also affects to women, as will be exposed below. Violence against women is employed as a strategy of war by the actors of the armed conflict in their struggle to control territories and the communities they inhabit.⁷

Colombia experiences significant legal and illegal economic emigration and refugee flows. Forced displacement remains prevalent because of violence among guerrillas, paramilitary groups, and Colombian security forces. Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations are disproportionately affected. Historically, Colombia also has one of the world's highest levels of forced disappearances. About 30,000 cases have been recorded over the last four decades - although the number is likely to be much higher - including human rights activists, trade unionists, Afro-Colombians, indigenous people, and farmers in rural conflict zones. Colombian-organized illegal narcotics, guerrilla, and paramilitary activities penetrate all neighboring borders and have caused Colombian citizens to flee mostly into neighboring countries.⁸

Cultural Traditions

The massive urban migration resulted in a three-class system: upper, middle, and lower. A wide gap separates the elite from the masses and social inequality is evident. The upper class, which includes 20% of the population, accounts for about 75- 80 % of the gross national product. This group tends to be made up of individuals of unmixed European ancestry and enjoys wealth and financial security, political power, and education. Since membership is largely due to birthright, not to individual ability, this group may be considered a caste. Mestizos and Mulattoes constitute the middle and lower classes. Blacks and Indians make up a significant portion of the lower class.⁹

White or light skin is associated with being Spanish and wealthy. All three classes in the interior, especially in Bogotá, speak a grammatically correct Spanish and are more proper and ceremonial. Coastal speech patterns have a rapid tempo and inhabitants are

⁶ <http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Colombia.html>

⁷ <http://www.cidh.oas.org/women/colombia06eng/part3co.htm>

⁸ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/co.html>

⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Colombia>



COLOMBIA

usually more trusting and carefree. Social interaction in the upper class is generally formal and respectful. Unlike their coastal counterparts, lower class individuals in the interior express mutual respect for each other and their elders; women are treated respectfully and given special attention.¹⁰

Personal space is highly regarded, so conversations take place at arm's length. The violation of this space even in crowded stores and museums is considered disrespectful and hostile. Exceptions occur in crowded bus stations and on buses. Formal greetings among strangers are mandated, whereas salutations among acquaintances are informal.¹¹

Members of the Roman Catholic Church attach great importance to Catholic sacraments. More than 85 % of Catholics in urban parishes attend mass regularly. In the countryside, Catholic practices and beliefs have been combined with indigenous, African, and sixteenth-century Spanish customs. Traditional remedies, as indigenous plants, are commonly used particularly in rural and remote areas.¹²

Gender and family relations

As a result of the colonial influence, Colombian society adopted a culture in which men occupy a dominant role and assume responsibility for maintaining family pride. The traditional male-female relationship assumes that the woman puts her husband's wishes before her own, and in addition to her conjugal role, is defined her role as a mother. She is responsible for the care of the children and household, but the husband makes decisions about the household's basic necessities.¹³

In upper class and some middle class families, women avoid working outside the home in order to preserve family status, honor, and virtue. Women from lower class and lower-middle class families often hold jobs outside the home to contribute to the family's subsistence, giving them a greater degree of equality. Family and kin group members interact regularly and generally live close to each other in urban areas or on the same land or estate in rural locations.¹⁴

Mothers from the upper class prefer to give birth in clinical settings, while those in the lower class usually have babies at home, sometimes with the help of a midwife. In rural areas, 20-30% of maternal deaths in those areas are due to induced abortions, which usually are performed outside of medical facilities.¹⁵

GBV

¹⁰ <http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Colombia.html>

¹¹ ibid

¹² ibid

¹³ ibid

¹⁴ ibid

¹⁵ ibid



COLOMBIA

Colombia takes the 89th position on the Gender Inequality Index Rank¹⁶, and the 39th position on Global Gender Gap Index Rank.¹⁷

In Colombia, 74% of women have suffered from any act of violence that results in physical, sexual or psychological harm.¹⁸ Also, 23 % of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before age 18.¹⁹

According to the most recent Legal Medicine report, 970 women were murdered in Colombia last year. The age range in most cases (156) is between 20 and 24 years. The same document warns that in 2015 there were 47,248 cases of intimate partner violence in Colombia. According to the report, 47,3 % of the cases, the perpetrator is the woman's sentimental partner and in 29.3 % is her ex-partner. The 37% of cases were some form of physical violence. It is estimated that 10 percent of women in the national territory have suffered sexual violence.²⁰

Due to the conflict situation in Colombia, 43 out of every 100 women affected by the internal armed conflict have been victims of different forms of deliberate violence. It has been identified that there are four main manifestations of violence affecting women within the armed conflict. First, the actors in the armed conflict employ different forms of physical, psychological and sexual violence to "wound the enemy" by dehumanizing the victim, injuring her family circle and/or spreading terror in her community, with the objective of advancing their control of territories and resources. Second, violence also is used to force displacement from their homes, daily lives, community and family of women in order to remove them from their territory. Third, sexual violence is enacted as a way to render sexual services to certain members of the guerrilla or paramilitary forces. Fourth, violence is intended to constantly subject women to measures of social control imposed by the illegal armed groups.²¹

As Colombian national news declare, 97 % of cases of sexual violence against women related to Colombia's armed conflict remain unpunished²²

¹⁶ *Gender Inequality Index*: A composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Source: Human Development Report, UNDP (2016)

¹⁷ *Gender Inequality Index*: A composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Source: Human Development Report, UNDP (2016)

¹⁸ Asociación Probienestar de la Familia Colombiana, Profamilia (2011). *Encuesta Nacional de Demografía y Salud*. Profamilia. Bogotá, Colombia.

¹⁹ UNICEF global databases 2016, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys

²⁰ Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses. *Violencia de Género en Colombia: Análisis comparativo de las cifras de los años 2014, 2015 y 2016* (2016)

²¹ <http://www.cidh.oas.org/women/colombia06eng/part3co.htm>

²² <https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/97-of-Colombias-Cases-of-Sexual-Violence-Remain-Unpunished--20160308-0035.html>



COLOMBIA



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.

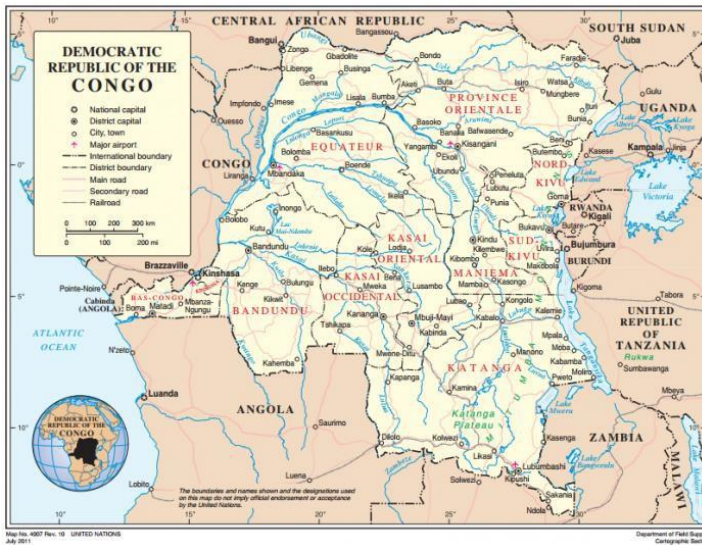


Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC of the CONGO (DRC)

Geography



The current flag of the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has been adopted after the approval of a new constitution in 2006, is composed of a blue sheet, red diagonal stripe and a yellow five-pointed star at the top of the left part of the flag. Blue symbolizes peace, red stands for blood of martyrs, yellow color that frames the red stripe denotes prosperity and the star represents hope for a brighter future of the country. DRC was under the Belgian domination until 1960 and in 1971 it was renamed to Zaïre. At that time the flag was brought out in traditional pan-African colors. However, after the overthrow of the government in 1996 this form was abandoned and a flag with six small and one large five-pointed star was used until 2006.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-

Population	81,331,050 inhabitants (2016)
Capital city	Kinshasa (9,046,000 inhabitants)
Other cities	Lubumbashi – Kolwezi -
Kisangani Total area	2,344,860 km ²

Languages Lingala (official language) – French – Swahili – Kikongo – Tchiluba

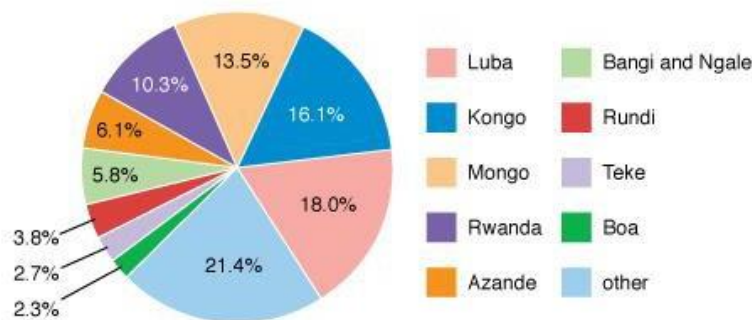
With one of the largest populations in Africa, spread across a huge area, the people of DR Congo are made up of many hundreds of different groups, speaking a variety of Bantu languages.

The most common native languages are Kikongo in the southwest, Lingala in the northwest, Tshiluba in the centre and Swahili in the east. These are the official languages, alongside French, which is spoken or understood across DR Congo.

With over 215 different mother tongues, the DRC is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world. This means that when two Congolese people meet at random, it is extremely unlikely they will speak the same native language.

Ethnic groups Bantu (80% including Luba, Mongo and Kongo people)

Ethnic composition (1983)



© Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Over 200 ethnic groups populate the Democratic Republic of the Congo, of which the majority are Bantu peoples. Together, Mongo, Luba and Kongo peoples (Bantu) and Mangbetu-Azande peoples constitute around 45% of the population. The Kongo people are the largest ethnic group in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In 2016, the United Nations estimated the country's population to be 79 million people, a rapid increase from 39.1 million in 1992 despite the ongoing war. As many as 250 ethnic groups have been identified and named. The most numerous people are the Kongo, Luba, and Mongo. About 600,000 Pygmies are the aboriginal people of the DRC.

Religion / Beliefs

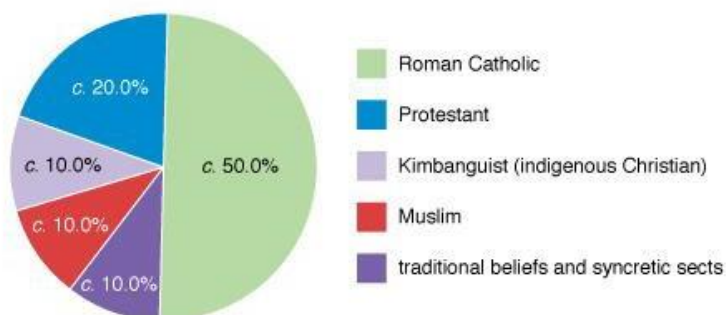
The Congolese population is overwhelmingly Christian (Catholic, Protestant)

Portuguese missionaries arrived many centuries ago in the region and the Catholic Church remains strong today; around half the population are Roman Catholics.

Other Christian denominations have been growing in popularity. For example, the local Kimbanguist Church now has around 6 million followers. Though the churches have a strong presence, many Congolese combine Christianity with traditional animist practices, which include a belief in the spirits of ancestors.

Down the eastern side of the country, slave routes of Arab traders spread Islam. Areas in the east therefore have significant Muslim populations and many mosques. Many people also believe in 'evil spirits' and witchcraft. Children are thought to have close ties to the spirit world, which can lead them to be accused of sorcery and to be cast out of families.

Religious affiliation (2004)



© Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Religion today

Article 22 of the constitution allows for religious freedom. These rights are generally respected by the government. Religious tension exists in some areas because of the link between prophetic groups and paramilitary organizations. In the turbulent eastern region, where the 2nd Congo war still simmers, some guerrilla groups have a major religious element, believing for instance that they are able to turn enemy bullets into water by wearing certain fetishes.

Currency

Congolese Franc

Economic Situation

Economic development in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been severely undermined by decades of instability and violence. Poor economic management worsened by repeated political crises has constrained economic freedom and driven much of the population into persistent poverty. The government's inability to provide even basic public goods reliably further limits economic opportunity.

Entrepreneurial activity is curtailed by an uncertain regulatory environment and the absence of institutional support for or facilitation of private-sector development. Arbitrary taxation, poor infrastructure, marginal enforcement of property rights, and the weak rule of law have driven many people and enterprises into the informal sector, which accounts for more than 80 percent of economic activity.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Political Background

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is one of the most complex and challenging humanitarian situations worldwide, with multiple conflicts affecting several parts of its vast territory.

Hopes soared after a long and costly civil war was brought to an end in 2003, but the nation has instead seen sporadic waves of fighting – especially in North Kivu, where the impact of widespread violence and anarchy persists. Rebel groups remain active. Joseph Kabila as President, who in 2006 won the first multi-party election in 40 years, was reelected in December 2011 in a process rife with violence. His schemes to secure a constitutionally prohibited third term have sparked major protests that state security services have suppressed, often brutally. The DRC's immense natural resource wealth includes large deposits of rare earth minerals used in many technology products, but because of its political instability, the country remains among the least developed in the world (RDC = 176).

Human Development Index Ranking (1 = High - 188 = Low) UNDP 2015

Now, thousands of civilians are again struggling for survival.

Although many people have returned to Kasai, they have often found their property, businesses and schools in ruins and family members killed. Human rights violations are still widespread, including physical mutilation, killings, sexual violence, arbitrary arrest and detention in inhumane conditions. Today, over 896,000 people remain displaced within the Kasai region.

While these conflicts have forced many Congolese to flee their homes, the country also hosts over half a million refugees from neighbouring countries. It continues to see new arrivals from Burundi, Central African Republic and South Sudan.

The risk of further displacement is high, as political and ethnic conflicts affect many areas. Protection needs particularly for the most vulnerable are enormous, and the challenges of getting aid to those in need are increasing. Strengthening public health, sanitation and water supplies to prevent diseases remains vital.

Cultural Traditions

The **culture of the Democratic Republic of the Congo** is extremely diverse, reflecting the great diversity and different customs which exist in the country. Congolese culture combines the influence of tradition to the region, but also combines influences from abroad which arrived during the era of colonization and has continued to have a strong influence, without destroying the individuality of many tribal' customs.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Rituals and Holy Places. Most Congolese mix their indigenous practices with the Christian faith, depending on circumstances and desired outcomes. When someone falls ill, the whole community works together to help the patient. First, it must be determined whether the illness comes "from God," or if it is of natural or human causes. If it is determined that a witch or enemy caused the sickness, then traditional healing methods and beliefs are used, such as offering sacrifices to God and the ancestors. If, however, the disease seems to be from God, members of the community will most likely go to church to pray for the person.

Death and the Afterlife. Many Congolese believe that the spirits of people who have died remain with the family in very obvious ways. Ancestors are very much alive and remain active in the life of the family for generations. People communicate with their ancestors, who act as intermediaries between humans and God. People often ask their ancestors for rain, health, good crops, or the solution to a difficult problem. White cloth is tied around trees to welcome these ancestral spirits. When someone dies, small gifts are placed around the corpse so the person will have these items when he or she enters the spirit world. The body is then buried in a shroud. Women wear white paint on their faces to symbolize both their mourning and strength in overcoming difficulties.

Read more: <http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo.html#ixzz55TenlFH7>

Education

In 2014, the literacy rate for the population between the ages of 15 and 49 was estimated to be 75.9% (88.1% male and 63.8% female) according to a DHS nationwide survey. The education system in the DRC is governed by three government ministries: the *Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel (MEPSP)*, the *Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et Universitaire (MESU)* and the *Ministère des Affaires Sociales (MAS)*. Primary education in the DRC is not free or compulsory, even though the Congolese constitution says it should be (Article 43 of the 2005 Congolese Constitution).

As a result of the 6-year civil war in the late 1990s-early 2000s, over 5.2 million children in the country did not receive any education. Since the end of the civil war, the situation has improved tremendously, with the number of children enrolled in primary schools rising from 5.5 million in 2002 to 13.5 million in 2014, and the number of children enrolled in secondary schools rising from 2.8 million in 2007 to 4.4 million in 2014 according to UNESCO.

Actual school attendance has also improved greatly in recent years, with primary school net attendance estimated to be 82.4% in 2014 (children at ages 6–11 attended school with 83.4% for boys, 80.6% for girls).



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Changing Educational Profile of Congolese Migrants

In the 1970s and 1980s, Congolese migrants to Europe had overall high levels of education. In recent years, the share with higher education has greatly decreased. The opportunities for migration are still greater among the better educated, reflecting their greater economic resources, their relative advantage in obtaining a visa to pursue further education, greater social capital in destination countries, and the selectivity of destination- country admission policies. However, the educational profile of migrants to Europe began to change in the 1990s as a result of several factors. First, scholarship opportunities offered by both the Congolese and European governments were greatly reduced as bilateral relations were disrupted due to war and instability in the 1990s. At the same time, emigration became part of a strategy among Congolese families for increasing and diversifying sources of income, with low-income and lesser-educated migrants increasingly leaving the country. The growing share of asylum seekers—less educated than migrants arriving through traditional channels—as well as the feminization of migration flows contributed to the decrease in migrants' education levels.

Migrations

Historical Migration Flows

Historically a region of hunter-gatherers, the area now encompassed by DRC began experiencing migration thousands of years ago, with the centuries-long movement of the Bantu from West Africa and people known as Nilotes from what is now Sudan into Central Africa beginning around 500 BCE. More than 200 different ethnic groups were established in the Congo region by about 600 CE and by the 15th and 16th centuries had consolidated into a number of kingdoms and empires. Portuguese traders who arrived by ship in the late 15th century represented the 1st European contact. International migration in this period and the following centuries was driven by European exploration, missionary work, and expansion of the slave trade. An estimated 1.5 million people were ultimately taken as slaves from the Congo.

The King's Colony

By the late 19th century, the European powers had begun to establish colonies across Africa. The relatively new country of Belgium, which gained independence from the Netherlands in 1830, sought to strengthen its status in Europe with an African colony. Following the 1885 Berlin Conference in which European states carved up Africa into colonial territories, the Congo Free State was founded as a personal colony of Belgian King Leopold II. While Leopold had argued for the humanitarian influence of Belgian rule, the Congo Free State was not intended as a populating colony, rather as one of resource extraction for its rich supplies of rubber, minerals, and oil. The Congo Free State government became notorious, however, for its abuse and exploitation of the local population, resulting in the death and maiming of millions. Under pressure from other European powers, the Belgian government took control of the territory in 1908.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Belgian migration to the Congo was limited during the Congo Free State period, with at most about 1,500 Belgians in-country in a given year. This population gradually increased to about 17,000 in 1930, and began to expand rapidly after World War II. On the eve of independence in 1959, nearly 89,000 Belgians lived in the colony, largely working as civil servants, missionaries, or employees of mining companies. Initially, Belgians comprised a minority of the foreign white population, accounting for 40 percent in 1890, as other Europeans worked as missionaries and for private companies. As the Belgian community grew, so did its share of the foreign population, reaching about 80 percent in 1959. Mass immigration to the colony was never encouraged, nor was Congolese migration to the metropole.

Internal and regional population movements within Congo, however, increased significantly during the colonial period as urbanization and movement to new towns, though strictly controlled, accelerated. Foreign mining companies also recruited thousands of workers from neighboring territories and colonies, such as Rwanda.

Independence

Congo gained independence in 1960 and the immediate postcolonial period was marked by the mass emigration of Belgians and forced local internal displacement due to secessionist conflicts. Despite the violence and political turmoil following the 1961 assassination of Patrice Lumumba, the Democratic Republic of the Congo's first prime minister, and coming to power of Joseph Mobutu in 1965, the country's economy remained fairly strong into the mid-1970s, due to exports of resources such as diamonds, uranium, and copper. Though widely known for rampant corruption and human-rights abuses, DRC (renamed Zaïre by Mobutu in 1971 until 1997) continued to draw economic migrants from throughout the region. With the 1973 oil crisis and global collapse in commodity prices, the country's economy deteriorated greatly. Despite economic reforms and slight improvements, the situation had become critical by the late 1980s.

Migration in a Deteriorating Context

The 1990s constituted one of the darkest periods in DRC's history. Growing dissatisfaction with the Mobutu regime and lagging democratization led to riots in 1991 in the capital, Kinshasa. In 1994, ethnic strife and civil war began spilling into DRC from neighboring Rwanda. The Rwandan genocide forced more than 1.2 million refugees across the Congolese border in July 1994. Among those who fled were remnants of Hutu militias who began cross-border attacks, prompting the Rwandan army to attack camps in DRC. Amid this instability, Laurent-Désiré Kabila launched an armed campaign against President Mobutu with the backing of Rwandan and Ugandan troops in the 1st Congo War (1996-97), deposing Mobutu after 32 years in power. A rebellion to depose Kabila began in 1998, starting the 2nd Congo War, which lasted until 2003. This conflict, which became known as Africa's Great War, led to forced migration of refugees and more than 1.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). Following the 2001 assassination of Kabila, his son, Joseph, became president, a post he continues to hold (2017).



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Despite the war's official end, the eastern parts of the country continue to experience regular violence and forced displacement. The political crises and wars throughout the 1990s contributed to rapid economic deterioration, driving further emigration. The economy has improved since 2003, and particularly since 2010, but living conditions remain extremely difficult.

Migration and Refugee Flows from DR Congo

DRC has long had both economic and humanitarian migration exchanges. African countries host the vast majority of Congolese migrants and refugees, whose numbers have increased significantly over the last four decades, particularly since the wars of the late 1990s and early 2000s. The lack of recent censuses in several destination countries (such as Angola) makes it difficult to precisely evaluate the distribution of Congolese migrants and changing patterns. Data from the United Nations Population Division nevertheless show significant changes over the last 25 years. In 1990, an estimated 300,000 Congolese migrants and refugees resided in one of the nine neighboring countries (Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sudan [now South Sudan], Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia), representing three-quarters of all migrants from DR Congo worldwide (see Table 1). Their number had more than doubled by 2000 (to approximately 700,000), and by mid-2015, had risen to more than 1 million in the neighboring countries (1.2 million for Africa as a whole).

While political violence and lack of economic opportunities remain significant push factors, new opportunities in destination countries have also contributed to this growth. The end of the apartheid regime in South Africa in the mid-1990s boosted its desirability as a destination. And in the early 2000s, the end of the Angolan civil war, combined with unprecedented economic development, attracted many Congolese. The MAFE survey conducted in Kinshasa in 2009 also shows that migration rates from Kinshasa to African countries have markedly increased since the 1980s, much more so than to Western countries. South Africa and Angola alone received more than half of the migrants leaving the Kinshasa region in the 2000s.

Congolese refugee flows have also increased dramatically since the early 1990s. Approximately 80,000 refugees from DRC were living in neighboring countries through the mid-1990s; by the late 1990s, following the 1st Congo War and start of the 2nd, this number exceeded 250,000, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). There were approximately 450,000 Congolese refugees in other African countries as of March 2016, UNHCR estimates. Most reside in Uganda (202,000), Rwanda (75,000), Tanzania (64,000), and Burundi (53,000). Internal displacement has also been widespread, reaching a peak of 3.8 million IDPs in 2008 and dropping to approximately 2.8 million as of March 2015, according to Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) estimates.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



DRC : A Migration History Marked by Crises and Restrictions

By Marie-Laurence Flahaux and Bruno Schoumaker (2016)

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the most populous countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and the largest French-speaking African country. Since gaining independence from Belgium in 1960, the country and its 75 million residents have experienced numerous political and economic crises, including a war that claimed millions of lives. Although tremendously resource-rich, DRC remains one of the least developed countries in the world.

Protracted economic slumps and violent crises have profoundly affected Congolese migration trends. Once an attractive destination, especially for African migrants, DR Congo has been a country of outmigration since the early 1980s. Overall, emigration has increased, particularly toward neighboring countries, with inflows becoming less significant. At the same time, DR Congo's social and economic deterioration has transformed the composition of its migration flows to extra-African destinations— with greater outflows of women, the less educated, and refugees and asylum seekers, particularly since the 1990s. In addition, with growing immigration restrictions in some destination countries and changing entry strategies, Congolese migration trajectories have become more complex, with new destinations attracting growing numbers of migrants.

Drawing on micro and macro data from the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) and Determinants of International Migration (DEMIG) projects as well as other sources, this article surveys the changing patterns of Congolese migration over the last 50 years, examining how the shifting dynamics and characteristics of Congolese migration relate to changes in the economic and political contexts in the DR Congo and destination countries.

Increasing Migration to Western Countries and Diversification of Destinations

Several thousand Congolese migrants have arrived in Western countries each year over the last two decades. Increases in these flows have been especially pronounced since the mid-1990s, when economic and political troubles in DRC intensified. However, this uptick was much less significant than that of outflows to other African countries, reflecting the higher costs of migration as well as tighter entry restrictions.

While Belgium was the main Western destination of Congolese migrants prior to the 1980s, destinations have increasingly diversified. France has become the preferred end point since the late 1990s, possibly as a result of greater ease getting visas and of obtaining asylum, and better labor market opportunities. Recent estimates indicate that France and Belgium together host more than 100,000 Congolese migrants, and that more than 50,000 others live elsewhere in Europe (including Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and the United Kingdom).

In addition to traditional migration flows, the number of Congolese asylum seekers in European countries also increased significantly since the late 1980s, fluctuating in response to crises in DRC. Over the last 25 years, seeking asylum has become a particular immigration channel among Congolese



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



migrants, together with family reunification and migration for education. MAFE surveys in Belgium and in the United Kingdom showed that since the 1990s, the proportion of asylum seekers among Congolese migrants has exceeded 50 percent.

Outside Europe, the United States and Canada have also become increasingly popular destinations since the 1990s, each now hosting nearly 30,000 Congolese immigrants. This growing interest is also found among would-be migrants in surveys conducted in Kinshasa. Congolese migration to the United States has taken off since 2005, making the United States the second most popular Congolese destination outside Africa. Refugees and asylum seekers represent a large share of Congolese obtaining permanent status in the United States, around 60 percent over the 2005-13 period). But the face of Congolese migration to the United States has been changing rapidly, with a growing share arriving via the diversity visa program (almost 40 percent of Congolese immigrants in 2013). Countries such as Australia have also recently started attracting Congolese migrants, but the flows have been much lower. While European destinations still appeal to Congolese migrants, restrictive immigration policies and difficulties integrating into the labor market may explain the emerging preference for other destinations.

In addition to direct migration from DRC to new locations, secondary migration has also contributed to the diversification of destinations. Beginning in the 1990s, substantial numbers of Congolese resettled in the United Kingdom from elsewhere, mainly France and Belgium. Congolese migration to North America also often takes place as secondary movement, from locations either in Africa or Europe.

As a result of the diversification of flows, Congolese migrants now live in more countries than in the 1970s. All in all, more than 200,000 Congolese migrants live in Western countries, not counting asylum seekers and unauthorized migrants. Congolese migration to Asia, especially China, is also thought to be increasing but little information is available.

Country	Number	Proportion of women
France (2010)	59,641	52%
Belgium (2015)	44,715	56%
USA (2011-13)	20,410	47%
Canada (2011)	19,890	53%
England and Wales (2011)	19,193	N/A
Germany (foreign citizens) (2015)	9,299	49%
Switzerland (2015)	6,724	52%
Italy (2015)	6,010	52%
Netherlands (2015)	4,973	50%
Australia (2011)	2,576	49%
Norway (2015)	2,210	50%
Sweden (2015)	3,092	50%
Spain (2013)	1,494	N/A
Finland (2015)	1,523	53%
Denmark (2015)	1,264	49%
Austria (2015)	926	48%



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Feminization of Congolese Flows and Stocks

As returns have declined, the number of women migrating to Western countries has risen, in contrast with Congolese migration within Africa, which remains heavily male. The vanishing prospect of return has encouraged families to reunify in Western destination countries, leading to larger numbers of female Congolese emigrants. Emigration of single women has also increased, as well as migration for economic reasons among women, indicating more frequent autonomous movement. The share of females among Congolese migration flows to Canada, France, Germany, and the Netherlands has increased steadily since the 1990s, in some cases doubling or even overtaking that of males, as shown in DEMIG data. In most Western countries, Congolese women represent around half of the Congolese migrant population. MAFE survey evidence indicates Congolese women are also less likely than men to want to return. As a result, the percentage of women among Congolese migrants may continue to increase.

Looking Ahead

International migration to and from the Democratic Republic of Congo has undergone enormous change in recent decades, partly in response to political and economic crises in the country and in the region. Large flows of refugees, to and from DRC, as well as increasing migration flows to African and Western countries have characterized Congolese international migration over the last 30 years.

How will Congolese migration evolve? Political and economic conditions in DRC, though improving, have been unpredictable over the last decades, and their effect on future departures and returns is necessarily speculative. However, the recent development of the domestic and regional political context suggests that DRC may continue to experience substantial inflows and outflows of refugees in the coming years. The management of these flows, to and from DRC, will be a challenge for Congolese authorities and UNHCR, operating in settings with poor infrastructure and ongoing insecurity.

Migration flows to Western countries and returns are of course difficult to predict, but recent trends suggest the Congolese diaspora will keep growing rapidly, especially in new destinations such as North America. And, should a substantial improvement in the living conditions in DR Congo occur, it would not necessarily translate into less migration, as more development often leads to increased migration to developed countries. Moreover, the growing Congolese diaspora in Western countries may in turn fuel further Congolese emigration, facilitated by the presence of family and friends in destination countries. A challenge for DR Congo will be to develop, implement, and reinforce policies and initiatives to facilitate circulation and returns, and to stimulate remittances and investments by the diaspora. In destination countries, improving integration in the labor market—which remains difficult for a large share of Congolese in Western countries—will also be key to the well-being of migrants and their relatives in DRC.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Gender roles and Statues

Congolese women are not effectively represented and have never participated in the governance of the country since 1960, year of the independence of the country. No woman has ever been a head of state or head of government (prime minister), neither head of armed groups. Several obstacles further make women's participation in the electoral process more difficult than men's. These obstacles include cultural factors such as deficit of civic duty, practical obstacles such as family responsibilities or even the fear to compete with men, physical security-related fears and economic obstacles that make access to infrastructures difficult, as well as a high level of ignorance. Although women constituted 63 % of the DRC electorate and were extensively mobilized as a propaganda tool during the 2006 National Election, however the current overall representation of women is only 7.2% in the high positions of recently established institutions (parliament as well as in the government).

The DRC government, national assembly and major institutions are largely run by men. Furthermore, many of the organizations that characterize the DRC civil society are run by men. Ironically, there are even organizations that provide service for women that are run by men in the DRC. Currently there is no woman member of the office of the Senate and there is only one single woman among the seven members of the office of the National Assembly. Out of the 108 Senators, there are only 6 women of which only one is the chair of a commission (on socio-cultural affairs). There are 43 elected women out 500 elected members of the DRC national assembly. Out of the 45 members of the Government, there are only 5 women of which 4 ministers and 1 vice minister. There is no woman Governor or Vice Governor of the 11 current Provinces of the Republic.

The analysis of provincial repartition of female parliamentarians reveals that it is in the province of Kinshasa that the proportion of women is the highest (17 %); followed by the southern province of Katanga (13 %). The Provinces with the least proportion of female parliamentarians are the Bas Congo (8 %), Kasai Occidental (7,5 %), Kasai Oriental (5 %), Equateur (5 %) and the eastern province of South Kivu (3 %). The province of Maniema with the influence of Islam and the worst form of retrograde patriarchy counts no female parliamentarian, and is the least developed province in the DRC. This weak provincial representation of Congolese women at the level of the National Assembly could be explained by several factors among which notably socio-cultural retrogressive traditions, religion, the high rate of illiteracy of women due to low access to higher education and extreme poverty.

For more than 4 centuries, women of the big Congo River Basin were dehumanized by violence and poverty maintained by a system of oppression and exploitation that uses militarism, retrograde patriarchy, violent masculinity and misogyny. Congolese women are denouncing these crimes and are resisting all forms of violence against women and young girls in the DRC that are maintaining their country underdeveloped. They no longer want to remain silent, survive in fear, be ignorant, raise their children in despicable poverty and leave their offspring to die of hunger, malnutrition, controllable diseases or to become delinquent / armed outlaws dehumanized by militarism or living exploited in fear.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Division of Labor by Gender

Most political, economic, and religious institutions have male leadership. Historically, Congolese men have been treated with respect and have been given positions of authority more often than Congolese women. The way a woman is treated in the Congo depends on her immediate environment and racial background. It has been argued that lower-class urban women enjoy fewer freedoms than their rural counterparts. Because women in cities are often more dependent on their husbands and other males for their livelihoods, the rural lifestyle may sound appealing to some; rural women find some independence through gardening, preparing meals, and generating small crafts for sale. These women spend so much time with their daily work, however, that they have little opportunity to organize for social change. Women living in Kinshasa are more able to form groups that collectively challenge the notion of male superiority.

The Relative Status of Women and Men

Though many ethnic groups in the Congo practice matrilineal succession, in which inheritance is passed through the mother's side of the family, women are regarded as lower than males on the scale of social hierarchy. There is a high degree of societal pressure placed upon young women to marry, and an urban single woman is regarded as a prostitute, regardless of her professional status. In many cases, women must detail everything they purchase for their husband, while the male usually does not have to account for his own expenses. The goal is to keep women dependent on and subservient to men.

Women often band together in groups to resist unfair treatment or taxation. Some led popular efforts against Mobutu, such as organizing prayer groups in Kinshasa to mobilize efforts for his removal; many women continue to play a prominent role in challenging traditional roles of authority.

Read more: <http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo.html#ixzz55TcO0qEc>

Marriage and Family

Marriage

In the past, single women in the Congo belonged to their fathers, and, upon marriage, their ownership would be transferred to the husband. The man's father would give gifts such as knives, food, or slaves to the new wife's father, in exchange for his loss of precious labor and kinship.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



In rural areas it is common for men to have many wives. Village chiefs or headmen usually have more than one wife. The goal is to have many children who survive until adulthood, providing the household with enough hands to complete the many chores necessary for survival. At times, however, the women married to one man compete amongst each other for kitchens, food, affection, and children.

Domestic Unit

Women are responsible for the majority of the day-to-day survival tasks, such as cutting wood for cooking fires; hauling on their heads large buckets of water for cooking; cleaning clothes; reaping; sowing, and harvesting the fields; collecting palm fruits; cooking, pounding, and sifting the local cassava root; child rearing; and making baskets and pottery for sale at local markets. Traditionally, men went off on hunts for several days, using traps, spears, and bows and arrows to kill animals large and small. Now there are fewer animals to hunt, but the work of women does not diminish by proportion. In fact, the responsibility of the household falls more squarely on their shoulders, as the society becomes ever more dependent on farming. Many women have recently flocked to urban areas in the hopes of selling their handiwork, becoming hairstylists, or participating in the underground economy. Often the woman is the family's principal breadwinner. Many women have hopes that their children will advance out of poverty, and they are therefore burdened with the additional responsibility of paying school fees. Male children typically advance further in school than their female counterparts, since men are the head of the household and make financial decisions on behalf of the entire family and will benefit more from the education.

Read more: <http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/Democratic-Republic-of-the-Congo.html#ixzz55TcnlM8S>



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Gender Based Violence

Violence against women

Violence against women seems to be perceived by large sectors of society to be normal. The 2013–2014 DHS Survey (pp. 299) found that 74.8% of women agreed that a husband is justified in beating his wife in certain circumstances.

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2006 expressed concern that in the post-war transition period, the promotion of women's human rights and gender equality is not seen as a priority. Mass rapes, sexual violence and sexual slavery are used as a weapon of war by the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and armed groups in the eastern part of the country. The eastern part of the country in particular has been described as the "rape capital of the world" and the prevalence of sexual violence there described as the worst in the world.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is also practiced in DRC, although not on a large scale. The prevalence of FGM is estimated at about 5% of women. FGM is illegal: the law imposes a penalty of two to five years of prison and a fine of 200,000 Congolese francs on any person who violates the "physical or functional integrity" of the genital organs.

In July 2007, the International Committee of the Red Cross expressed concern about the situation in eastern DRC. A phenomenon of "pendulum displacement" has developed, where people hasten at night to safety. According to Yakin Ertürk, the UN Special Reporter on Violence against Women who toured eastern Congo in July 2007, violence against women in North and South Kivu included "unimaginable brutality". Y. Ertürk added that "Armed groups attack local communities, loot, rapes, kidnap women and children, and make them work as sexual slaves". In December 2008, Guardian Films of *The Guardian* released a film documenting the testimony of over 400 women and girls who had been abused by marauding militia.

In June 2010, Oxfam reported a dramatic increase in the number of rapes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and researchers from Harvard discovered that rapes committed by civilians had increased seventeen fold. In June 2014, Freedom from Torture published reported rape and sexual violence being used routinely by state officials in Congolese prisons as punishment for politically active women. The women included in the report were abused in several locations across the country including the capital Kinshasa and other areas away from the conflict zones.

Physical integrity

The DRC is subject to both international and domestic legislation regarding women's rights and the physical protection of women. The DRC's domestic framework includes several structures and laws to address Violence Against Women (VAW). Article 15 of the DRC constitution state that authorities shall take care in the elimination of any form of sexual violence used as a weapon of destabilization or of dislocation of the family.

In 2006, the transitional parliament approved a new sexual violence law, which broadened the definition of rape to include male victims. Laws 06/018 and 06/019 set out the modalities for the implementation of the above mentioned rights, thus amending and complementing the Code and Congolese Criminal Procedure



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



through the integration of the rules of international humanitarian law on sexual violence offences. This represents considerable progress given that before the adoption of the new laws, the Congolese Criminal Code did not define rape and described as indecent assault any form of sexual violence without penetration.

To date, the amendments made to the new sexual violence law, inter alia, include male rape victims, clarify the offence of sexual violence and define new forms of violence liable to criminal sanctions. The law criminalizes rape and also addresses sexual slavery, sexual harassment, forced pregnancy, and other sexual crimes not previously covered by law. Rape is punishable by a prison sentence of five to twenty years, and indecent assault is punishable by prison terms between six months and twenty years, depending on the age of the victim and whether violence, ruse or threat was used.

However, the current situation of GBV continue to be extremely worrying in the DRC. Violence Against Women is widely spread, particularly domestic violence and sexual violence with rape in the marriage, being common in the DRC. Recent obtained statistics reveal that about 1,100 cases of sexual violence are documented each month in various health zones, which amounts to an average of 36 victims a day. The most affected population is comprised of girls aged between 10 and 17, although 10% of the victims are less than 10 years old.

In 2006, the transitional parliament approved a new sexual violence law, which broadened the definition of rape to include male victims. Laws 06/018 and 06/019 set out the modalities for the implementation of the above mentioned rights. Furthermore, up to this date, there are no known of official statistics, provided by either the DRC government or local institutions, on the national extent of this kind of violence. It is reported that the police rarely intervene in domestic violence.

Violence against women has been exacerbated by armed conflicts since 1997. The increased in the cases of sexual violence is proportionally linked to the armed conflicts in the DRC and the subsequent climate of insecurity and impunity. Laws protecting the physical integrity of women in the DRC are rarely implemented. The government has not demonstrated political will to effectively enforce these laws. Therefore the DRC national institutions have failed in their responsibility for bringing perpetrators of sexual violence and other human rights violations to justice, mainly due amnestied crimes, weak judicial system and poor infrastructure.

There is a lack of political will in the judiciary regarding the 2006 laws on sexual violence, and interference by the executive and or judiciary powers in judiciary matters. Victims and experts have cited widespread impunity as the main reason for the continuation of sexual violence. Although current national statistics of Sexual Gender Based Violence (S/GBV) are difficult to confirm, nevertheless from available reports of victims' point of view, the major challenges to overcome are ignorance of the law, geographic distance, and lack of financial resources to facilitate access to justice, fears for reprisal. Broad dissemination and sensitization of the law on sexual violence is the first step in a strategy designed to protect victims and to put an end to impunity. The community therefore adopts a major role in accompanying, whistle blowing, securing, fighting stigmatization and installing counseling offices for the victims in collaboration with justice.

In DRC, women and children are the most affected by the conflict. It is estimated that nearly 75% of refugees and internally displaced populations (IDPs) are women and children. Women are victims of physical and sexual assaults during the war. It is estimated that over 250,000 were raped or sexually mutilated during the conflicts, including up to two thirds of girls and women between the ages of 10 and 30 in eastern DRC. Furthermore, other severe types of violence emerged, such as rape with extreme violence with penetration of sharp objects, amputation of limbs, decapitation, and live burials of women. It has also been suggested that 70 percent of the abuse attacks were part of a coordinated strategy of war, including contamination with HIV AIDS.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



In a report published in 2002, Human Rights Watch noted that sexual violence was used as a weapon of war and intimidation.

In 1998, the WHO provides figures of recorded cases of sexual violence since the beginning of the war in 1997: 25,000 in the South Kivu Province; 11,350 in the Maniema Province; 1,625 cases in Goma; and 3,250 cases in the southeastern town of Kalemie. According to Panzi General Hospital's director, Dr Denis Mukwege Mukengere, the hospital in Bukavu, South Kivu's capital admits at least ten victims of sexual assault daily, an average of 3,600 cases a year. Since 2000, an estimated 16,000 victims of rape, many suffering from obstetric fistula, have been treated at the hospital.

In 2003, Médecins Sans Frontières (CH Branch) has noted that between 30 and 500 patients reported sexual assaults every month in Ituri. Between June 2006 and May 2007, UNICEF identified nearly 13,000 survivors of sexual violence in the eastern Congo of whom 33 percent were children. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) estimated the occurrence of 350 rape cases a month in North Kivu alone during 2007, with a third committed against children under 18.

Further statistics collected by the UNFPA showed that 3,060 cases of sexual violence principally against women were reported in the North Kivu and 515 in the South Kivu, for the early period of the year 2008. From a study of 10,381 survivors of violence recorded by UN partners in the East of the RDC up to June 2007, 37% were children. There is also an increase of reported cases in the Bas Congo and Bandundu, near the border with Angola. Furthermore, insecurity and violence to women has reached the west of the country, as studies show that from October 2006 up to October 2007, the St Joseph Hospital of Kinshasa received 209 cases of victims of sexual violence, in average 24 cases a month. The law forbids the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). The WHO reports that about 5% of women in DRC undergo FGM. The population sex ratio in DRC has been stable for the past 50 years, suggesting the low concern with regard to missing women. However, trafficking of women is often linked to local or international prostitution, particularly in cases of marriage abroad.

Civil liberties

By law, Congolese women have full civil liberty. There are no restrictions on the freedom of movement, expression or association for men and women. However, with regard to the conjugal domicile, a married woman is legally obliged to live with her husband and to follow him wherever he sees fit to reside. Married women were also legally demanded to seek permission of their husband before traveling, contradicting the UDHR of 1948.

Although there is no reported limitation to women's freedom of dress; it is reported that female parliamentarians are not allowed to wear trousers during the sessions at the DRC National Assembly. Ironically this is amongst the first laws that were passed in the national assembly; while Congolese people were expecting their MPs to debate on important matters for peace, security and survival. Women lose their Congolese nationalities if they marry a foreign national. The children of a Congolese woman were not guaranteed the Congolese nationality if they were born from a foreign man even in the territories of the DRC. However children from a foreign woman have automatically the Congolese nationality if born from a Congolese man even abroad.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



According to international texts, primary Education must be free, however this is not the case in the DRC, due to the political, economic and social situation. Children's education is seriously affected, particularly that of girls who can be forced to exploit their bodies. An "All Girls at School" campaign, initiated by UNICEF, failed to reach its objectives, probably due to the retrograde patriarchal mentality and lack of resources allocated by the DRC government. Furthermore, the government often fails to address the issues of sanitary pads in the DRC national budget to meet the menstrual biological need of girls. Therefore, many young girls miss up to 1 week of school per month, leaving their education to fall behind that of boys. Insufficiency of education for Congolese girls and women contributes to ignorance and absence in the decision-making processes. Although many non-governmental organizations have set up centers for the elimination of illiteracy of Congolese women, without State support, female illiteracy rate is very high. Congolese women are also more expected to provide daily survival. They are also expected to care for children, sick parents or husband than men; however nobody cares for women. Due to poverty and a lack of provision legal aid and social benefit by the DRC state, Congolese Women are also expected to get education to defend themselves against discrimination and exclusion. Moreover, the work of women is extremely dependent on the question of child care. However the DRC State does not include a provision to address this issue in the DRC annual budget.

It also worth mentioning the influence religion plays in gender inequality in the DRC. Although many catholic schools, particularly those for girls have contributed significantly in the advancement of schooling as well as instruction of young girls; however, it is worth outlining that the religious system and hierarchy is male dominated, hence its patriarchal nature is not favouring the advancement of women in the Congolese society. It worth stressing that several leaders of Congolese women's NGOs claims that the role of women in the Congolese society has gone from full participation in the pre-colonial period, to marginalization during the colonial period to complete exclusion during the post-colonial period.

Women, trafficking and prostitution

Combined fourth and fifth periodic report of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) on the evaluation of the status of implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (May 2004)

Trafficking in women is not a widespread phenomenon in the DRC. Prostitution, however, is a common practice. There are two distinct categories of prostitute. The first category consists mainly of young girls, often poorly educated, who stand at night along main roads or go to bars or brothels in search of potential customers. The second category of prostitutes are seemingly respectable women, sometimes in paid employment, who engage in hidden prostitution, selling their bodies for economic reasons. In both cases, the main causes of prostitution are poverty, the struggle for survival and/or the quest for a life of luxury. These sex workers act alone, there being no formal networks of procurers. There are, of course, middlemen, who act clandestinely for generally affluent clients.

Prostitution remains a nebulous phenomenon in the DRC, perhaps because it is not an offence. Prostitutes are not subject to any controls, even health checks. The authorities should establish mechanisms to protect them, and society, particularly against HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Violence against women

The Convention cannot be assessed unless the day-to-day violence against women, which hampers their fulfilment, is held up to censure. Violence against women is a recurring question, and in DRC it has been exacerbated by armed conflicts. The magnitude of familiar forms, such as rape, has become astonishing. At the same time, new forms are emerging, such as the amputation of limbs, mutilation of genital organs and live burial of women.

Violence against women can be categorized in many ways. A study conducted in 2002 divided the predominant types of violence into the three groups listed below. A fourth category could be added concerning violence caused by the state of war.

(a)

Domestic violence in civil marriages and consensual unions

- Insults;
- Assault and battery;
- Sexual harassment;
- Rape;
- Partner's infidelity.

(b)
Violence at the hands of institutions, caused by the application of laws and rules deemed necessary to regulate the social fabric in the public and private spheres

- Customary practices unfavorable to women;
- Spousal authorization;
- Preferential or forced marriage;
- Denial of social benefits;
- Complications with respect to inheritance;
- Police harassment;
- Non-payment of final settlement or survivor's benefit.

Factors that encourage violence are, in particular:

- Customs perpetuating the idea of women's inferiority;
- Low level of women's income, which makes them economically and financially dependent on men;
- Education level: the study showed that educated women are better able to defend themselves against violence. Among the victims questioned, 47 percent have not completed their education and only 4 percent attend university;
- Home environment: overcrowding encourages rape, incest, assault and battery and insults;
- Work: sexual harassment is predominant in the workplace and in schools and university centres;
- Marriage: married women are more vulnerable than others (dispossession, assault and battery, spousal authorization, insults, etc.);
- Summary eviction of the wife from the marital home.

(c)

Tactical violence originating in the constraints of tradition and used to gain an advantage

- Non-payment of bride price;
- Forced abortion;
- Forced prostitution;
- Homicidal witchcraft;
- Summary eviction of the wife from the marital home.

Factors that encourage violence are, in particular:

- Customs perpetuating the idea of women's inferiority;



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



- Low level of women's income, which makes them economically and financially dependent on men;
 - Education level: the study showed that educated women are better able to defend themselves against violence. Among the victims questioned, 47 percent have not completed their education and 4 percent attend university;
 - Home environment: overcrowding encourages rape, incest, assault and battery and insults;
 - Work: sexual harassment is predominant in the workplace and in schools and university centres;
 - Marriage: married women are more vulnerable than others (dispossession, assault and battery, spousal authorization, insults, etc.);
 - Summary eviction of the wife from the marital home.
- (d)
- Violence linked to the state of war

Sexual violence

Of all the forms of violence, sexual violence should be highlighted. Its scope and persistence are encouraged by the state of war, mainly in the east of the country. In a report published in 2002, Human Rights Watch noted that sexual violence was used as a weapon of war. In fact, most of the forces involved in the conflicts raped women and children to win effective control over civilians. The aggressors intended to traumatize, humiliate and terrorize communities, so as to destabilize and punish them for supporting the opposing side. These barbaric acts were perpetrated on victims of all ages. In a report published in 2004, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) stated that it had treated victims in Baraka, a village in South Kivu, on the edge of Lake Tanganyika, the youngest of whom was 4 years of age and the oldest 70.

The NGO "Aide Médicale Internationale" reported that 80-year-old women had been raped in Equateur. Pregnant women were not spared. Many NGOs have reported cases of rape in front of witnesses.

Location of sexual violence

Areas most heavily affected by sexual violence are:

- The province of South Kivu: the Governor of the province estimated that between 2,500 and 3,000 women had been raped from the end of 1999 to mid-2001;
- The provinces of Orientale, North Kivu, Maniema, Equateur and the northern part of Katanga;
- In January 2003, the Centre Olame received 117 women and girls from the Uvira region of South Kivu who had been raped by various armed groups;
- Within the framework of its project to combat poverty, GTZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, a German technical aid body) recorded 2,500 rape victims.

Consequences

The consequences of sexual violence take many forms, including:

- Medical consequences

- Unwanted pregnancies;
- STD and HIV/AIDS infection; the risk is higher because forced sexual intercourse involves wounds and bleeding;
- Serious injuries accompanied by haemorrhaging;
- Prolapse of genital organs, fistulas;
- Physical injuries; MSF says that it has treated battered women.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Some women complained of pain in the joints of the hips and back, caused because their legs had been forcibly held apart for prolonged periods. Many of the women assisted by MSF in Baraka report reproductive health problems subsequent to rapes, including miscarriages and neonatal deaths.

- Social consequences

- Stigmatization and rejection by family and community. Some husbands, feeling humiliated by the rape of their wives, simply repudiated them. Thereafter, such wives live in shame and can never again live normal lives. Other men, fearing dishonor, have kept their wives' rapes a secret. This, however, often leads to an unhealthy climate of silent hostility.

- Economic consequences

- Rape victims, who have been traumatized, live in fear and no longer dare to go to the fields or pursue any commercial activity, and their situation becomes precarious.

- Legal consequences

- These barbaric acts often go unpunished. The victims sometimes continue to live with their aggressors and are afraid to report them. They have neither the courage nor the resources to institute legal proceedings.

Amputation of limbs: At the commemoration ceremony held on 8 March 2004, the theme of which was "Say no to violence against women", a woman who had both arms amputated was introduced to the public in Kinshasa. It is hard to imagine the suffering endured by this woman on a daily basis. She requires total and permanent assistance and no longer has an intimate life. Her life has come to a stop. This amputation is not an isolated case.

Live burial of women: In Mwenga, a village in South Kivu, the military went to extremes of cruelty, burying 11 innocent women alive.

Caring for victims

- The Government

There are still no functional mechanisms to deal with this issue. However, a few initiatives have taken place:

- The Ministries of Justice and Human Rights and the Ministry for the Status of Women and the Family, together with the United Nations system, participated in developing a programme entitled "Joint initiative to combat sexual violence against women";
- In collaboration with the Women's Action Network and civil society organizations, the Government launched a campaign to combat sexual violence against women and was involved in organizing a fortnight of activism to combat violence against women in 2003;
- The Ministry for the Status of Women and the Family launched awareness-raising activities as part of the PNPFC, publishing an illustrated guide to the Convention;
- The Ministry of Health set up a committee to combat violence against women and children.

Violence caused by the state of war

1.

Domestic violence in civil marriages and consensual unions

- Insults;
- Assault and battery;
- Sexual harassment;
- Rape;



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



– Partner's infidelity.

2. Violence at the hands of institutions, caused by the application of laws and rules deemed necessary to regulate the social fabric in the public and private spheres

- Customary practices unfavorable to women;
- Spousal authorization;
- Preferential or forced marriage;
- Denial of social benefits;
- Complications with respect to inheritance;
- Police harassment;
- Non-payment of final settlement or survivor's benefit.

3. Tactical violence originating in the constraints of tradition and used to gain an advantage

- Non-payment of bride price;
- Forced abortion.

Joint initiative to combat violence

The Ministries of Justice and Human Rights and the Ministry for the Status of Women and the Family worked together to foster the operation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), one of the five institutions supporting democracy. It is certain to provide solutions given that its tasks are:

- To collect confessions from perpetrators, and any deposition from witnesses concerning crimes and mass human rights violations, in particular those related to the rape of women and girls during wartime;
- To identify victims and determine the extent of the harm suffered;
- To explore any appropriate protection mechanism requested by deponents who fear consequences that would jeopardize their safety following deposition.

Shattered Future: Sexual Violence and Child Exploitation in the Eastern DRC

“I rent a tent for five dollars a week, and pay 30 as a monthly fee to access an artisanal mining camp of more than 900 miners. To get there takes a two-hour climb from the nearest trading centre. I sleep with about six male workers, each of whom pays about three dollars per session. Sometimes a miner pays for an entire overnight session for five dollars. I have four children that I left with my mother in the provincial capital, which is about three hours' drive from this site. Every month I spend three weeks on top of this hill providing sex services within the camp, then for a week I go check on the children and bring money for their upkeep...”

This testimony of a sexually-abused woman represents the plight of many young girls that are sexually violated in thousands of artisanal mining zones in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Despite the international, regional and national due diligence guidelines and mechanisms such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk areas; the Regional Certification Mechanism (RCM) of the Great Lakes Region, sexual violence, labour exploitation and abuse against women and children continue to occur at an alarming rate in and around artisanal mining sites in the country.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



A recent assessment by the Panzi Hospital in South Kivu, in collaboration with IOM, the UN Migration Agency, revealed escalating human rights violations and abuse against women and children who suffer in silence for fear of social apprehensions, reprisals, stigmatization and social exclusion. The study also highlights the concerning situation particularly of sexual violence against young women and girls leading to unwanted pregnancies and early parenthood.

Because of recurring conflict in the Eastern DRC, associated with deep-seated gender discrimination, harmful cultural practices and the low social status of women and children contribute to high rates of gender-based violence. Labour exploitation and abuse against women and children continue occurring at alarming rates particularly around remote mining sites where laws and rules are often disrespected, and poor work and social conditions prevail.

Despite national and international efforts to improve the justice system and build up the capacity of security forces, impunity remains the norm and justice the exception.

To address these human right violations of women and children in the mining areas and empower them to participate in social and economic systems without stigma and discrimination, IOM and the Panzi Foundation in the South Kivu are collaborating to find external support that will help the two organizations provide a holistic set of essential services targeting female sexual and gender-based violence (S/GBV) survivors and exploited children.

This could be done through provision of medical care, psychosocial support, economic reintegration, vocational and literacy training, legal support, and strengthening of civilian and police and judicial systems for prevention and case referral system. Community awareness activities and information campaigns will use various communication approaches to promote rights and equity of women and children.

In his October 2015 speech at a global meeting on natural resources, governance and human rights held in Dakar, Senegal, Dr. Denis Mukwege, the Medical Director of the Panzi Hospital and Foundation stated: “We can no longer continue to repair the consequences of violence without talking about its root causes.”



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)

Geography

Country of the West Indies that occupies the eastern two-thirds of Hispaniola, the second largest island of the Greater Antilles chain in the Caribbean Sea. Haiti, also an independent republic, occupies the western third of the island. The Dominican Republic's shores are washed by the Caribbean to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the north.¹



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Population 10,766,564 (2017)²

Population distribution Coastal development is significant, especially in the southern coastal plains and the Cibao Valley, where population density is highest; smaller population clusters exist in the interior mountains (Cordillera Central)³

Capital Santo Domingo

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Dominican-Republic>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2266.html>



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Language Spanish (official)

Literacy Rate 92 % (2015)⁴ **GPI** 1.01 (2015)⁵

Ethnic Groups mixed 73%, White 16%, Black 11%⁶

Religion/Beliefs Roman Catholic 95%, other 5%⁷

Political Situation

During much of its history the Dominican Republic has been governed by strongarm dictators who have denied human rights to their citizens, particularly darker-skinned people. Nowadays, there is a bicameral Congress whose senators and deputies are elected by popular vote every four years. The Dominican Republic is divided into provinces, each run by a governor who is appointed by the president. Unfortunately, corruption in government grows, specially each time government salaries are cut. ⁸

⁴ Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175>)

⁵ The *gender parity index (GPI)* of the adult literacy rate is the ratio of the female to male literacy rates of the population aged 15 years and over. A GPI value between 0.97 and 1.03 is usually interpreted to indicate gender parity (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175/3>)

⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/dr.html>

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Dominican-Republic>



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The mistreatment of Haitian immigrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent is a reality since 1937, when Trujillo's soldiers killed somewhere between ten thousand and thirty-five thousand Haitian civilians, claiming it was a Dominican peasant uprising. Today there is still great disdain for Haitian and other blacks.⁹

The last constitutional proposal in 2016 has controversially overseen the relaxation of abortion laws and the introduction of a naturalization law which led to the descendants of thousands of Haitian immigrants becoming stateless.¹⁰

Cultural Traditions

Roman Catholicism has been combined with traditional folk religion, particularly in rural areas. Few people are skilled in the use of herbs and other natural objects for healing, and are called witch doctors. Voodoo is practiced secretly, primarily along the border with Haiti. Practitioners believe in one God and many lesser spirits. They believe that each individual has a protector spirit who rewards that person with wealth and punishes him or her with illness. Nature spirits oversee the external world. Ancestral spirits are the souls of dead ancestors and will protect the living if properly remembered with funerals and memorials.¹¹

Dominican social stratification is influenced by racial and economic issues. The upper class has historically descended from European ancestry and is light skinned. The lower class is most often Black, descendants of the African slave population or Haitians. The Mulattoes are people of mixed African and European ancestry and make up the majority of the population; they have created a growing middle class. The symbols of social stratification are similar to those in Western cultures. Many of the growing middle-class population own homes and cars, and enjoy modernizing them with the latest electronic appliances. Their children graduate from high school, and may go on to college. However, there is still a large segment of the population which lives in urban slums and poor rural areas without electricity or running water.¹²

Politeness is a very important aspect of social interaction. When you enter a room or begin a conversation, it is polite to make a general greeting such as *buenos días*, which means "good day." Handshakes are another friendly gesture. Personal appearance is also important to Dominicans and they do their best to look neat and clean. Rural women wear skirts or dresses, but in urban areas jeans and short skirts are acceptable.

¹³

Personal space is limited, touching is normal, and crowding, particularly on public transportation, is common. Dominicans are animated and often make gestures and

⁹ <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Dominican-Republic.html>

¹⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-19246340>

¹¹ CESDEM (2014) *Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud República Dominicana*

¹² *ibid*

¹³ *ibid*



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

use body language. Most women kiss each other on both cheeks, and a man who trusts a woman will also kiss her. Most women ride side saddle while on the backs of motorcycles, because sitting with the legs apart is considered unladylike.¹⁴

Gender and family relations

Women tend to find jobs more easily than men, especially in rural areas, but are paid less. Women often support their households, but do not make enough to bring them out of poverty. In middle-class and upper-class families the structure is patriarchal. Among the lower-class families, the structure is often matriarchal because the father does not live in the house.¹⁵

The extended family, composed of three or more generations, is prevalent among the Dominican elite. The oldest man holds authority, makes public decisions, and is responsible for the welfare of the family. The oldest married woman commands her household, delivers the more private decisions, and nurtures the family. Married brothers and their wives are part of the extended family while married daughters become part of their husbands' families. When families wish to establish a trusting relationship with other families, they can become *compadres*. Strong emotional bonds link *compadres* or co-parents.¹⁶

GBV

The Dominican Republic occupies 107th position in Gender Inequality Index¹⁷, and 97th position of Global Gender Gap Index.¹⁸

The latest data on gender violence in the Dominican Republic was published in 2014. This report shows that 26 % of women aged 15-49 years have experienced physical violence at some point in their lives, and 13 % lived that experience in the last 12 months.¹⁹ Separated or divorced women are more prone to being victims of some physical violence (41 %) than married or unmarried women (28 %) and single women (8 %). As the number of children increases, the more frequent is physical violence inflicted. The 13 % among those without children up to 45 % among women with 5 or more children, being the same pattern for women who suffered violence in the last 12

¹⁴ <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Dominican-Republic.html>

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ *Gender Inequality Index*: A composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Source: Human Development Report, UNDP (2016).

¹⁸ The *Global Gender Gap* Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria. Source: World Economic Forum, the Global Gender Gap Report 2016.

¹⁹ CESDEM (2014) *Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud República Dominicana*, p. 318



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

months. As is expected, the more educational level, the less frequent of women who has been suffered violence, although this does not occur in lowest educational levels.²⁰

One out of ten women has been victim of sexual violence at some point in their lives and approximately 4 % in the 12 months prior to the survey.²¹ Most married or unmarried women (61%) who experienced sexual abuse reported that they were perpetrated by their ex-husband or ex-partner and 21% said the perpetrator was their current spouse or partner.²² Women who are victims of sexual violence tend to be silent, never seek help, neither mention it to anyone (42%), and 23% choose help-seeking.²³

Related to current measures against GBV, the National Plan for Gender Equality (2006-2016) is directed at the eradication of all forms of violence against women. It includes three major objectives, 1) the need to improve services for victims of violence, 2) to improve and consolidate violence prevention, and 3) to strengthen sanction mechanisms and the administration of justice in cases of violence against women.²⁴

There are fifty-three Provincial and Municipal Offices run by the Ministry of Women. These offices provide information on services for women who are victims of violence²⁵. There are also free helplines for situations of domestic violence (Linea VIDA and Línea de Auxilio) providing 24-hour service since 2012²⁶.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 319

²¹ CESDEM (2014) *Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud República Dominicana*, p. 323

²² Ibid, p. 325

²³ Ibid, p. 318

²⁴ Response of the Government of the Dominican Republic to the questionnaire on violence against women 2010; Ministerio de la Mujer: <http://mujer.gob.do/>

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Government of Dominican Republic, National Review on Beijing+20, 2014, p. 4



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.





ECUADOR

Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)

Geography

Western South America, bordering the Pacific Ocean at the Equator, between Colombia and Peru¹.



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Population 16,625,776 (2017)²

Population distribution Nearly half of the population is concentrated in the interior in the Andean intermontane basins and valleys, with large concentrations also found along the western coastal strip; the rainforests of the east remain sparsely populated.³

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ec.html>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>



ECUADOR

Capital Quito



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Language Spanish (Castilian) 93% (official), Quechua 4.1%, other indigenous 0.7%, foreign 2.2% *Note:* (Quechua and Shuar are official languages of intercultural relations; other indigenous languages are in official use by indigenous peoples in the areas they inhabit) (2010 est.)⁴

Literacy Rate 94% (2015)⁵ **GPI** 0.97⁶

Ethnic Groups Mestizo (mixed Amerindian and white) 71.9%, Montubio 7.4%, Amerindian 7%, Ehite 6.1%, Afroecuadorian 4.3%, Mulato 1.9%, Black 1%, other 0.4% (2010 est.)⁷

Black and indigenous people identify with cultural counterparts in other nations. For example, Quichua-speaking people identify with other such speakers in Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina.⁸

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2266.html>

⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ec.html>

⁵ Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy#!/tellmap/-1003531175>)

⁶ The *gender parity index (GPI)* of the adult literacy rate is the ratio of the female to male literacy rates of the population aged 15 years and over. A GPI value between 0.97 and 1.03 is usually interpreted to indicate gender parity. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy#!/tellmap/-1003531175/3>)

⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ec.html>

⁸ <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Ecuador.html> 5/15



ECUADOR

Religion/Beliefs Roman Catholic 74%, Evangelical 10.4%, Jehovah's Witness 1.2%, other 6.4% (includes Mormon Buddhist, Jewish, Spiritualist, Muslim, Hindu, indigenous religions, African American religions, Pentecostal), atheist 7.9%, Agnostic 0.1%

Note: data represent persons at least 16 years of age from five Ecuadoran cities (2012 est.)⁹

Political Situation

Ecuador is a constitutional democracy, whose current Chief of State is Lenin Moreno Garces, since May 2017¹⁰. Political life is focused on *caudillos* within a contemporary system of coalitions that features from seven to twenty political parties. Parties constantly coalesce and fragment, but a few, such as the Social Christians, the Leftist Democrats, and various populist parties, endure. The judicial system is based on the Napoleonic code, wherein a person is treated as guilty until proven innocent. The military is the most powerful force within the country, and the police force is substantial.¹¹ Poor people have little recourse to police help, and the idea and practice of *justicia por propia mano* ("justice by one's own hand") is increasingly prevalent.¹²

Ecuador's high poverty and income inequality mostly affect indigenous, mixed race, and rural populations. An estimated 2 to 3 million Ecuadorians live abroad. Spain is the logical destination because of its shared language and the wide availability of low-skilled, informal jobs at a time when increased border surveillance made illegal migration to the US difficult.¹³

Cultural Traditions

All Ecuadorians demand respect in their interactions, and conflict on interpersonal or group bases occurs when disrespect is repeatedly observed or inferred. The indigenous and black social movements, and movements by women and poor people, are oriented toward achieving the status of dignity through the allocation and/or appropriation of respect.¹⁴

Ecuador is a highly stratified society with strong symbolic as well as socioeconomic and political ordering. The social structure constitutes a class pyramid. The all-White oligarchies represent the pinnacle of political power, economic control, and social esteem. There is a significant middle class of professional, commercial, and service workers who generally self-identify ethnically as *blancos*. Their representations of other people depend on many political and socioeconomic situations and contexts. Power and control are associated with being *blanco*, and upward mobility often

⁹ <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Ecuador.html> 5/15

¹⁰ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-19331501>

¹¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ecuador>

¹² <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Ecuador.html>

¹³ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ecuador>

¹⁴ <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Ecuador.html>



ECUADOR

involves a process known as *blanqueamiento* (Whitening). Despite quasi-racial categorization and vast differences of wealth, there is a great deal of mobility and fluidity in all social and cultural sectors. Well over half the nation is composed of those stigmatized as black or "Indian" people and those with ancestry falling into such categories; they are excluded from access to wealth, power, or social esteem. ¹⁵

A root metaphor for many Catholics is that of the Passion of Christ. His life symbolizes the value of suffering. Virgins and saints are second to Christ's imagery in wide-spread Ecuadorian Catholicism. Indigenous people have a rich spiritual universe, which shamans tap for curing and for sending harm. ¹⁶

Gender and family relations

Gender roles are not clear and deserve serious research attention. Women make up a considerable portion of the workforce and are particularly visible in banking and finance, university teaching and research, and NGOs. Women have gained legal rights over their children and their own property. A woman, even with a stable and enduring marriage, may choose to omit her husband's name from her child's birth certificate to protect that child from potential future bad fatherhood or separation or divorce, in which the father could claim the child. ¹⁷

The basic domestic unit focuses on the mother and children with the father as provider. The mother nurtures the children and manages the household; the father legally provides for the family and the home. This system operates at all class levels and across different cultural systems. ¹⁸

GBV

Ecuador is the 88th country in Gender Inequality Index Rank¹⁹ and occupies the 40th place on Global Gender Gap Index Rank ²⁰.

Gender-based violence is a major social problem, 6 out of every 10 Ecuadorian women aged 15 or over have suffered physical, psychological, sexual or patrimonial assaults. The most frequent form of violence is psychological or emotional violence. 53.9% of women report having suffered this type of violence. Second is physical violence (38%); followed by sexual violence that reaches 25.7% and, finally, patrimonial is located at

¹⁵ <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Ecuador.html>

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ *ibid*

¹⁹ The *Gender Inequality Index* is a composite measure reflecting inequality between women and men in three different dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and labour market participation. Source: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2016.

²⁰The *Global Gender Gap* Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria. Source: World Economic Forum, the Global Gender Gap Report 2016.



ECUADOR

16.7%²¹. Feelings of jealousy by the perpetrator are the most common trigger of the episode of violence (47,4%), followed by consumption of drugs (37,4%), sentimental relationship with another women (37,2%) and economical problems (36,4%).²²

Among women who have suffered any type of aggression by their partners, most are indigenous (59.3%), followed by Afro-Ecuadorians (55.3%), and women who self-define as White (43.2%)²³. Other vulnerability factors are low educational level, disability, living with their partners, having children with other men and being divorced or separated²⁴

Only 1 woman in every 10 battered women (11.5%) reported it. Of these, only two (20%) have continued with the judicial process, and only one of them indicates that the aggressor was sanctioned, that is, only 1% of the men who violate their partner have received a legal sanction.²⁵

10.4% of women reported that they had suffered some form of sexual abuse before reaching the age of 18, of which 45% were perpetrated by friends, loved ones or acquaintances and 37.6% by blood relatives.²⁶

The latest measure against GBV was taken in 2015. The National Directorate of Domestic and Gender Violence was created by the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Worship. This Unit for the Protection of Victims of Violence manages the National Network of Reception Houses and Specialized Care Centers for victims of violence. This measure includes an integral care model of attention to victims of gender violence.²⁷

²¹ Consejo Nacional para la Igualdad de Género (2014). *LA VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO CONTRA LAS MUJERES EN EL ECUADOR: Análisis de los resultados de la Encuesta Nacional sobre Relaciones Familiares y Violencia de Género contra las Mujeres*, p. 37

²² Consejo Nacional para la Igualdad de Género (2014). *LA VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO CONTRA LAS MUJERES EN EL ECUADOR: Análisis de los resultados de la Encuesta Nacional sobre Relaciones Familiares y Violencia de Género contra las Mujeres* p. 42

²³ *ibid*, p. 50

²⁴ *ibid*, p. 52-62

²⁵ *ibid*, p. 69

²⁶ *ibid*, p. 100

²⁷ Government of Ecuador, National Review on Beijing +20, 2014, p.15



ECUADOR



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Produced by the University of Malta

FAST FACTS:

- Egypt is a country located in the extreme northeast of Africa
- The official language of Egypt is **Arabic**. Most Egyptians speak a specific variant of Arabic in the form of a vernacular dialect
- **Islam** is the most widely practiced religion, followed by **Christianity**. **Ancestral beliefs** are also quite common
- Ethnic groups of Eastern Hamitic stock, which include Egyptians, Bedouins, and Berbers constitute 99% of the population of Egypt
- After years of turbulence and popular unrest under Presidents Mubarak and Morsi, Egypt appears to be relatively stable
- Egypt is an **unequal society** with a stark divide between the very wealthy and the very poor
- **Public modesty in dress is highly valued in Egypt**, and clothes serve the purpose of hiding body shape
- **Egypt ranked 136th out of 145 countries worldwide for gender equality in the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index**. In Egypt, women's literacy levels are significantly lower than men's, and while the majority of men participate in the



labour force, only a small percentage of women is in employment

- In 2015, **7.888 million women reported having suffered from some form of violence** at the hand of husbands, partners, acquaintances or strangers in the previous year
- The most commonly reported perpetrators of domestic violence (DV) are current husbands or parents such as father/ step-father, mother/ step mother
- Egypt ranks **second worldwide after Afghanistan for sexual harassment**
- **Egypt has the world's highest number of women and girls who have experienced FGM**. It is estimated that 87.2% among all women aged 15-49 undergo FGM



GEOGRAPHY: Egypt is located in the extreme northeast of Africa. Egypt borders with Libya to the west, Sudan to the south, and Israel to the northeast. It has access to the Mediterranean Sea in the north and to the Red Sea in the east¹.



CAPITAL: Cairo

POPULATION: 83.9 million

LANGUAGE: The official language of Egypt is **Arabic**. Most Egyptians speak a specific variant of Arabic in the form of a vernacular dialect. The most common dialects are: the Cairo dialect; the Bedouin dialect of the Eastern Desert and of the Sinai Peninsula; the Bedouin dialect of the Western Desert; the dialect spoken in Upper Egypt (which is strikingly different from that of Cairo). Educated Egyptians are generally fluent in English or French or both, in addition to Arabic².

LITERACY RATE: 76%³

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Egypt>

² <https://www.britannica.com/place/Egypt/Languages>

³ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?page=3>



EGYPT

BELIEF: Islam is the most widely practiced religion, followed by Christianity. Ancestral beliefs are also quite common. Villages and towns have shrines; and associations of mystics (Sufi brotherhoods) are widespread. Sufi brotherhoods aim to enable members to achieve a mystical union with God through collective rituals⁴.

ETHNIC GROUPS: Ethnic groups of Eastern Hamitic stock, which include Egyptians, Bedouins, and Berbers constitute 99% of the population of Egypt. The remaining 1% of the population is made up of Nubian, Armenian, Greek, and other Europeans minorities, primarily Italian and French⁵.

POLITICAL SITUATION: Since the election of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in 2014, Egypt has been relatively stable. In the years preceding Sisi's Presidency, Egypt was characterised by several years of popular unrest. In 2011, riding on the wave of Tunisia's Arab Spring, anti-government demonstrations erupted in Cairo's Tahrir Square. Ongoing protests led to President Mubarak's resignation.



Bedouin man and his wife from tribal intermarriage

© [Tour Egypt](#)

Following a transitional government, Mohammed Morsi was elected in 2012. Under Morsi, tensions between secularists and the military heightened; Morsi accrued himself greater powers through a constitutional declaration, which sparked renewed popular discontent and protests leading to Morsi's deposition by the military in 2013. Morsi was replaced by interim President Mansour, followed by Sisi in 2014.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: Handshakes are expected when greeting someone; embracing is common among members of the same sex. People are generally addressed by their first name, often preceded by a title - e.g. 'am, or uncle is often used for men, *hajj* for an older man or a pilgrim who has returned from Mecca, *duktor* for a person holding a doctorate etc. It is considered rude to address someone by name only. Egyptians frequently do not have last names, but each person has a first name and the name of his or her father, grandfather, and so on. Hence one's full name is usually composed of three names: their given name, their father's name and their grandfather's name. Women often do not change their names upon marriage.

There are very stark class differences in Egypt between the very wealthy and the very poor, which manifest themselves in the choice of clothes, housing, transport and other. Seniority

⁴ www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Egypt.html#ixzz4mXr9K9UB

⁵ <http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/Africa/Egypt.html#ixzz4mXoyUjuL>



EGYPT

is highly valued in Egyptian society, and women normally defer to men. Youths should not raise their voice when addressing elders and should not remain seated if an elder is standing.

Public modesty in dress is highly valued in Egypt, and clothes serve the purpose of hiding body shape. Women generally wear a head scarf pinned under the chin and covering the hair and ears. Men are also required to dress modestly with loose trousers and long sleeves.

GENDER RELATIONS: Egypt ranked 136th out of 145 countries worldwide for gender equality in the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index⁶. In Egypt, women's literacy levels are significantly lower than men's, and while the majority of men participate in the labour force, only a small percentage of women is in employment. Of the women who do work, almost half are employed in agriculture and farming, where most work is conducted on family-owned land and is thus unpaid. Women's working conditions are generally poor and do not reflect their role and responsibilities in the workplace and within the local community.

Differences in role and status between genders are starker in northern Egypt, where women's access to education, healthcare and social services is very limited⁷.

Housework and caring for children is primarily the woman's responsibility, although grandparents and other family members also contribute to raising children. Many Egyptian women breast-feed children for two years in line with the Koran.



Women picking cotton in rural Egypt

© Daily News Egypt

Women do not have the same legal rights as men when it comes to marriage, divorce and child custody. When a woman wants to marry, all of the family is involved in match-making, and marriage between cousins is common. Polygyny (having multiple wives) among Muslims is not very common and is in decline. Divorce is relatively easy to obtain, but families tend to get involved in trying to reconcile the couple⁸.

GBV: Domestic violence, sexual harassment and FGM are the most common forms of violence experienced by women in Egypt, yet they are often unreported. Women were particularly exposed to violence at the peak of political and social unrest in recent years, when **group rapes in Tahrir square** were employed as a tactic to thwart women's political activism. However, violence was and is also experienced in daily life, in both the public and private spheres.

⁶ <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2015/rankings/>

⁷ http://www.unwomen.org/mdgf/B/Egypt_B.html

⁸ www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Egypt.html#ixzz4mXr9K9UB



In an UNFPA study published in 2015, **7.888 million women** reported having suffered from some form of violence at the hand of husbands, partners, acquaintances or strangers in the previous year. Only 75.000 of these women reported to the police and 7.000 women sought social support⁹.

Domestic violence figures for 2014 reveal that more than **one-third of ever-married women between age 15 and 49 have experienced physical violence since the age of 15**. The most commonly reported perpetrators are current husbands or parents such as father/ step-father, mother/ step mother¹⁰.

Egypt ranks second worldwide after Afghanistan for sexual harassment. According to a 2013 UN Women study, 99.3% of Egyptian women and girls surveyed reported experiencing sexual harassment in their lifetime and 82.6 % of respondents reported feeling unsafe when walking the streets. A higher percentage reported feeling unsafe on public transport. Although a new law criminalising sexual harassment was passed in 2014, patriarchal norms and beliefs pervade society and women and girls are routinely discriminated against.

Egypt has the world's highest number of women and girls who have experienced FGM. It is estimated that 87.2% among all women aged 15-49 undergo FGM. FGM is practised for several reasons, such as tradition, religion and its association with marriage. 57.5% of Egyptian men and 53% of Egyptian women believe a husband prefers his wife to be cut. Many men believe that FGM serves to protect women and their families. This belief is commonly referred to as 'quama' ('protection'). There is also the widespread notion that women are overly sexualised and that FGM can help put a rein on their sexual desires. 48.7% of men and 43.1% of women believe FGM prevents adultery¹¹.

⁹ <http://egypt.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Costs%20of%20the%20impact%20of%20Gender%20Based%20Violence%20%28GBV%29%20WEB.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://egypt.unfpa.org/topics/gender-based-violence-1>

¹¹ <http://28toomany.org/countries/egypt/> & http://28toomany.org/media/uploads/egypt_key_findings_final.pdf



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



ERITREA (State of)



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mk7WGmsM2s0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNvZLPAehTw>

Geography

Officially the State of Eritrea is a country in the Horn of Africa, with its capital at Asmara. It is bordered by Sudan in the west, Ethiopia in the south, and Djibouti in the southeast. The north eastern and eastern parts of Eritrea have an extensive coastline along the Red Sea.



The wreath with the upright olive-branch symbol derived from the 1952 flag, which had a light blue background to honour the United Nations. The green colour in the flag stands for the agriculture and livestock of the country, the blue stands for the sea, and the red for the blood-shed in the fight for freedom.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Population 4,954,645 inhabitants (2016)

Eritrea's population increased from 3.2 million to 5 million between 1990 and 2016. The average number of children born to Eritrean mothers is 4.7

Capital city Asmara (804,000 inhabitants in 2017)

Other cities Keren (82,198) - Massawa (53,090) - Assab (28,000) - Mendefera (25,332)

Total area 117,600 km² (45,400 sq mi)

Languages Official language: NONE
Recognized national languages: Tigrinya - Tigre - Kunama - Saho - Bilen - Nara - Afar - Beja
Working languages: Tigrinya – Arabic – English

Eritrea is a multilingual country. The nation has no official language, as the Constitution establishes the "equality of all Eritrean languages". Tigrinya serves as the de facto language of national identity. With 2,540,000 total speakers of a population of 5,254,000 in 2006, it is the most widely spoken language, particularly in the southern and central parts of Eritrea. Other major national languages include Afar, Arabic, Beja, Bilen, Kunama, Nara, Saho and Tigre. Tigrinya alongside Modern Standard Arabic and English serve as working languages, with the latter used in university education and many technical fields. Italian, the former colonial language, is spoken by a few monolinguals and is still taught in primary and secondary schools.

Most of the languages spoken in Eritrea belong to the Ethiopian Semitic branch of the Afroasiatic family. Other Afroasiatic languages belonging to the Cushitic branch are also widely spoken in the country. The latter include Afar, Beja, Blin, and Saho. Smaller groups also speak other Afroasiatic languages, such as the newly recognized Dahlik and Arabic (the Hejazi and Hadhrami dialects spoken by the Rashaida and Hadhrami, respectively).

In addition, Nilo-Saharan languages (Kunama and Nara) are spoken as a native language by the Nilotic Kunama and Nara ethnic minority groups that live in the northern and north western part of the country.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Ethnic groups

Eritrea is a multi-ethnic country, with nine recognized ethnic groups according to the government of Eritrea. Most residents speak languages from the Afroasiatic family, either of the Ethiopian Semitic languages or Cushitic branches.

Eritrean society is ethnically heterogeneous. An independent census has yet to be conducted, but the Tigrinya people make up about 55% and Tigre people make up about 30% of the population. A majority of these ethnic groups belong to Afroasiatic-speaking communities of the Cushitic branch, such as the Saho, Hedareb, Afar and Bilen. There are also a number of Nilo-Saharan-speaking Nilotic ethnic minorities, who are represented in Eritrea by the Kunama and Nara. Each ethnicity speaks a different native tongue but, typically, many of the minorities speak more than one language. The Rashaida represent about 2% of Eritrea's population. They reside in the northern coastal lowlands of Eritrea as well as the eastern coasts of Sudan. The Rashaida first came to Eritrea in the 19th century from the Hejaz region.

In addition, there exist Italian Eritrean (concentrated in Asmara) and Ethiopian Tigrayan communities. Neither is generally given citizenship unless through marriage or, more rarely, by having it conferred upon them by the State. In 1941, Eritrea had about 760,000 inhabitants including 70,000 Italians (most Italians left after Eritrea became independent from Italy).

Religion / Beliefs

Most people in the territory adhere to Christianity or Islam. According to the Pew Research Centre, as of 2010, 62.9% of the population of Eritrea adheres to Christianity, 36.6% follows Islam, and 0.4% practices folk religion. The remainder observes Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religions including traditional faiths and animism.

Since May 2002, the government of Eritrea has officially recognized the Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church (Oriental Orthodox), Sunni Islam, the Eritrean Catholic Church (a Metropolitanate sui juris), and the Evangelical Lutheran church. Among other things, the government's registration system requires religious groups to submit personal information on their membership to be allowed to worship. The Eritrean government is against what it deems as "reformed" or "radical" versions of its established religions. Therefore, alleged radical forms of Islam and Christianity, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Bahá'í Faith (though the Bahá'í Faith is neither Islamic nor Christian), the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and numerous other non-Protestant Evangelical denominations are required to undergo a registration process and cannot worship freely.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Political Background

The People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) is the ruling party in Eritrea. Other political groups are not allowed to organize, although the unimplemented Constitution of 1997 provides for the existence of multi-party politics. The National Assembly has 150 seats, of which 75 are occupied by the PFDJ. National elections have been periodically scheduled and cancelled; none have ever been held in the country since independence in 1993.

Eritrea is a member of the United Nations, the African Union, and is an observing member of the Arab League alongside Brazil, Venezuela, India and Turkey. The nation holds a seat on the United Nations' Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). Eritrea also holds memberships in the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Finance Corporation, International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), Non-Aligned Movement, Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Permanent Court of Arbitration, Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa, and the World Customs Organization.

Eritrea maintains diplomatic ties with a number of other countries, including China, Denmark, Djibouti, Israel, the United States and Yemen. There are approximately 60,000 African refugees in Israel, mostly from Sudan and Eritrea. Relations of Eritrea with Djibouti and Yemen are tense due to territorial disputes over the Doumeira Islands and Hanish Islands, respectively.

The undisclosed border with Ethiopia is the primary external issue currently facing Eritrea. Eritrea's relations with Ethiopia turned from that of cautious mutual tolerance, following the 30-year war for Eritrean independence, to a deadly rivalry that led to the outbreak of hostilities from May 1998 to June 2000 which claimed approximately 70,000 lives from both sides. The border conflict cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Disagreements following the war have resulted in stalemate punctuated by periods of elevated tension and renewed threats of war. The situation has been further escalated by the continued efforts of Eritrean and Ethiopian leaders in supporting opposition in one another's countries. The Eritrean–Ethiopian war severely hurt Eritrea's economy.

Currency

The nakfa is the currency of Eritrea and was introduced on 8 November 1997 to replace the Ethiopian birr at par. The currency takes its name from the Eritrean town of Nakfa. The nakfa is divided into 100 cents and is pegged to the US dollar at a fixed rate of USD\$1 = ERN15.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Economic situation

The economy of Eritrea has experienced considerable growth in recent years. A big reason for the recent growth of the Eritrean economy is the commencement of full operations in the gold and silver Bisha mine and the production of cement in Massawa. Eritrea has an extensive amount of resources such as copper, gold, granite, marble, and potash. The Eritrean economy has undergone extreme changes due to the war of Independence. In 2011, gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 8.7% (2012 / 7.5%) making Eritrea one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

80% of the Eritrean workforce are employed in agriculture. Eritrea's main agricultural products include sorghum, millet, barley, wheat, legumes, vegetables, fruits, sesame, linseed, cattle, sheep, goats and camels.

Even during the war, Eritrea developed its transportation infrastructure by asphaltting new roads, improving its ports, and repairing war-damaged roads and bridges as a part of the Wefri Warsay Yika'alo program. The most significant of these projects was the construction of a coastal highway of more than 500 km connecting Massawa with Asseb, as well as the rehabilitation of the Eritrean Railway. The rail line has been restored between the port of Massawa and the capital Asmara, although services are sporadic. In theory, Eritrea has a national carrier, Eritrean Airlines, but services are intermittent.

Cultural Traditions

Whenever one thinks about Eritrea, the immediate thing that comes to one's mind is the existing strong harmony and coexistence among the nine ethnic groups of the country. Mutual respect and tolerance are deeply rooted in the Eritrean society which in turn serves as pillar for the present firm unity and nationalism – an asset rarely found in other countries. All these noble values of mutual respect and harmony symbolize the cherished slogan of unity in diversity. Despite the prevailing unity among all ethnic groups, each nationality is endowed with its own rich culture and tradition that distinguish the country as a multicultural nation.

The culture of Eritrea is the collective cultural heritage of the various populations native to Eritrea. It shares historic commonalities with the traditions of Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Sudan. The local culture consists of various, and often quite similar, traditions practiced by the nation's many Cushitic and Ethiopian Semitic-speaking Afro-Asiatic ethnic groups, in addition to those practiced by the area's Nilotic minorities.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Eritrean society is divided along ethnic, religious, and social lines. Traditionally, there were low caste groups within many of the ethnic groups in the country. The last slave was reportedly emancipated by the EPLF in the late 1970s. The traditional elites were the landowning families. After land reforms both during and after the liberation struggle, however, these elites have ceased to exist. Generally, in the rural areas, the people live in scarcity and poverty and few distinctions between rich and poor are seen.

In the urban areas, however, a modern elite is emerging, composed of high-ranking civil servants, business-people, and Eritreans returning from the diaspora in the United States and Europe.

In the rural areas, the better-off are able to acquire proper clothing and shoes. The rich may have horses or mules to carry them to the market. A sign of prosperity among the pastoral groups is the display of gold jewelry on women.

“Women, tradition and development: a case study of Eritrea”. *Pages 29 and more*

https://books.google.fr/books?id=t-6aHSOI_ukC&pg=PA37&lpg=PA37&dq=Eritrean+traditional+taboos&source=bl&ots=FbC-ax6aq8&sig=ORMTRd8rZXGYp4y06zTnmRLho5U&hl=fr&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjD4o7C26zZAhWFaFAKHQneCaYQ6AEIPDAC#v=onepage&q=Eritrean%20traditional%20taboos&f=false

Education

There are five levels of education in Eritrea: pre-primary, primary, middle, secondary, and post-secondary. There are nearly 238,000 students in the primary, middle, and secondary levels of education. There are approximately 824 schools, two universities (the University of Asmara and the Eritrea Institute of Technology) and several smaller colleges and technical schools.

Education in Eritrea is officially compulsory for children aged 7 to 13 years. However, the education infrastructure is inadequate to meet current needs. Statistics vary at the elementary level, suggesting that 65% to 70% of school-aged children attend primary school; approximately 61% attend secondary school. Student-teacher ratios are high: 45.1 at the elementary level and 54.1 at the secondary level. Class sizes average 63 and 97 students per classroom at the elementary and secondary school levels, respectively. Learning hours at school are often less than six hours per day. Barriers to education in Eritrea include traditional taboos, school fees (for registration and materials), and the opportunity costs of low-income households.

Literacy rate is high: for ages 18 to 24 years, it is 92.6% for men and 87.7% for women (2008–2012). Overall literacy is 81%.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Education in Eritrea is a fundamental human right and a lifelong process by which all individuals are given opportunities to attain their potential as well-rounded citizens. The national education policy of Eritrea has stated that since Eritrea's greatest asset is its people, revitalizing citizens with relevant education and training is the only means by which the overall socio-economic development of the country can be achieved. The general objectives of the educational policy of Eritrea include to produce skilled and knowledgeable citizens, to teach a sense of commitment to self-reliance and self-consciousness to fight poverty and to make education accessible to all. Eritrea is spending large sums of money on educating the youth so that in the future they may make large returns to the country.

The government of Eritrea pursued a correct (although demanding) policy to address education for all by spreading it to all parts of the country. As a result, the education sector has undergone significant improvements to reach the previously unreached areas. The government's determination to expand education and make it free and accessible to all citizens is special in Africa. Education in Eritrea is free and has enabled young citizens to be beneficiaries, helped eradicate illiteracy and backwardness, and has improved the health conditions of the society. Education and other community services together have instilled a sense of commitment on Eritrean youth to the general society. Innocent Sanga has perfectly described the reality of Eritrea's educated youth in another context; "In the allegory of the mountain, those who climb the mountain of knowledge to the apex and manage to come back to the valley of challenges become the source of liberation for the illiterate societal members towards the realization of their political, social, economic, psychological, health and other related problems" (March 2017). The education policy of Eritrea liberates the individual and society from the chains of backwardness, ignorance, neo-colonialism, diseases and all forms of exploitation.

Eritrea is determined to ensure social justice centred on a fair distribution of resources and services that give citizens equitable opportunities. Likewise, education as a social service is made all inclusive and the government is working towards realizing equitable educational opportunities to all citizens, regardless of their background (ethnicity, gender, socio-economic level, religion, etc.). Aware of needs for socio-economic development, the government works towards the elimination of gender disparities at all levels of the education system. Sustainable socio-economic development cannot be realized without the full participation of women. Comprehensive efforts have been made at all levels to eliminate gender disparities. Supportive programmes to help socially disadvantaged groups and other populations, such as the physically disabled, nomads, semi-nomads, and others, have been implemented so as to promote equality in educational opportunity. The educational policy of Eritrea reflects the government's view of education as a human right and as a pillar of social justice. Every citizen has the full right to education and special attention has been paid to disadvantaged sections of the society.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Human rights

Eritrea is a one-party state in which national legislative elections have been repeatedly postponed. According to Human Rights Watch, the government's human rights record is considered among the worst in the world. Most Western countries have accused the Eritrean authorities of arbitrary arrest and detentions, and of detaining an unknown number of people without charge for their political activism.

A prominent group of fifteen Eritreans, called the G-15, including three cabinet members, who were arrested in September 2001 after publishing an open letter to the government and President Isaias Afewerki calling for democratic dialogue. This group, and thousands of others who were alleged to be affiliated with them, are imprisoned without legal charges, hearing, trial and judgment.

Since Eritrea's conflict with Ethiopia in 1998–2001, the nation's human rights record has been criticized at the United Nations. Human rights violations are allegedly often committed by the government or on behalf of the government. Freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association are limited. Those who practice "unregistered" religions, try to flee the nation, or escape military duty are put into prison. During the Eritrean independence struggle and 1998 Eritrean-Ethiopian War, many atrocities were also committed by the Ethiopian authorities against unarmed Eritrean civilians.

In June 2016, a 500-page United Nations Human Rights Council report accused Eritrea's government of extrajudicial executions, torture, indefinitely prolonged national service and forced labour, and indicated that sexual harassment, rape and sexual servitude by state officials are also widespread.

All Eritreans aged between 18 and 40 years must complete a mandatory national service, which includes military service. This requirement was implemented after Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia, as a means to protect Eritrea's sovereignty, to install national pride, and to create a disciplined populace. Eritrea's national service requires long, indefinite conscription, which some Eritreans leave the country in order to avoid.

Questions as fundamental still stay opened: "What are human rights?", "Who determines human rights?", and "What should take precedence, human or communal rights?". In 2007, the Eritrean government banned female genital mutilation. In Regional Assemblies and religious circles, Eritreans speak out continuously against the use of female circumcision. They cite health concerns and individual freedom as being of primary concern. Furthermore, they implore rural peoples to cast away this ancient cultural practice. In 2009, a movement called Citizens for Democratic Rights in Eritrea formed to create dialogue between the government and political opposition. The group consists of ordinary citizens and some people close to the government.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-

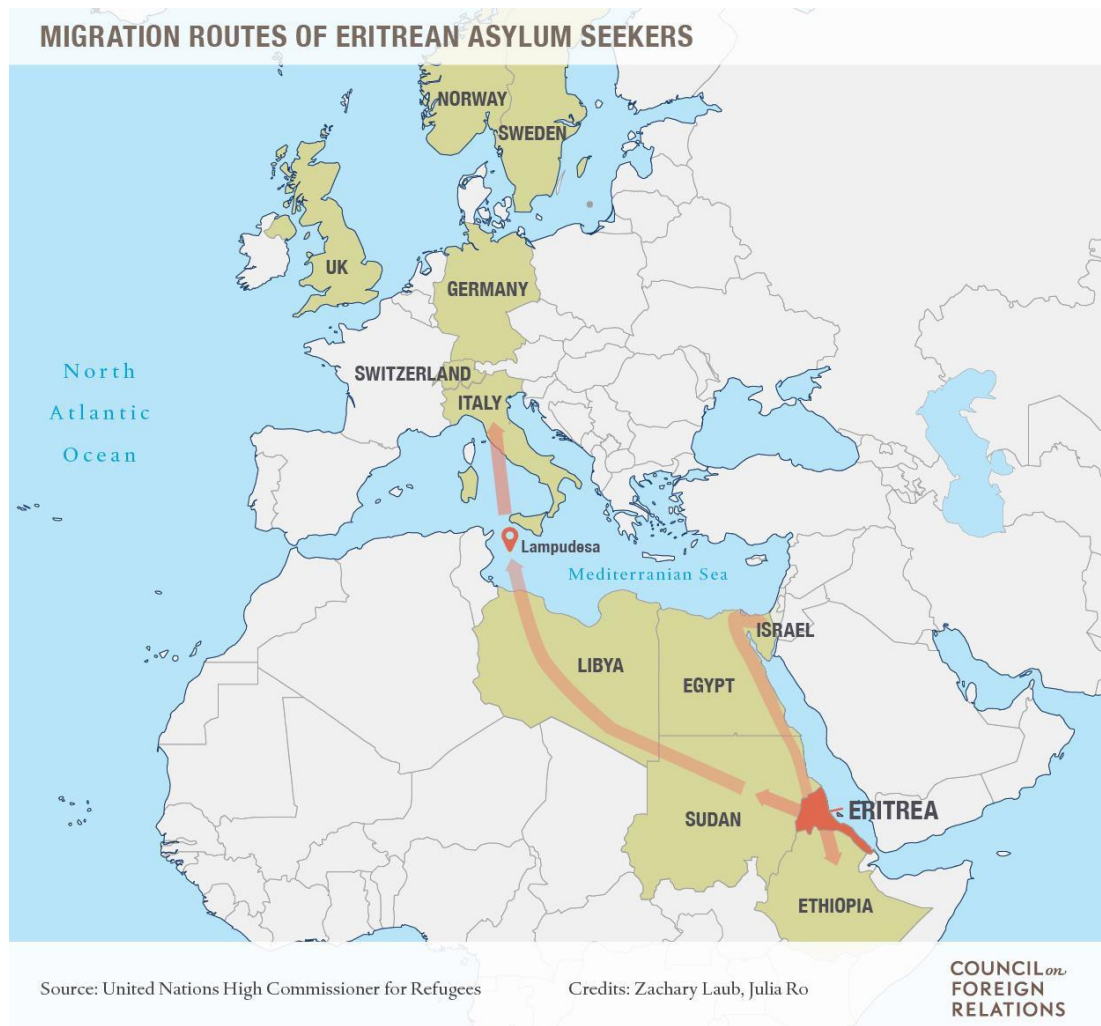


Migrations

<https://esa.un.org/migmgprofiles/indicators/files/Eritrea.pdf>

<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/research/protection-move-eritrean-refugee-flows-through-greater-horn-africa>

The major route to Europe takes asylum seekers through the Sahara Desert to war-torn Libya, where they board often-unseaworthy vessels bound for Italy. The UN refugee agency reported 11,564 Eritrean arrivals in Italy in the first seven months of 2016, representing 12 percent of arrivals there—second to Nigeria. (In 2015, a full quarter of arrivals in Italy were Eritrean.) In the same period, another 2,692 migrants were reported dead at sea along that route.



92% of asylum-seekers in Israel hail from Eritrea (73%) and Sudan (19%). Both are dictatorships that brutally repress their populations and violate their human rights. Citizens of Eritrea flee a country with no civilian judiciary, a country that never held democratic elections and whose citizens are obligated to perform endless national



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



service. This service is unlike the service performed in other armies and includes performing various forms of hard labour for the benefit of the regime, including: mining, paving roads and agricultural work. Eritreans who defect from national service are considered traitors and if they are caught, they are tortured and sometimes executed or tortured to death. Despite the severe punishments for defector, each month over 1,000 soldiers defect from the national service and flee the country.

<http://hrc-eritrea.org/?p=77>

<https://vimeo.com/4109613>

<http://hrc-eritrea.org/eritrean-government-demands-ransoms-from-refugees-for-detained-family-members/>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-africa-34774133/why-do-so-many-people-want-to-leave-eritrea-for-europe>

Little has been said, however, about Eritrea. Yet 22% of all people entering Italy by boat in 2014 were from Eritrea, according to the UN refugee agency, the UNHCR. After Syrians, they are the second most common nationality to undertake these journeys. Many who died are from the former Italian colony.

So why is it so rarely discussed? The answer is essentially the problem. Eritrea is without western allies and far away. It is also in the grip of a highly repressive regime. Eritrea has been named the most censored country in the world by the Committee to Protect Journalists, beating North Korea, which is in second place. Nobody talks about Eritrea because nobody (i.e. westerners) goes there.

People and Power -The mystery behind Eritrea

<https://youtu.be/FrvaEVs2VtE>

Most Eritrean are highly educated but had no prospects after university. Instead, there is conscription for adult men and unmarried women until the age of 50. Bullying and sexual abuse are common within the army.

Eritrea - A nation in isolation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6agTyME64FA>

Tackling the root causes of human trafficking and smuggling from Eritrea

<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IRRI%20Report%20final%20Nov%208.pdf>

The report is based in part on interviews with 67 Eritrean refugees.

An Eritrean woman in Addis Ababa who left Eritrea in 2015 and is planning to travel on to Europe said: *"I know refugees are kidnapped, sold, even killed. They don't give the migrants enough water or food for days. They beat and torture men. They rape the women. I heard so many bad things from others who have already gone through but I have no other way but to travel through the same route."*



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Gender and Family relations

The Relative Status of Women and Men

Since Eritrean society is still highly influenced by customary principles, the status of women in many communities is inferior to that of men. The war of liberation, where female fighters served side by side with men, was believed to have changed the status of women. The culture of gender equality, however, did not penetrate deeply into the Eritrean patriarchal culture. Nevertheless, with the government's policies of modernization and gender awareness, changes are slowly occurring in the status of Eritrean women.

Read more: <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Eritrea.html#ixzz57MBvXb4F>

Marriage and Family Engagement

Marriages are monogamous and arranged by contract, involving a dowry given by the bride's family to the couple.

Eritrean Wedding

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2l31hb51cjE>

Customary rules of marriage vary among the ethnic groups. Generally, girls marry at an early age, sometimes as young as fourteen. A large share of the marriages in the rural areas are still arranged by the family groups of concern. The future spouses have no say whatsoever in their future married life. If for some reason two lovers get married without prior permission from their respective parents, the boy is obliged to pay a certain sum of money plus an ox to the girl's father.

The marriage candidate has to fulfill the following requirements:

Same religion, close blood relationship (in Moslem society), no blood relationship whatsoever up to seven generations (in Christian society), beauty, riches and health.

In engagement, the father of the boy has nothing to offer to the father of the girl. In fact, it is the latter who is expected to give a cow or an ox to the former. The boy and the girl are promised for engagement by their respective families while still in their mother's wombs. On the third day of the engagement, the mother of the betrothed girl prepares boiled legume and distributes it among the villagers in the hope that her grandchildren might multiply like the sands of the sea.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Depending on the ethnic groups and their rules, marriages can last up to several months during which the young wife must stay away from her spouse.

As the soon as the couple have their own house, the role they play in the society shows some changes. Now they are full members of the society and enjoy all the rights and privileges in the village. Nonetheless, the woman remains unequal to the man. In a patriarchal and male dominated society, the husband is the only breadwinner and can do whatever he likes with the property. He can buy and sell as he pleases and everything in the house is under his control. The woman on the other hand is confined to the kitchen and bearing children. If she is given some work like poultry to tend or taking care of some household goods, it is because such activities may seem degrading for a man to even pay attention to.

Gender Roles

Since subsistence agriculture is the main production activity in Eritrea, the division of labour is influenced by custom. Women's input in agricultural production is vital but certain tasks, such as plowing and sowing, are conducted only by men. Animals are generally herded by young boys, while young girls assist in fetching water and firewood for the household.

Traditionally, the girls are taught to perform household tasks, but with family roles changing due to immigration, the boys in the family also help out with housecleaning and dishwashing. As both spouses begin to work more outside the home, household duties are more frequently shared by men and women.

Family and Kinship Structure

Eritrean immigrants generally prefer that their children date and marry other Eritreans, because they feel that they will better understand each other's culture. As time goes on there is more intercultural dating, although this is still generally discouraged.

Extended Families

The nuclear family, although forming the smallest kin unit, is always socially embedded in a wider kin unit. The lineage and/or clan hold an organizing function in terms of social duties and obligations and as a level of identity. With the exception of the Kunama who are matrilineal, all ethnic groups in Eritrea are patrilineal, that is, descent is traced through the male line.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Read more: <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Eritrea.html#ixzz57MC78Dw6>

Generally, people live together in nuclear families, although in some ethnic groups the family structure is extended. The man is the public decision-maker in the family, whereas the woman is responsible for organizing the domestic activities of the household.

Eritreans help one another and many send money back to family members in Eritrea. Traditionally, Eritreans care for elder family members at home and view this as an important duty. This cultural value is embraced by younger Eritrean refugees, though most have not yet needed to care for elders. This younger generation will likely find it challenging to care for elders at home due to the need for both men and women to work. As the Eritrean community ages, there is debate about the need for an Eritrean retirement home.

Pregnancy

In Eritrea, birth control is commonly practiced. Although birth control is not religiously acceptable and is a taboo topic, most couples practice it because they see the practicality of having smaller families. The Eritrean government promotes birth control and most Eritreans know what it is.

Sex education is becoming more prevalent in Eritrea, and students learn about birth control, STDs, and female circumcision. Although sexuality is often a taboo topic, the Eritrean community is becoming more open and informed on the subject.

Female circumcision is practiced in Eritrea and traditionally performed by lay healers. The type of female circumcision varies from region to region. Eritreans wish to have all males circumcised.

In Eritrea, home deliveries performed by midwives are the norm. There is a current push to retrain midwives to include modern sterile techniques in their practices.

In Eritrea, there is a high value placed on natural childbirth and women generally try to avoid using pain killers during birth. Traditionally men do not enter the birthing room, and only the female family members are present. There is a slow shift towards the husband being present, but this varies greatly from family to family depending on their level of education.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Gender Based Violence

Violence against girls in the family

The government of Eritrea still has to deal with the problem of the Domestic violence following a comprehensive approach, although abuses are already considered as crimes. 90% of women would be subjected to domestic violence. Yet, few denounce these acts to the authorities, because sexual violence is not a topic that can be addressed openly in Eritrean society.

Since early marriages are common in Eritrea, domestic violence is highly relevant when it comes to violence against girls in that country. When married before the age of 18, girls are more likely to be physically and psychologically abused by their husbands or other extended family members, especially when the age difference is significant.

Conjugal rape is not a crime under Eritrean law, since the Transitional Penal Code states that rape is by definition committed outside marriage. The Draft Penal Code envisages a slight alteration of this definition, recognizing rape between spouses when they are separated and live in two separate homes.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is extremely common in Eritrea, with about 89% of girls and women having suffered it. According to the WHO definition, FGM includes "all interventions including the removal of all or part of the external genital organs and / or any intervention performed on the female genital organs for cultural or religious reasons or for non-therapeutic purposes". Girls are usually circumcised a few days after birth, but the operation can be performed at any time before the girl reaches the age of 12.

In Eritrea, girls who are not circumcised are marginalized and generally perceived by the community as "unclean, unmarriageable, whores, or deviant sexual behaviour".

Violence against girls in the community

The presence of girls in the sex industry is a growing problem in Eritrea. The Eritrean government report recognizes that at least 5% of all sex workers are under 18 years of age. The number of girls employed in the sex industry is often representative of the number of very young separated girls of their parents for a variety of reasons, including "to find a better job, avoid an early marriage, because of parental divorce, family abuse, and rejection of parents if the girl is pregnant". Sex worker girls are particularly vulnerable to violence and sexual abuse.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



There is limited information on rape in Eritrea, but one study reports that young women are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence in the community, including rape, and that rape and attempted rape are commonplace in areas where refugees and returnees reside. Some reports mention a cultural perception of rape that insists on its shameful side, hence the silence of the victim on this crime, especially if she is not married, virginity being considered as a mandatory condition to be able to marry.

Violence against girls in armed conflict

Eritrea also forces thousands of young Eritreans, some of whom are still minors, into the army or other state services for an unlimited period each year. Girls do not escape and are often delivered to sexual slavery.

The conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia has given rise to particular dangers for children, especially girls. Reports indicate that many girls and young women were raped in the last war with Ethiopia (1998-2000).

The NGO CSUCS (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers) reports that in Eritrea, children (during the recent conflict with Ethiopia) were likely to be enlisted in the army. Although the government denies having recruited child soldiers, it admits that children, boys and girls, sometimes find themselves in the army because births are not systematically recorded.

The aim of the National Women's Union is to raise awareness and make the population aware of the importance of the subject of women's rights. It also has a role of defence and control of the correct application of the laws in this matter. An aid office receives and accompanies the victims to justice. The problems faced by women in Eritrea are of four types:

- Rape, which remains a taboo in some areas but is strongly condemned when a complaint is lodged, usually with a minimum of 15 years imprisonment;
- Excision, which was abolished by a law in 2007 and which does not exist anymore (the association makes pedagogy on this subject in all the country);
- Physical and moral violence;
- Forced marriage.

These practices exist and are not denied, but the association says "the facts are far more marginal than what is denounced and relayed in the media abroad."



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

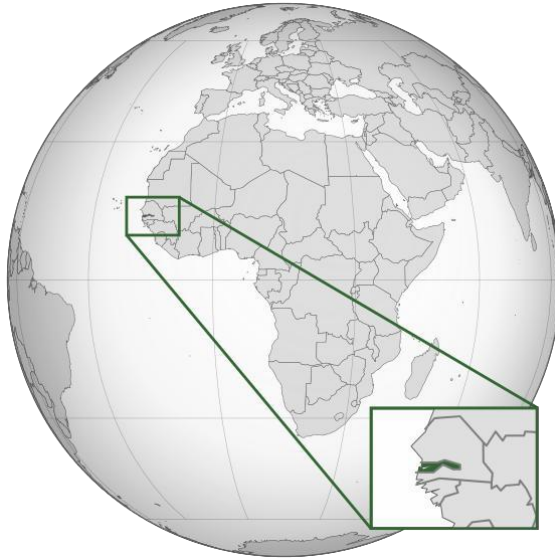


Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



GAMBIA

Produced by ANFE Italia (Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti)



GEOGRAPHY: The Gambia, one of the smallest countries in Africa is situated in the Sahelian zone on the West Coast. Gambia occupies a territorial strip of within Senegal, part of his coasts are washed by the Atlantic Ocean.¹.

CAPITAL: Banjul

POPULATION: 2,051,363 millions²

LANGUAGE: The official language is English. The most common dialects are: Mandinka, Wolof, Fula followed by other indigenous vernaculars.

LITERACY RATE: total population is 55%, male 63.9% and female 47.6%³

BELIEF: The Gambia is a predominantly Islamic country. Muslims constitute more than 90% of the population; Christians of different denominations account for most of the remainder and less than 1% practices indigenous animist religious beliefs.⁴.

ETHNIC GROUPS: Gambia is a multiethnic country and a positive a model of ethnic tolerance and harmony. The largest group is the Mandinka (42%), followed by the Fula

¹ <http://www.accessgambia.com/information/geography-and-nature.html>

² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ga.html>

³ ibidem

⁴ <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/africa/gm-religion.htm>



GAMBIA

(18%), Wolof (16%), Jola (10%), Serers, Serahule, and the Bianunkas. The Krio people are one of the smallest ethnicities, in the country there also exists a small community of other groups such as the Lebanese, Europeans, Mansoanka, Bayot, Bambara, Badibunka, Balanta, Hausa, Mankanya and the Mandjak Christians⁵.

POLITICAL SITUATION: After independence from the United Kingdom arrived in 1965, the Gambia constituted a small Confederation with neighbouring Senegal between 1982 and 1989 but tensions have flared up intermittently until 1994 caused a coup d'état of the Armed Forces which led to the dictatorship of Yahya Jammeh. Jammeh has won the following three elections (2001, 2006 and 2011) but in 2016 after new elections, Adama Barrow defeated the long-standing president, putting an end to his authoritarian leadership⁶.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: The society is still influenced by a hierarchical caste structure even if it does not exist in a rigid form. Mandinka, Wolof and Serer are divided in different social groups, marriages among different groups is restricted or highly problematic⁷, intermarriage between Muslims and Christians is common. Four types of marriages are legally recognised in Gambia: Christian, Muslim, customary and civil marriage.

Handshaking with right-hand is the usual form of greeting, hugging is normal between the same and opposite sexes if people are related or good friend. Kissing on the cheeks is common between women or between a man and a woman in case they are related. There are conservative standards of dress and behaviour in The Gambia, and woman should cover their knees, even more than their breast. The traditional clothes for Gambian women and men tends to be long and free flowing clothes. Women tend to wear clothes down to their feet as well as up to their wrists. This is called a grandmuba, which comes with an under garment called a malan which is a couple of metres of cloth which is wrapped around the waist as an underskirt.⁸ In the urban areas, European style clothing is commonly worn. Although certain dress styles may be unique to one ethnic group, these clothing styles are worn interchangeably by everyone.

In an official situation people are sometimes addressed - Mr., Boss or the surname of the person. Traditionally, a person may be addressed by a junior using the appropriate term of relationship. When a person is old shall be called "father" for male and "mother" for female, followed by the name. A boy or girl can be called "kambaano" and "sunkuto" respectively. Gambians can sometimes address other people with terms as my friend, my brother, or my sister⁹.

⁵ <http://www.accessgambia.com/information/people-tribes.html>

⁶ <https://www.hrw.org/report/2015/09/16/state-fear/arbitrary-arrests-torture-and-killings>;
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13376517>

⁷ [https://www.28toomany.org/static/media/uploads/Country%20Research%20and%20Resources/The%20Gambia/the_gambia_country_profile_v1_\(march_2015\).pdf](https://www.28toomany.org/static/media/uploads/Country%20Research%20and%20Resources/The%20Gambia/the_gambia_country_profile_v1_(march_2015).pdf)

⁸ <http://www.accessgambia.com/information/traditional-greetings.html>

⁹ http://www.gambia.dk/culture_notes.pdf



GAMBIA

GENDER RELATIONS: Gambia ranked 104th out of 144 countries worldwide for gender equality in the 2016 Global Gender Gap Index¹⁰. In order to promote gender equality, a gender-responsive policy development has been undertaken and a new National Gender Policy has been formulated for 2010-2020, but National Women's Policy was challenged by lack of adequate human resources capacity, finance and materials¹¹. The provisions against discrimination do not apply to laws on adoption, marriage, divorce, burial, death, inheritance or other matters of private law and discriminations at different levels persist, especially in regards to economic activities.

Women's empowerment has been challenged by low literacy levels (significantly lower than men's), low participation in decision-making at national and local levels, inadequate knowledge of legal provisions. and gender-based violence¹² The society is guided by the principle of male dominance and women's life is very limited by the observance of customary traditions and Islamic law, more in rural than in urban areas: women tend to have limited access to development resources, modern educational facilities and health care; they marry much earlier in life and do most of the farming work (particularly control garden farm)¹³ but under Shari'a law, which applies to 90% of the population, women do not have property rights and the can't inherit property from their husband, in some case they are not even free to decide the kind of cultivation (for example Planting Tree, because is associated with permanent land rights)¹⁴. Many marriages are not legally registered, so at the time of divorce women do not have property rights and are forced to return to their paternal home.¹⁵

GBV: Women are protected by various legal enactments, including the Constitution; Gambia signed the international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. In 2010 enacted the "Women's Act," a law which **expressly** prohibit violence against women, including all forms of physical, sexual, psychological and economic harm. In order to combat gender-based violence, two pieces of legislation were promulgated in 2013, the Domestic Violence Act and the Sexual Offences Act¹⁶: the first addresses domestic violence and provides protection for the victims, the second one punishes every form of sexual assault, exploitation and harassment. In 2015 passed a Bill

¹⁰ <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=GMB>

¹¹ <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Gambia.html>

¹² [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/GAMBIA%20Gender%20Profil%20final%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/GAMBIA%20Gender%20Profil%20final%20(2).pdf)

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf

¹⁵ [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/GAMBIA%20Gender%20Profil%20final%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Project-and-Operations/GAMBIA%20Gender%20Profil%20final%20(2).pdf)

¹⁶ https://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1226_1500012469_cpin-gambia-fgm-v1-0-december-2016.pdf



GAMBIA

banning FGM/C and criminalizing the practice. fDespite the full range of provisions and assurances¹⁷, critical gaps still exist and there is a very high prevalence of harmful practices. Early marriage is a common reality for many girls under the age of 18, more in rural areas than urban; about 30% of girls marry before age 18¹⁸ and under customary laws girls of 13 years are often married off by their parents, especially in rural areas.¹⁹ Abuse by physical violence is one of the most common forms of violence in The Gambia; 41 % of women age 15-49 have ever experienced sexual violence and higher percentage of women than men (58% versus 33%) agree that wife beating is justified.²⁰ Victims do not report violence (particularly domestic one) due to social stigma and they prefer the family mediation; the health system does not have formal protocols or procedures for caring for survivors of gender-based violence²¹; there is only one governmental shelter which caters to persons in need of safety or women threatened in their homes and police officers are not equipped to respond adequately to victims of GBV, even if in 2013 the Women's Bureau the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have developed a gender training manual, later incorporated into the training modules taught at the Police Academy²². Most women in The Gambia (74.9%) have reported that they had been circumcised and support for FGM is greater among rural women (70%) than urban women (61%)²³; traditionally this practice was actually considered a rite of passage²⁴. Regarding the territorial distribution, the highest concentration of women affected by FGM is located in the eastern Basse region (99%), while the lowest rate is in the coastal region of Banjul, where 56.3% of women have suffered percentage; According to ethnicity, among the Sarahules have the highest rates against the lowest of the Wolof. In most ethnic groups there is above a 50% support rate for continuing the practice, though the number of daughters aged 0-14 reportedly cut is lower than this rate of support.²⁵

¹⁷<http://evawglobaldatabase.unwomen.org//media/files/un%20women/vaw/country%20report/africa/gambia/gambia%20opr%20wg%20report.pdf>

¹⁸: UNICEF global databases 2016, based on DHS, MICS and other nationally representative surveys.

¹⁹ <https://www.wikigender.org/wiki/africa-for-womens-rights-gambia/>

²⁰<http://evawglobaldatabase.unwomen.org//media/files/un%20women/vaw/vaw%20survey/gambia%20vaw%20survey.pdf>

²¹ <http://www.refworld.org/country,COI,,,GMB,,58ec8a373,0.html>

²² <http://www.refworld.org/docid/52de60d04.html>

²³<http://evawglobaldatabase.unwomen.org//media/files/un%20women/vaw/vaw%20survey/gambia%20vaw%20survey.pdf>

²³ https://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1226_1500012469_cpin-gambia-fgm-v1-0-december-2016.pdf

²⁵[https://www.28toomany.org/static/media/uploads/Country%20Research%20and%20Resources/The%20Gambia/the_gambia_country_profile_v1_\(march_2015\).pdf](https://www.28toomany.org/static/media/uploads/Country%20Research%20and%20Resources/The%20Gambia/the_gambia_country_profile_v1_(march_2015).pdf)



GAMBIA



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



INDIA

Produced by the University of Coventry (UK)

FAST FACTS

- India is a country in South Asia. India is ranked second in the world based on population, second only to China.
- **Hindi** is the most spoken language, though there are hundreds of languages in India.
- Most people in India are **Hindu**, making up around three-fourths of the population. There are also large concentrations of **Muslims** in areas throughout the country.
- Almost all **marriages are arranged** by family elders, but non-arranged 'love marriages' are becoming increasingly common in cities.
- Within families, the senior male of the household is the recognised head of the family, and his wife regulates the tasks assigned to female family members.
- It is perceived that the **primary role for women in India is to have and raise children**, and to run the household. Educated women tend to leave employment after marriage, to give priority to their care giving duties at home.
- **Males have a higher status** than females; boys are often pampered while girls are largely left neglected. This reflects in significantly different mortality and morbidity rates between the two genders, occasional female infanticide, and increasingly in the abortion of female foetuses following prenatal gender testing.
- Upper-class women, despite their qualifications, experience **threats to their security** whilst travelling outside their home to college or university. Threats from jilted lovers to men on the streets, display contempt for women stepping out and holding equal positions.
- **Crimes against women remain largely unreported** in India, where gender-based violence is deeply entwined with the social fabric.
- Often, women who speak up against crime are subjected to **social isolation and scorn**. There are numerous instances where the police refused to register a woman's complaint.



INDIA

GEOGRAPHY: India shares borders with six countries. It is bordered to the northwest by Pakistan, to the north by Nepal, China, and Bhutan; and to the east by Myanmar (Burma). Bangladesh to the east is surrounded by India to the North, East, and West. The island country of Sri Lanka is situated some 40 miles (65 km) off the southeast coast of India across the Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar.

The land of India—together with Bangladesh and most of Pakistan—forms a well-defined subcontinent, set off from the rest of Asia by the imposing northern mountain rampart of the Himalayas and by adjoining mountain ranges to the West and East. In area, India ranks as the seventh largest country in the world.

Much of India's territory lies within a large peninsula, surrounded by the Arabian Sea to the West and the Bay of Bengal to the East; Cape Comorin, the southernmost point of the Indian mainland, marks the dividing line between those two bodies of water. India has two union territories composed entirely of islands: Lakshadweep, in the Arabian Sea, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which lie between the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea¹.



©Encyclopaedia Britannica

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/India>



CAPITAL: New Delhi

POPULATION: 1,354,051,854. India ranks number 2 in the list of countries by population²

LANGUAGE: There are many languages spoken in India. Hindi is the most widely spoken language and primary tongue of 41% of the population, Bengali accounts for 8.1%, Telugu 7.2%, Marathi 7%, Tamil 5.9%, Urdu 5%, Gujarati 4.5%, Kannada 3.7%, Malayalam 3.2%, Oriya 3.2%, Punjabi 2.8%, Assamese 1.3%, Maithili 1.2%, and other 5.9%. English is a subsidiary official language but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication³.

LITERACY RATE: 69.3%⁴

ETHNIC GROUPS: India has 3 major ethnic groups⁵:

Indo-Aryan makes up most of India's population (72%) and is mostly located in north and central India. This group is the most diverse, consisting of Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmiri, Konkani, Marathi, and Punjabi.

Dravidian accounts for 25% of the population in India. Almost all Dravidians of India live in the south of the country. The five major ethnic groups of the Dravidian people in India are Kannadiga, Malayali, Tulu, Tamil, and Telugu.

Mongoloid and other minority groups including the Brachycephalic people and the Austrics people make up the remaining 3% of the population in India.

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/india-population/> (as of 9th January 2018)

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>

⁴ <https://en.unesco.org/countries/india?language=en> (Official statistic from 2011)

⁵ <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/biggest-ethnic-groups-in-india.html>



INDIA

BELIEF: India has many diverse religious groups. Most people in India follow **Hinduism** (79.8%⁶), a collection of doctrines, sects, and ways of life. Other religions include **Muslim** (14.2%), **Christianity** (2.3%), **Sikh** (1.7%), and other unspecified (2%). Muslims are still the single largest minority faith, with large concentrations in many areas of the country including Jammu and Kashmir, Western Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Kerala. India's Muslim population is greater than that found in any country of the Middle East and is only exceeded by that of Indonesia and, slightly, by that of Pakistan and Bangladesh⁷.

POLITICAL SITUATION:

Due to the lack of homogeneity in the Indian population, social divisions exist based on religion, language, caste and race. This division has led to the rise of political parties with agendas catering to one or a mix of these groups; it has been estimated that over 200 parties have been formed since its independence in 1947⁸.

Political rallies and demonstrations occur often throughout the country and can turn violent, particularly around election time. Terror attacks are often carried out by both insurgent groups and terrorists. Recent media reports have suggested that Daesh (more commonly known as ISIS) has an interest in attacking targets in India, such as religious sites, Indian government interests and popular tourist destinations⁹.

India has had one female prime minister: Indira Gandhi. She is the longest serving Indian prime minister after her father, Jawahariah Nehru. She initially served for 11 years during 1966-1977, and then between 1980-1984 when she was assassinated. During her reign, she made the decision to support the independence movement in Pakistan, resulting in India's victory and liberating East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/in.html>

⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/place/India>

⁸ Prakash Chander, Prem Arora. "Nature of Party System in India". *Comparative Politics & International Relations*. Cosmos Book hives. pp. 129–134. ISBN 817729035-5

⁹ Gov.uk/foreugn-travel-advice/india/terrorism



INDIA

India's twelfth president was Pratibha Patil, who had achieved a Master's degree in Political science and Economics, and a Bachelor's degree in Law. She was first elected to the Maharashtra Legislative assembly at the age of 27 and became president at the age of 73¹⁰.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: India is a large and diverse multi-lingual nation, whose tempo of life changes from region to region and from community to community. Throughout India, custom and religious rituals are still widely observed and practiced. Among Hindus, religious and social custom follow the *samskara*, a series of personal sacraments and rites conducted at various stages throughout life. Observant members of other confessional communities follow their own rites and rituals. In all groups, caste¹¹ protocols remain a central role in enforcing norms and values, despite decades of state legislation to remove caste bias¹².

Virtually all regions of India have their distinctive places of pilgrimage, local saints and folk heroes, religious festivals, and associated fairs. There are also innumerable festivals associated with individual villages or temples or with specific castes and cults. The most popular of the religious festivals celebrated over the greater part of India are Vasantpanchami (generally in February, with the exact date being determined by the Hindu lunar calendar), in honour of Sarasvati, the goddess of learning; Holi (February–March), a time when traditional hierarchical relationships are forgotten and celebrants throw coloured water and powder at one another; Dussehra (September–October), when the story of the *Ramayana* is re-enacted; and Diwali (Diwali; October–November), a time for lighting lamps and exchanging gifts. The major secular holidays are Independence Day (August 15) and Republic Day (January 26)¹³.

Clothing for most Indians is quite simple and typically untailed. Men (especially in rural areas) frequently wear little more than a broadcloth dhoti, worn as a loose skirt-like loincloth, or, in parts of the south and east, the tighter wraparound *lungi*. In both cases the body remains bare above the waist, except in cooler weather, when a shawl also may be

¹⁰ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/indias-first-woman-president-elected/>

¹¹ Definition: each of the hereditary classes of Hindu society, distinguished by relative degrees of ritual purity or pollution and of social status.

¹² <https://www.britannica.com/place/India/Railways-and-roads#toc46442>

¹³ <https://www.britannica.com/place/India/Daily-life-and-social-customs>



INDIA

worn, or in hot weather, when the head may be protected by a turban. The more-affluent and higher-caste men are likely to wear a tailored shirt, increasingly of Western style. Muslims, Sikhs, and urban dwellers generally are more inclined to wear tailored clothing, including various types of trousers, jackets, and vests. Although throughout most of India women wear saris and short blouses, the way in which a sari is wrapped varies greatly from one region to another. In Punjab, as well as among older female students and many city dwellers, the characteristic dress is the *shalwar-kamiz*, a combination of pyjama-like trousers and a long-tailed shirt (saris being reserved for special occasions). Billowing ankle-length skirts and blouses are the typical female dress of Rajasthan and parts of Gujarat. Most rural Indians, especially females, do not wear shoes and, when footwear is necessary, prefer sandals¹⁴.

Family is the most important social unit. Oftentimes, two or more married couples (usually of more than one generation), share finances and a common kitchen. Marriage is almost universal, the divorce rate is low, and nearly every marriage produces children. Most marriages are arranged by family elders depending on caste, degree of consanguinity¹⁵, economic status, education (if any), and astrology. However, non-arranged “love marriages” are becoming increasingly common in cities.

It is clear within families that there is an order of social precedence, based on gender and age, and for a woman, the number of her male children. The senior male of the household is typically seen as the head of the family; his wife controls the tasks given to the rest of the female family members. Males hold a higher status than females. Boys are often pampered whereas girls are relatively neglected. This is reflected in significantly different rates of mortality and morbidity between the sexes, allegedly (though reliable statistics are lacking) in occasional female infanticide, and increasingly in the abortion of female fetuses following prenatal gender testing. This pattern of preference is largely connected to the institution of dowry¹⁶. Traditionally, women were expected to treat their husbands as

¹⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/place/India/Clothing>

¹⁵ Consanguinity (“blood relation”) is the property of being from the same kinship as another person. In that aspect, consanguinity is the quality of being descended from the same ancestor as another person.

¹⁶ an amount of property or money brought by a bride to her husband on their marriage



INDIA

if they were gods, and obedience of wives to husbands has remained a strong social norm. This expectation of devotion may follow a husband to the grave; within some caste groups, widows are not allowed to remarry even if they are bereaved at a young age¹⁷.

GENDER RELATIONS: As outlined, it is tradition in India to follow a patriarchal hierarchy. Due to the amount of care giving duties within a household, women have less time for other activities such as paid work and education. In a sample of 62 countries, it was noted that on average, men in India spend 4.5 hours a day on their social life, whereas the women only spend 3.9. As such, it is difficult for women to pursue and develop income-generating skills and active careers. Additionally, women are often subjected to the family ideals to cater to their husband and the household, rather than seeking a job. Interestingly, educated married women in urban areas concede to the pressures of their in-laws and drop out of the labour force after marriage to give priority to their care giving duties at home. There are also instances of women willingly leaving their jobs as they are conditioned to believe that housekeeping and child bearing are their primary duties and roles¹⁸.

Given that society is hostile to women who break the mould, conforming becomes the easier and thus the more frequently opted choice. It's often vital for those who want to maintain a relationship with their own parents and family. Work culture in India also adopts the same attitude and would rather fire young mothers or women with conservative social norms than invest in arrangements such as:

- Assisting them with more flexible work hours
- Allowances for travelling or facilities for pick up and drop off
- Building crèches or day care facilities for their employees' children

Life for the upper-class, educated woman is different but no better. Despite their qualifications, what acts against them is a threat to their security while working outside their homes, travelling to universities and colleges. From jilted lovers seeking to teach their beloved a lesson for rejecting them through extreme means like acid attacks and rape, to men on the streets treating women with contempt through harassment and molestation for

¹⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/place/India/Clothing>

¹⁸ <https://www.poverties.org/blog/status-of-women-in-india>



INDIA

stepping out and holding equal positions – the story follows a similar narrative throughout the country.

GBV: Between 2005 and 2014, 2.24 million crimes were reported against women in India. That is 26 crimes reported every hour. In 2015, sexual harassment incidents involving assault, stalking or use of criminal force rose by 2.5%. Kidnapping and abduction of women also increased to 59,277 cases in 2015. Moreover, two years after the brutal gang rape of Jyoti Singh¹⁹, when the assault on the 23-year-old physiotherapy student in New Delhi that led to her death sparked mass protests across the country, crimes against women in India rose by 9%, to 337,992 cases.

Crimes against women remain largely unreported in India, where gender-based violence is deeply entwined with the social fabric. Often, women who speak up against crime are subjected to social isolation and scorn and there are numerous instances where the police refuse to register a woman's complaint²⁰.

In 2013, the ICRW in partnership with UNFPA conducted a study on how masculinity acts as a determinant of son preferences and intimate partner violence. Consisting of a small of 9205 males and 3158 females from across the 7 states in India, it was reported that 27% women report had experienced intimate partner violence within the previous year. The prevalence of any form of intimate partner violence in the last year reported by men is approximately 34% and highest in Uttar Pradesh at 49% followed by Odisha at 46%. In terms of women's reporting in this study, the aggregate prevalence is 31% and highest for Odisha at 59%. In three states, Punjab and Haryana, Odisha and Rajasthan, women report higher perpetration of any form of violence compared to men. However, in terms of specific forms of violence men tend to report higher forms of sexual violence than women except in Odisha and Rajasthan. Men felt intense demands to uphold gender norms (e.g. appear

¹⁹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/india/11443462/Delhi-bus-rapist-blames-his-victim-in-prison-interview.html>

²⁰ https://www.faiobserver.com/region/central_south_asia/india-gender-inequality-violence-south-asia-culture-news-64321/



INDIA

strong, maintain control). Their aggressive behaviours may be reactions to the stress men experience in trying to abide by gender role expectations²¹.



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Facts about

IRAN



Rohr, Anja (JVA Zweibruecken)
Ministerium der Justiz und für
Verbraucherschutz



Basic Data about Iran

Area: 1 628 750 sq km

Population: 80 043 000

Life expectancy: females: 68, 6 years; 71,6 years

Ethnic groups: Persians 61%, Azerbaijanis 16%, Kurds 10%, Lurs 6%,
Turkmens 2%, Arabs 2%, Baloch 2%

Religion: 98% Islam, 89% Shiites, 9% Sunni Islam, Christian & Jewry

Unemployment: 10, 6% (2014)

Capital city: Tehran: 8 432 000

Major cities: Mashhad, Isfahan

Literacy: 86, 8%; female: 82, 5%; male: 91, 2%

Language: Persian

Government/ President: Islamic Republic/ Hassan Rohani



Flag of Iran *C. K. Raju*

The flag of Iran is composed of three horizontal stripes of green, white, and red color. Traditionally, the green stands for Islam, white stripe, which is slightly wider, represents hope and peace, and the red stripe should provide courage in battles. These colors were adopted in 1907 already, but the central motive of the flag was until 1979, when Iran became the Islamic Republic, a lion with sword looking at the rising sun. Later, the lion was replaced by a red tulip motive, which is composed of five parts, each of which represents one pillar of Islam. The boundary between the green and white stripe and the red and white stripe is made of eleven inscriptions "God is great" in kufic script.

Green: stands for vitality, growth and prosperity. Green color represents Islam as it is believed to be a favorite color of Prophet Muhammad.

White: represents honesty, purity and peace

Red: symbolizes valour, sacrifice and bloodshed by the martyrs for the Iran's freedom

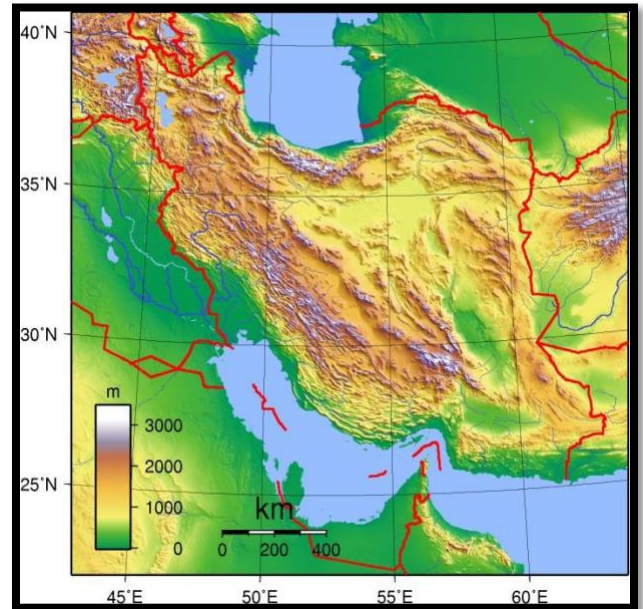


Geography *Justin Dodge*

Iran sits in the Middle East, stretching from Iraq and Turkey in the west to Afghanistan and Pakistan in the east; it is one of the largest countries in the Middle East by both size and population. Being such a large country, Iran has numerous land borders, including: Iraq to the west, Pakistan and Afghanistan to the east, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Armenia to the north, and Turkey to the northwest. The country also borders the Caspian Sea to its north and the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman to its south.

Iran is a very geographically diverse country.

The central part of the country is a high dry plateau, while it is surrounded by mountains, which roughly make up the country's borders. These mountain ranges include the Elbrus Range in the northwest, the Khorasan Range in the east and the Baluchistan Range in the southeast among others. Although dry, the country is fairly livable due to the higher elevations and hence lower temperatures.

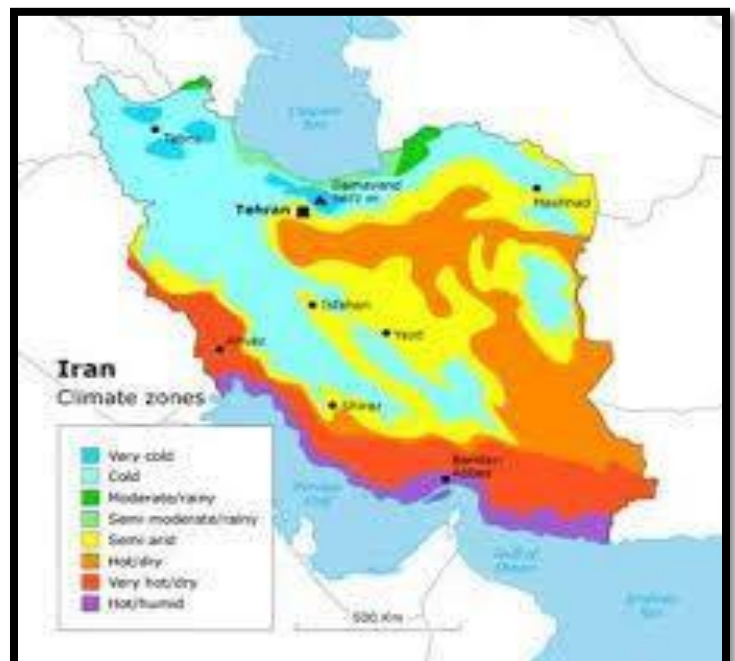


Climate *Justin Dodge*

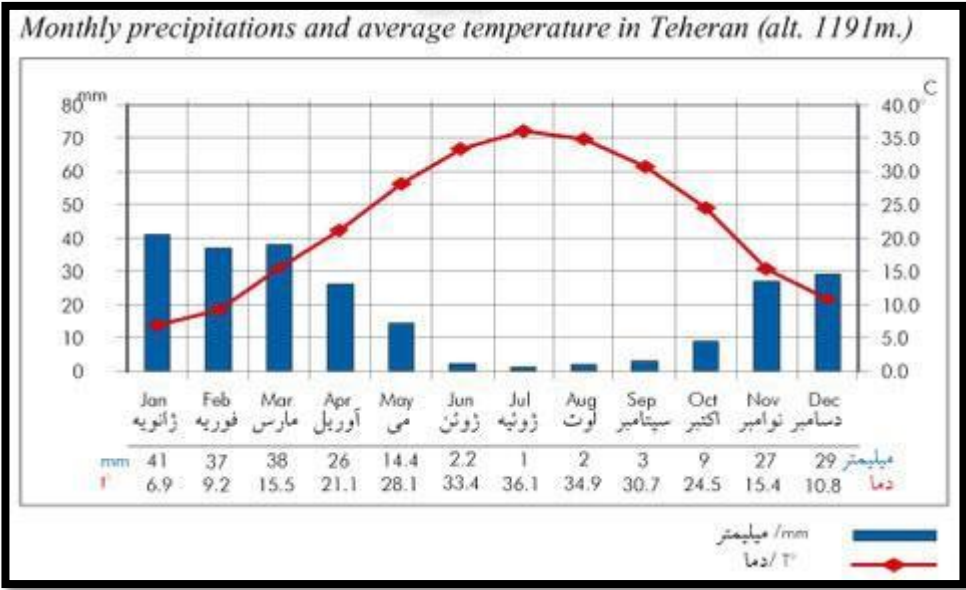
Iran has a significant number of mountains through their country, but the land also dips to lower elevations making the weather dependent on a number of things, most noticeably elevation and season.

During winters (about November to March) the northwest mountains get very cold and can receive a significant amount of snow at elevation. This region can remain below freezing for much of December and January. The rest of the country is warmer and rarely dips to below freezing as this time of year is the rainy season, but again few places get much rain as most of it is concentrated in the northern mountains and along the Caspian Sea. Average temperatures in Tehran are about 45° F (7° C) during the winter.

During summers (about June to August) temperatures peak in the southern part of Iran with average highs of about 100° F (38° C), although the rest of the country is cooler and Tehran averages about 80° F (27° C) during these months. In some areas the

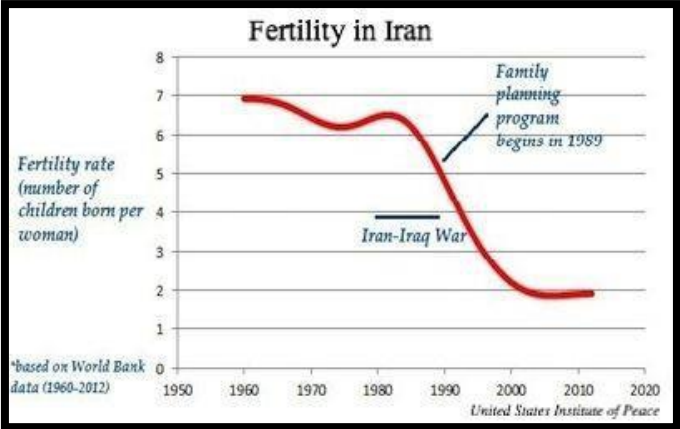


summers can also bring humidity, although most of the country is fairly dry during this season.



Population *World Population Review*

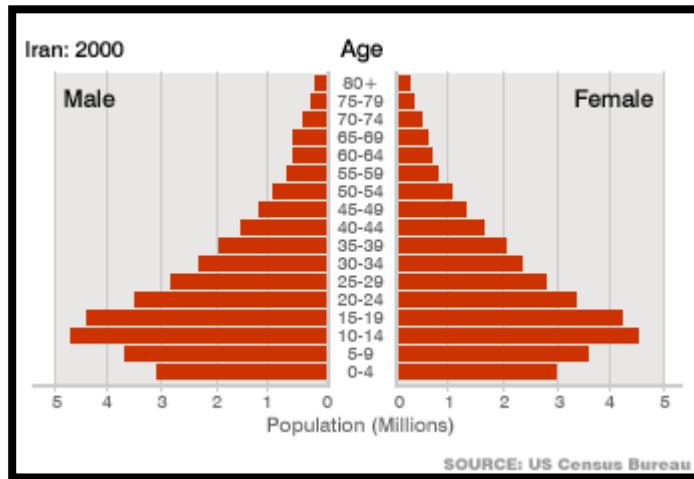
During 2017 Iran population is projected to increased by 1,020,774 people and reach 81,650,656 in the beginning of 2018. The natural increase is expected to be positive, as the number of births will exceed the number of deaths by 1,083,666. If external migration will remain on the previous year level, the population will be declined by 62,891 due to the migration reasons. It means that the number of people who leave Iran to settle permanently in another country (emigrants) will prevail over the number of people who move into the country (to which they are not native) in order to settle there as permanent residents (immigrants). The population of Iran will be increased by 2,797 persons daily in 2017.



Life expectancy

Life expectancy at birth is one of the most important demographic indicator. It shows the number of years a newborn infant would live assuming that birth and death rates will remain at the same level during the whole lifetime. Total life expectancy (both sexes) at birth for Iran is 70.1 years.

Male life expectancy at birth is 68.6 years.
 Female life expectancy at birth is 71.6 years.

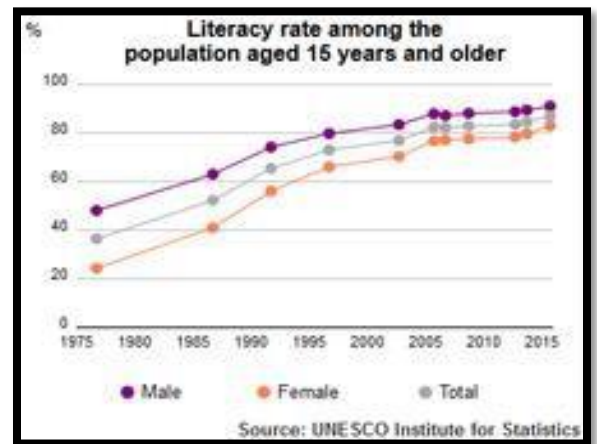


Literacy of population

According to our estimates 53,215,088 persons or 86.9% of adult population (aged 15 years and above) in Iran are able to read and write. Accordingly about 8,019,277 adults are illiterate.

Literacy rate for adult male population is 91.19% (28,251,045 persons). 2,729,375 are illiterate.
 Literacy rate for adult female population is 82.52% (24,964,043 persons). 5,289,902 are illiterate.

Youth literacy rates are 98.53% and 98.17% for males and females accordingly. The overall youth literacy rate is 98.36%. Youth literacy rate definition covers the population between the ages of 15 to 24 years.



Languages *Justin Dodge*

Persian more commonly referred to as Farsi, is the only official language in Iran as it is spoken natively by most ethnic Persians, which is a bit over half the people. Farsi is a fairly unique language as it is in the Iranian language family, primarily consists of languages spoken in small numbers. Tajik and Dari are arguably the same language, but if not are mutually intelligible and Persian's closest relative. Persian is written in the Arabic script. Azerbaijani and other Turkic languages are also commonly spoken among minority groups in Iran. Azerbaijani is one of the most widely spoken languages in the country next to Persian, but there are also significant numbers of



native Kurdish, Balochi, and Arabic speakers. English is a widely taught second language in Iran and many people, especially young people, speak at least a minimal amount of English.

Culture of Iran *Justin Dodge*

Iran is a changing country and the way of life in the country today is quickly transforming. The government has strict laws in place that dictate how people dress, act, and behave, but how long these laws will remain is in question. Many young people abide by these rules, but privately speak out about many aspects of the culture, religion, and lifestyle demanded by the government.



Today the greatest differences in the way of life in Iran come with the generational gaps. Many older people tend to be fairly conservative as life is focused on the home and family. Going out with friends is uncommon and religion is the center of the world for many of these people. On the other hand much of the younger generation enjoys going out with friends and have a much more active social life.

No matter the differences, life in Iran is centered on religion. The weekend is Thursday afternoon and Friday, which aligns with Islam's holy day on Fridays. The five daily prayers also tend to dictate the daily routine for nearly everyone. Even the people that aren't overly religious must at least nominally observe these prayers when in the workplace to avoid ostracism. The workplace does generally have a somewhat regular routine though as most Iranians generally begin work at the same time each morning, usually between 7:30 and 9:00 am. However, the seasons, heat, and day of the week can mean some people work until about noon while others take a long lunch then work until 6:00 pm.

After work most Iranians go home for dinner with their family, but many of the farmers, who make up about a quarter of the working population, tends to set their schedule based on the sun, weather, and seasons.

Iran is a very well educated country, particularly in the larger cities, and there is a thriving student life in many large cities. While there are restrictions on drinking alcohol and dating (as well as touching anyone of the opposite sex), socialization is common amongst friends and there is an active night scene filled with students and young people talking over coffee, perhaps a glimpse of the future.

Identity

Identity in Iran is somewhat in flux at the moment and has been over the past couple centuries. Throughout history Iran (and formerly Persia) has been a very diverse country so there was a clear distinction between a national identity and an ethnic one. This political identity included all people no matter their ethnicity, language, or culture; however the new government is slowly changing this definition as being a Muslim is now seemingly a

necessity to being a citizen of Iran and as a religious state, to be "Iranian" now means being both a citizen of Iran as well as a Muslim.

Behavior *Justin Dodge*

Due to the Islamic laws in Iran, there are a huge number of behavior restriction and laws. Most of these are common sense, such as stealing is wrong, but stealing comes with a penalty of having your hand cut off in Iran, so be very careful regarding your actions and when in doubt ask.

Adult women are best off traveling to Iran with their husband, father, or brother. Single women travelers are looked at oddly and traveling with a man who is not related or married to you is widely considered inappropriate. It is also improper for a man

to touch a woman, even holding your spouse's hand or offering to shake the hand of a person who is of the opposite sex can be considered inappropriate to a conservative Muslim. While almost no one will take offense at hand holding, you are best to avoid this behavior in public and don't offer your hand to a local woman unless she does so first.

Islamic law also has a number of dietary restrictions, but these are difficult to break. Islam forbids pork products and alcohol; however there is little worry about adhering to these rules since neither is available anywhere in Iran. You should be aware that attempting to take either into the country is strictly forbidden so don't try to smuggle any pork or alcohol into the country as punishments can be severe.



Dress

Unlike many Middle Eastern countries, the dress in Iran for women is often times bright and colorful, which makes it impossible to miss a Persian in the region. The women dress in a more traditional style, while the men tend to prefer western-styled clothing, which is often times in browns and earth-toned colors, making their dress quite a contradiction to that of the women.

Today the dress is varied significantly as women tend to wear brightly colored loose-fitting clothing, but many of the more conservative Muslims prefer to wear a black dishdasha or abaya. This loose-fitting clothing reveals nothing and many women who do wear this tend to also wear a hijab over their heads and often times will also cover their faces. In fact, women must cover their hair by law in Iran, although many young people reject this notion (although not publicly). Even for the



women in more colorful dress, it is loose-fitting and conservative as all skin is covered to the hands and feet. Men in Iran have significantly shifted to conservative western-styled clothing, but this is not consistent across the country. Many men continue to wear more traditional clothing items, including the dishdasha.

As a visitor to Iran you are likely on a tour, so check with your tour company for the most recent recommendations on travel to the country. However, some things that haven't changed in some time is the conservative nature of dress in the country. Always cover your arms and legs in Iran and women must always cover their hair by law. Also avoid anything that may indicate where you are from or that may encourage social unrest. Although wearing a shirt with a flag of a foreign country or a foreign country's soccer jersey (football kit) may seem innocent in Iran it can be interpreted very differently and may send you to prison or get you deported.

Gender roles *Marjane Satrapi*

Before the Iranian Revolution, the role of men and women contrasted significantly. While men were provided with advantageous opportunities and rights, women had limited rights associated with divorce, custody, and inheritance and they were challenged with extremely restricted living standards. Women in Iran had disadvantages in all aspects of Iranian society particularly in court, for employment, and educational opportunities. Due to an unbalanced distribution of rights among men and women before the revolution, a woman's testimony in court is worth just half as much as a man's. Also, public segregation of the sexes led to the use of the chador or veil which women were forced to wear when in public or when presented to a male not related to them in their house. Since women could not perform much action without their husband or male relative's permission, women had difficulty in getting high standard jobs or any job at all. Thus, the traditional view of women before the revolution was just an ideal view. In reality, women were kept inside the home, performing domestic tasks associated with managing a household and taking care of children. Unlike the low standard jobs available to women, men worked in the public domain in the fields, factories, markets, and offices. The strength of these traditional stances was reflected in the public education system. Despite the overall increase in literacy for women, formal education was still limited. This was because there were separate schools for boys and girls from the elementary through the secondary levels and if there were educational gains, they were mainly at the elementary level. Conclusively, the education system did little to change sex roles or women's perceptions of themselves as nurturing mothers and providers. After the Iranian Revolution, which took place from 1978 to 1979, the revolution left a substantial impact on the role of women. Women, primarily from the traditional background, participated greatly in demonstrations leading up to the revolution. Hence, when the revolution came to an end, the role of women drastically changed aspects of daily life especially in the social factors.

University enrollment and the number of women in the civil service and higher education have risen. Also, several women have been elected to the Iranian parliament. For example, once Iranian women quickly discovered the gap between reality and expectations, they were able to earn numerous skilled and academic positions; nearly 1,000 women were involved in executive positions. As the role of women advanced due to the rise of more than 80% of women accepted into universities and higher education institutions, the percentage amongst men fell during the same period by more than 38%. Finally, in current Iranian society, the

Iranian Constitution states that “Every individual has the right to select the work they wish to engage in, providing that this does not contravene the provisions of Islam, the public interest or the rights of others (Article 28)”. Thus, the Iranian Revolution allowed the majority of women in Iran to become more successful than men in the media field because of the special characteristics of their gender such as emotional and artistic traits. Yet because of the laws based on gender discrimination, not all women were able to escape being treated as second-class citizens.

Food *Justin Dodge*

The land that Iran today occupies is quite fertile and a large number of fruits and vegetables are readily available to the people today and in the past. In addition to these foods, animals were also present so the historic diet of the Persians was substantially varied.

Among the many fruits and vegetables grown in Iran are dates, onions, garlic, pomegranate, figs, eggplant, spinach, beans, and more. There are also numerous grains like wheat and rice and animals including sheep, chicken, and sea life in both the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. Among others, sturgeon and caviar are present in the Caspian, while the Persian Gulf is home to grouper, mackerel, nagroor, shrimp, crab, and lobster and more.

Culinary Influences

There were few true culinary influences in Iran for much of the region's history as the numbers of foods and animals present were incredibly large. Additionally, most of the region's historic diet and local foods still form the base of the local diet and over time the greatest changes have been in the

introduction of new spices, vegetables, and in some cases the introduction of entirely new dishes. Through early history the greatest influences came with traders who brought new spices and foods. These foods came from all directions, but primarily from India, the Mediterranean, and to a lesser degree China. These traders arrived to both modern day Iran as well as to the region just north of there, along the historic Silk Road. The Silk Road had power centers in the cities of Bukhara and Samarkand (both in modern day Uzbekistan), but these cities were ruled by the Tajiks (who are ethnic Persians) at the time. The influence from this trade changed the cuisine of Iran, but not in the way many would expect. The base diet remained quite firm as few major or noticeable alterations were made to the diet; in fact the Persian base of bread, meat, and rice didn't change at all. However the addition of new spices forever altered the Persian diet in a very subtle way. The traders on the Silk Road and in modern day Iran left behind spices and foods that were mixed and integrated into the local cuisine giving it a unique flavor that survives to this day.

Although India and Iran share a number of spices, the people to the west had greater success in introducing whole dishes to Persian cuisine. For example, the Greeks and Turks brought



yogurt, stuffed grape leaves (dolma), kebabs, and coffee while the Arabs brought a greater prevalence of figs and dates, around which new dishes were centered. Today the greatest outside influences that can be tasted are the spices from India and some dishes from Turkey. In the past century the foods have changed slightly in Iran as politics has dictated what can and cannot be imported. In 1979 some foods from Europe and North America were imported in smaller numbers, but today there are no true embargoes on Iran and western-influenced foods are making a return. American fast food is growing in popularity as are American dishes like pizza, hamburgers, and fried chicken. Chinese and other Far Eastern foods as well as some European ethnic foods, like Italian are also growing in popularity. The one constant in all of these influences though is that they aren't really altering local foods, but are only adding new dishes as the traditional foods remain fairly unchanged.

Staple Foods

Bread: bread is fairly common, but it is a flat bread called nan

Rice: numerous styles exist, including basmati rice; often the rice are flavored with a spice like saffron and are served with most meals

Regional Variations, Specialties, & Unique Dishes

Dolma: fruits, meats, and/or vegetables with rice stuffed in grape leaves, but sometimes also served in peppers or tomatoes

Kebab: roasted lamb or chicken served with rice and vegetables in pita bread

Kofta: meatballs using Indian and Persian spices often served with rice and grilled vegetables

Rice Tah-chin: saffron rice topped with chicken

Dining Etiquette

When eating in the Muslim country of Iran there are a few etiquette rules you must know and follow (although some, like not eating pork or drinking alcohol won't be an issue as they are not available in Iran). If you get invited to dine with the local people in Iran the first thing you must know is to dress conservatively. As Muslims, it is considered rude and offensive to show too much skin; this includes any part of the legs and the arms from the elbows, or better yet the wrists, up. For women, their hair should also be covered, which brings us to rule number two.

Often times men dine only with men and women only with women so don't bring a guest of the opposite sex to any meal unless you are specifically invited to do so. In many restaurants there is a "Men Only" section and a "Family Section," in which women and men can dine together (there is no "Women's Only" section). In the

home many people disregard this rule and will allow people of the opposite sex to dine together with little issue; just follow your host's lead.

If you dress appropriately and bring, or don't bring, the right guests you've already cleared two of the largest obstacles. Try to arrive on time for a meal and if eating in a local's home remove your shoes at the door if others have done so. Greet the elders first, but be sure to greet every person individually and shake their hands (although some conservative Muslims



don't believe men and women should touch so wait for locals to extend their hand first if they are of the opposite sex). Let your host seat you and when sitting be sure to keep your feet flat on the floor or pointed behind you as pointing the soles of your feet at another can be offensive.

Once the food is served follow your host's lead he or she may invite everyone to begin eating at the same time or may request that either you or the elders be served first. Try a bit of everything offered as turning down food is rude.

Eat as the locals eat; in most settings this means eating in the continental style (knife in the right hand, fork in the left), although sometimes a knife is not present, in which case most locals will hold the spoon in their right hand and eat primarily from the spoon. No matter which utensil you hold in which hand, be sure to only bring food to your mouth with the utensil in your right hand. On some occasions and with some foods you may eat with your hand, but only touch your food with your right hand. Be sure to only take a small amount of food at first if served family style as you



will certainly be offered a second and third helping. Turn down the first offer of a second helping, but on their insistence accept the offer. As you finish your food, leave a bit on your plate to show there was more than enough and place your fork and knife together in the 5:00 position.

If dining in a nice restaurant make sure to check the bill for a service charge. Most restaurants catered to tourists include a service charge that will replace the tip, but if no service charge is included and you're in a restaurant catered to tourists, leave a tip of about 10%. In other restaurants no tip is expected.

Celebrations & Events

The Persians love their food and after you taste it you most likely will as well. For nearly every festival or event in Iran, it is accompanied by a celebration of food; this includes birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, guests, and anything else one can think of. At any of these festivals you will be sure to have plenty of food offered and most meals finish with dessert as well.

The Iranian New Year takes place during the Spring Equinox and during this time foods are plentiful. Although there are no particular dishes that are universal served on this occasion, the event is sure to guarantee plenty of traditional Persian foods, including meats, rice, and desserts.

There are two major Muslim holidays in Iran associated with food, including Eid al Fitr, an event that takes place after Ramadan, a religious holiday that requires fasting for 30 days. To celebrate the end of this fast, Eid al Fitr offers numerous foods, which differ from family to family and region to region, but generally consist of various meats as a base with multiple grains and vegetables.

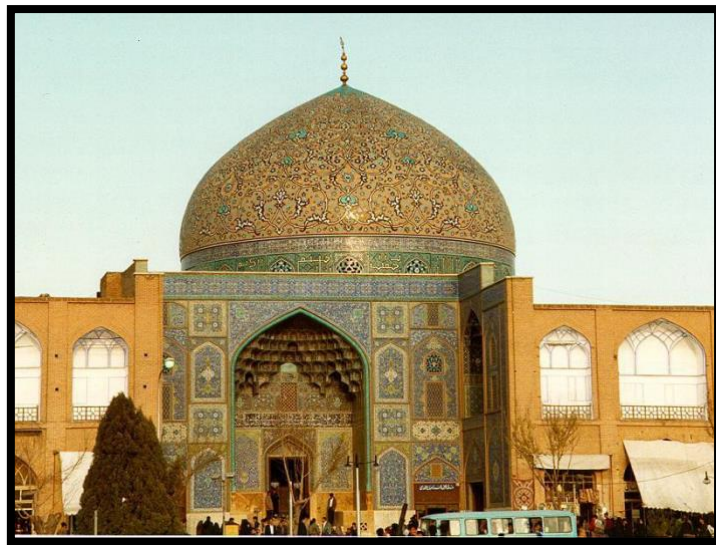
The second major religious celebration associated with food is Eid al Adha, an event only celebrated after a pilgrim returns from haj, the mandatory journey for every able Muslim to go to Mecca. Again, this festival contains a large number of rice and meat dishes, including many of those served during Eid al Fitr.

Drinks

For some people Iran may seem isolated, but in reality the country is very in touch with the rest of the world and the availability of international drinks is easily accessible. In Iran you can find coffee, tea, milk, juices, and soft drinks, including many well-known international brands. Tea is one of the more popular drinks and if you want something more unique and local, Iran has options: doogh is a yogurt-based drink with mint and various flavors of sherbets are also common.

As a primarily Muslim country, Iran has no alcohol available and it should not be consumed or transported to the country. Drinking alcohol comes with a punishment of whipping.

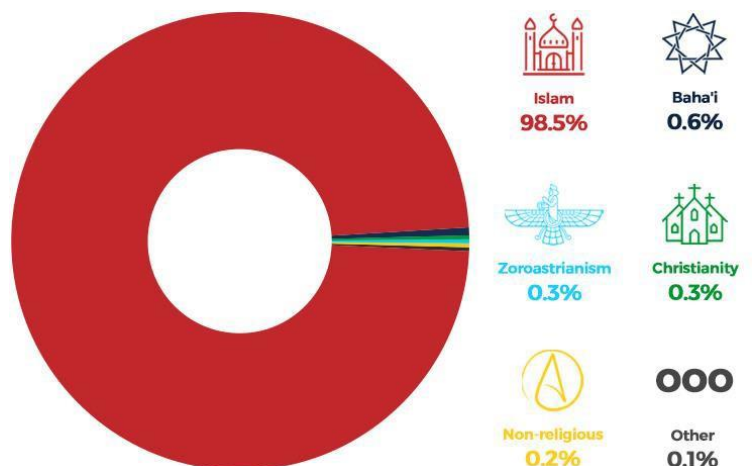
The tap water is generally not safe to drink in Iran, but in most large cities it is considered safe to drink. The most cautious course of action is to entirely avoid the tap water and items that could be made from or with the water, such as ice, fruits, and salads. If you do decide to drink the local tap water, first check with your local hotel or guesthouse to learn the cleanliness of the water in that area. If the water is safe, remember that many people may have trouble adjusting to the local tap water as it will most certainly be different from what your system is used to if you are not from the region.



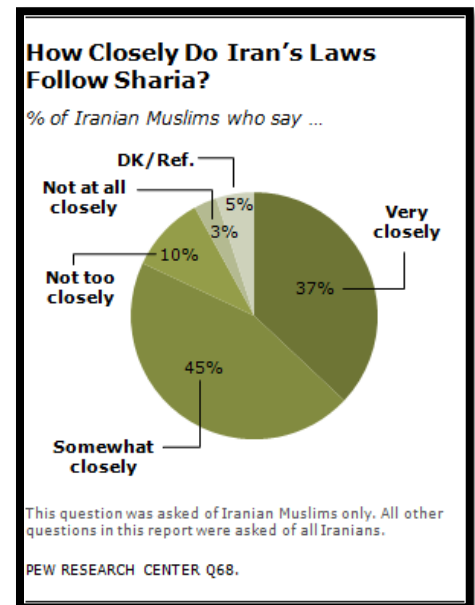
Religion *Justin Dodge*

Muslim is the official religion of Iran and nearly 90% of the people are Shia Muslim. Another 9% of the people are Sunnis. The final percent or two consists of various groups, including Christians, Zoroastrians, and Baha'is.

Islam (the name of the religion, whose followers are called Muslims) is a monotheistic religion, whose holy book is called the Qur'an. The Qur'an is believed to be the word of God spoken through the prophet Muhammad from 609-632 CE (Common Era is preferred over AD (Anno Domini or "year of the Lord") since the Islamic world doesn't believe



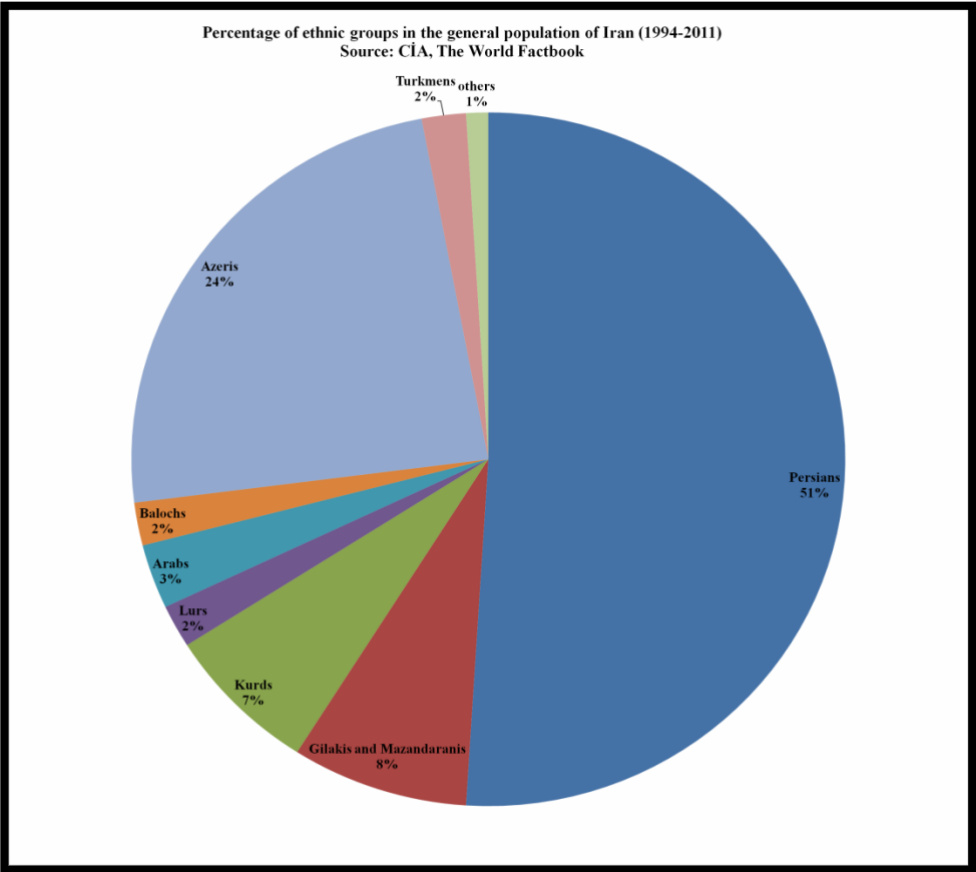
Jesus was the messiah). Islam believes Muhammad was the last prophet sent to earth by God, the last in a long line of prophets, which includes Moses, Abraham, and Jesus among others. Muslims follow five pillars of their faith: testimony, prayer, alms-giving, fasting, and pilgrimage. These pillars, and other tenants of their faith, can give great structure to their lives as some foods, like pork, are forbidden and every Muslim is expected to pray five times a day. However, the level of participation in each of these pillars and to what degree Islam influences an individual's life varies from person to person and community to community. Iran is conservative in how they practice Islam as their laws and government are based on Islamic laws, not laws created by man, known as "sharia law").



Ethnicity *Justin Dodge*

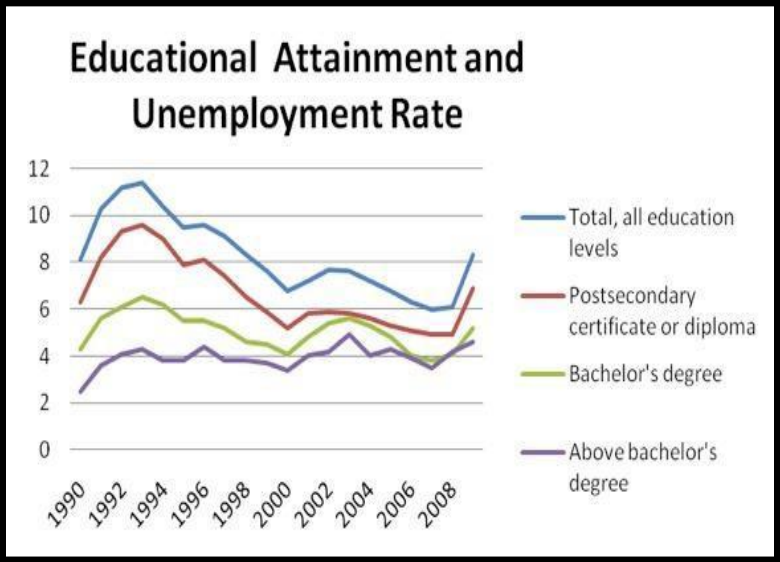
Most of the people in Iran are ethnic Persians, which is a distinct ethnic group only distantly related to the Arabs and other people of the Middle East today. Outside minor Persian groups, the closest relatives to the Persians are the Turkic people of Central Asia and Azerbaijan. Beyond the majority, there are also large numbers of Azerbaijanis, which is a Turkic group, and the Kurds, who are most closely related to the Persians, but are truly a combination of ethnicities. There are dozens of other minorities in the country, none of whom make up a substantial percentage of the population.





Economy 11

Iran is the second largest economy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region after Saudi Arabia, with an estimated Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2016 of US\$412.2 billion. It also has the second largest population of the region after Egypt, with an estimated 78.8 million people in 2015. Iran’s economy is characterized by the hydrocarbon sector, agriculture and services sectors, and a noticeable state presence in manufacturing and financial services. Iran ranks second in the world in natural gas reserves and fourth in proven crude oil reserves. Economic activity and government revenues still depend to a large extent on oil revenues and therefore remain volatile.



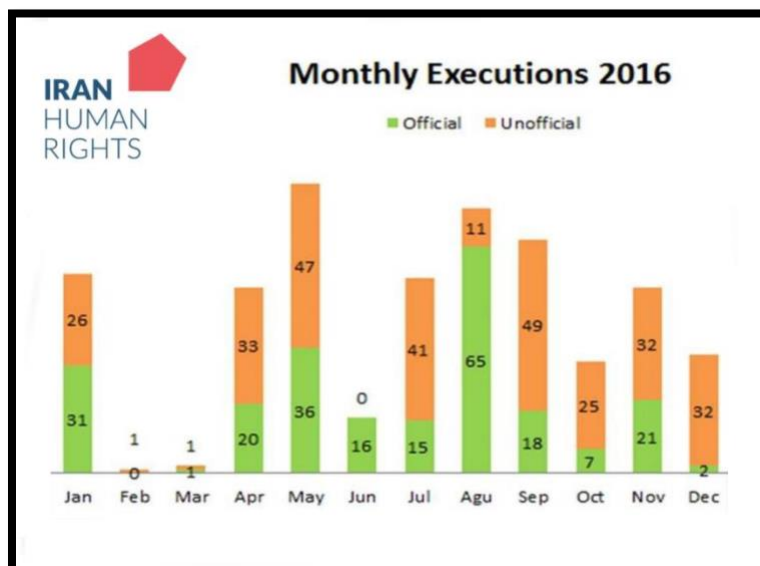
Government *Benjamin Elisha Sawe*

Iran is a Middle-Eastern country also known as the Islamic Republic of Iran and has a theocratic government, in which most policies are based on Islamic religious ideologies. The political structure of the country comprises of the supreme leader, the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, and other institutions such as the Assembly of Experts, the Expediency Discernment Council, and the City and Village Councils of Iran. The country follows a constitution that was ratified by referendum in 1979, and later amended in 1989. The Iranian constitution outlines and defines the political, economic, and social structure of the country. The supreme leader of the Islamic Republic is the ruler and the Commander-in-Chief of the country – Hassan Rohani.



Refugees *Connie Agius*

Iran is a dangerous place to be different. People are persecuted for political views, their race, gender sexuality and religion. One man who knows is Ali Akbar Mousavi, a former member of the Iranian parliament. He left the country in 2009 and has settled in the US.



ALI AKBAR MOUSAVI: I was in prison and I've been tortured two times. And then I left the country because the situation in the country and the security situation for me and my family was not very good.

CONNIE AGIUS: Some may say Mr Mousavi's case is unique because he's a politician. But he believes ordinary Iranians are just as easily pursued by authorities.

Australian government figures support that. So far this year, 5,541 people have arrived in Australia - that's up from 2,749 in 2012.

ALI AKBAR MOUSAVI: Lots of people since 2009, especially after the presidential election and crackdown of the government increased. The freedom of expression is very bad in the country and since 2004 especially until now. Actually most of the people who left the country, they left because of that limitation.

CONNIE AGIUS: But political persecution is just one reason authorities pursue people in Iran. There are many others.

Graham McGregor is Amnesty International's refugee spokesperson.

GRAHAM MCGREGOR: Human rights abuses are still very widespread and are still carried

out against both individuals and social groups. The authorities still in Iran still can seem to discriminate really pretty harshly against non-Shia minorities, including other Muslim communities.

The Kurds and a number of other ethnic minorities are all discriminated against in a similar way to women - both in law, so they don't have the same legal rights as the rest of the population, but they're also discriminated against on a day-to-day basis in terms of access to employment or education.

CONNIE AGIUS: That seems to be the view of the Immigration Department. It says asylum seekers from Iran claim persecution on the grounds of their political opinion, race or religion.

Foreign Minister Bob Carr took a different line when he said most arrivals were economic migrants. For Iranians, that too is a factor. Inflation is more than 30 per cent. The unemployment rate has sat above 10 per cent since 1997.

Ali Akbar Mousavi says these issues are also a reason why people leave.

ALI AKBAR MOUSAVI: After eight years of governing the country by Ahmadinejad, the economy is very bad and inflation and unemployment it increased.

CONNIE AGIUS: But if political persecution and the economy aren't enough, some say international sanctions in response to the country's nuclear program are also playing a role. Western countries, including Australia, have been slapping Iran with new sanctions every year since 2006.

Reza Marashi from the National Iranian American Council says the affect of these sanctions can't be underestimated.

REZA MARASHI: You're hearing an increasing number of stories of medical supply shortages inside of Iran.

You see the prices of food increasing, you see the prices of automobiles, you name it; typical day-to-day items that many of us in the West take for granted all becoming far more difficult for Iranians to afford and access.

The sanctions that have been put in place by the United States and other Western countries, Australia included, increasingly are the primary reason why life has become so much more difficult than it used to be even one or two years ago inside of Iran.

CONNIE AGIUS: These are all factors that paint a dire situation for Iranians. Until they change, it's hard to see what would stop them wanting to leave.



References

- <http://countrysimeters.info/en/Iran> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/iran/culture/food-drinks/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/iran/culture/ethnicity-language-religion/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/iran/culture/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/iran/culture/food-drinks/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/iran/culture/social-life/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/iran/culture/ethnicity-language-religion/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/iran/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/iran/geography-weather-wildlife/> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://coolpeopleswebquest.weebly.com/gender-roles-in-iran.html> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/iran/overview> View: 12.09.2017
- <http://iranflag.facts.co/iranflagof/iranflag.php> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.abc.net.au/pm/content/2013/s3806975.htm> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-type-of-government-does-the-iran-have.html> View: 06.09.2017



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



IRAQ

Produced by the University of Coventry (UK)

FAST FACTS

- Iraq is a country in Western Asia and is surrounded by Turkey, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Kuwait.
- **Arabic** and **Kurdish** are the two most spoken languages in Iraq.
- Iraq is a predominantly **Muslim** country, with over 99% of the population following the official religion.
- In recent times, the country has been **ravaged by war, a growing refugee crisis, crippling sectarianism**, and the violent spread of the self-styled **Islamic State extremist** movement.
- Despite efforts to rebuild a new government, the governing institutions remain weak- **corruption and poverty** remains prevalent.
- Traditional social relationships, in which the family, the extended family, and the tribe are the prime focus, have remained fundamentally important in rural areas but are under pressure in the towns.
- During the Iran-Iraq War, with so many men fighting in the military, women were required to study in fields and to work in positions normally filled by men. **Many women joined the labour force** as teachers, physicians, dentists, factory workers, and civil servants, with the majority performing unskilled labour.
- The role of women has been changing, with a **higher proportion participating in the labour force** despite encouragement from the government to stay at home and raise large families.
- In politics, Iraq was the first Arab country ever to elect a woman to a parliamentary position. Today **there are women in politics**, though the legitimacy of their authority is often questioned. In Islam, the state religion, women do not hold any leadership roles. Many cannot go to the mosque to pray, and if they do, they are segregated from the men.
- In the past, arranged marriages were common. However, this practice is becoming increasingly rare, and a law was passed that gave authority to a state-appointed judge to overrule the wishes of the father in the event of an early marriage.
- **Gender-based violence has escalated** in Iraq since the US-led invasion in 2003 until the surge of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the country, killing at least 14,000 women in 12 years.
- **Sexual violence is used as a tactic of terror** in the armed conflict, primarily targeting women and girls of specific ethnic and religious minority groups in Iraq and Syria. Those living in areas under Daesh control are at risk of rights violations, abduction, sexual slavery, rape, torture and abuse



IRAQ

GEOGRAPHY: Iraq is one of the easternmost countries of the Arab world. It is bordered to the North by Turkey, to the East by Iran, to the West by Syria and Jordan, and to the South by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Iraq has 36 miles (58 km) of coastline along the northern end of the Persian Gulf, giving it a small amount of territorial sea. Followed by Jordan, it is thus the Middle Eastern state with the least access to the sea and offshore sovereignty¹.



©Encyclopaedia Britannica

CAPITAL: Baghdad

POPULATION: 39,339,753². Iraq ranks number 36 in the list of countries by population.

LANGUAGE: Iraq has two official languages: Arabic and Kurdish. Other languages including Turkmen (a Turkish dialect), Neo-Aramaic, and American are official in areas where native speakers of these languages comprise a majority of the population³.

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Iraq>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/iraq-population/> correct as of 9th January 2018



IRAQ

LITERACY RATE: 79.7%⁴

ETHNIC GROUPS: There are two main ethnic groups within Iraq: Arabians and Kurds. Iraq's Arab population (who make up between 75 and 80% of the population) is divided between Sunni Muslims and the more numerous Shia. These groups, however, are for the most part ethnically and linguistically homogenous, and—as is common throughout the region—both value family relations strongly. Kurds (who make up 15-20% of the population in Iraq) are thought to be the fourth largest ethnic group in the Middle East, following Arabs, Turks, and Persians. There are important Kurdish minorities in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria, and Iraq's Kurds are concentrated in the relatively inaccessible mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan, which is roughly contiguous with Kurdish regions in those other countries⁵. Kurds constitute a separate and distinctive cultural group. They are mostly Sunni Muslims who speak one of two dialects of the Kurdish language, an Indo-European language closely related to Modern Persian. They have a strong tribal structure and distinctive costume, music, and dance. Other smaller ethnic groups are Turkmen, Assyrian, Shabak, and Yazidi⁶.

BELIEF: Iraq is predominantly a Muslim country, with 99% of the population following the official religion. It is estimated that of these, between 55-60% is Shia, and 40% is Sunni⁷. Largely for political reasons, the government has not maintained careful statistics on the relative proportion of the Sunni and Shia populations. Shia are almost exclusively Arab (with some Turkmen and Kurds), while Sunnis are divided mainly between Arabs and Kurds but include other smaller groups, such as Azerbaijanis and Turkmen⁸.

POLITICAL SITUATION: In recent times, Iraq has suffered from cycles of warfare, a growing refugee crisis, crippling sectarianism, and the violent spread of the self-styled Islamic State

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>

⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>

⁵ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Iraq/Arabs>

⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>

⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/iz.html>

⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Iraq/Arabs#toc22940>



IRAQ

extremist movement (also known as ISIS, ISIL, or by its Arabic acronym Daesh). Since the abolishment of Saddam Hussein, Iraqis have made attempts to rebuild their government—approving a constitution to replace that of the Saddam Hussein era, and holding successive elections for parliament and provincial governments. However, governing institutions are still weak, and corruption and poverty remain prevalent. The ISIS threat and rising violence compelled U.S. military advisors to return to the country in 2014, after having withdrawn in 2011. The continued weakness of governance in Iraq along with ISIS' seizure of much of north-western Iraq and adjacent parts of Syria, and its recruitment of young Muslims worldwide poses a long-term challenge to stability in the region and globally⁹.

Additionally, the largest minority in Iraq, the Kurds, continually battle with the majority Arabs, and the sparring between these two cultural groups has contributed to a survivalist mentality for the Kurds. The Turkoman, who populate the northern mountainous areas, also have had strained relations with the Kurds due to their historical role as buffers between Arab and Kurdish areas. Other cultural groups who are sometimes subject to the will of the Arab majority are the Yazidi people, who are of Kurdish descent, but differ from the Kurds because of their unique religion. There are the Assyrians, who are direct descendants of the ancient Mesopotamian people and speak Aramaic. They are mainly Christian, and though they compose a significant minority in Iraq, the government does not officially recognise them as an ethnic group. Regarding relations with other countries, Iraq's Shias have been the traditional enemies of Persians for centuries; this contributed to Iraq fighting Iran in a costly war from 1980 to 1988 over a land dispute. The Iraqi Kurdish population is surrounded by fellow Kurds in the countries of Iran, Turkey, Syria, and Azerbaijan¹⁰.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: War is a part of daily life and following the beginning of the Iraq war, water and electricity shortages, demolition of infrastructures, unemployment, collapse of government facilities, and violence affect social interactions and traditions.

However, rapid urban growth has been observed over much of the 20th century, with a higher proportion of the population being exposed to modern, westernised, lifestyles.

⁹ <https://www.usip.org/publications/2017/09/current-situation-iraq>

¹⁰ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ge-It/Iraq.html>



IRAQ

Traditional social relationships, in which the family, the extended family, and the tribe are the prime focus, have remained fundamentally important in rural areas but are under pressure in the towns.

Alcoholic beverages and Western-style entertainment have become freely available, a circumstance much deplored by devout Muslims. Although the number of Muslims in Iraq embracing a fundamentalist interpretation of Islam has grown—as it has elsewhere in the Middle East—Islamic extremism has not presented a major social or political problem, given the nature of the former regime. The role of women has been changing, with a higher proportion participating in the labour force despite encouragement from the government to stay at home and raise large families.

Although Iraqis generally are a religious and conservative people, there are strong secular tendencies in the country. This is reflected in the dress, which, while conservative by Western standards (short or revealing clothes for men or women are considered inappropriate), is quite relaxed by the standards of the region, particularly compared with neighbouring Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf states. Men will frequently wear Western-style suits or, in more casual surroundings, the long shirt-like *thawb*. The traditional chador and veil, the *hijab*, is common among conservative women—especially those from rural areas—but Western attire are common¹¹.

GENDER RELATIONS: During the Iran-Iraq War, with so many men fighting in the military, women were required to study and to work in positions normally filled by men. Many women joined the labour force as teachers, physicians, dentists, factory workers, and civil servants, with the majority performing unskilled labour. Female professionals, such as doctors, are normally paediatricians or obstetricians, so that they work with only women or children. Those drafted into the workforce during the Iran-Iraq War were also made to comply with about a one-third deduction from their salary to go toward the war effort¹².

The General Federation for Iraqi Women (GFIW) is a government organisation for women, to officially organise women, promote literacy and higher education, and

¹¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Iraq/Government-and-society#toc22956>

¹² <http://www.genderindex.org/country/iraq/>



IRAQ

encourage women in the labour force. The federation supported major legislative milestones, such as a 1977 law that said a woman may be appointed an officer in the military if she has a university degree in medicine, dentistry, or pharmacy. However, it has had little impact on issues that personally affect women, such as polygamy, divorce, and inheritance. It is generally argued that the GFIW is not operating in the interests of women, but rather in the interests of the Baathist regime. Instead of trying to improve the situation of women in Iraq, the government seems to use the federation to exercise control over them. One of the underlying goals of the GFIW (whether it is stated or not) is to encourage women to "liberate" themselves through commitment to the Iraqi revolution.

In politics, Iraq was the first Arab country ever to elect a woman to a parliamentary position. However, many believe that rather than exercising real authority, she was put in power to falsely demonstrate the controlling regime as a progressive one. Today there are women in politics, though the legitimacy of their authority is often questioned. In Islam, the state religion, women do not hold any leadership roles. Many cannot go to the mosque to pray, and if they do, they are segregated from the men. It is largely due to Islamic influence that women do not enjoy the same social rights and privileges as men, and if gender reform is to take place, it is within the context of Islamic law.

In the past, arranged marriages were common. However, this practice is becoming increasingly rare, and a law was passed that gave authority to a state-appointed judge to overrule the wishes of the father in the event of an early marriage. The Muslim majority traditionally views marriage as a contract between two families, as the family's needs are considered most important. In urban settings, women and men have more options in choosing their spouses, though the proposed spouse still must have parental approval. Partners often come from the same kin group, and though marriage between different ethnic groups is accepted, it is not too common. The ruling Baath regime considers marriage to be a national duty that should be guided and encouraged. Starting in 1982, women were forbidden to marry non-Iraqi men. If they were already married, they were prohibited from transferring money or property to their spouses.



IRAQ

Following the Iran-Iraq War, the loss of male lives was so severe that the government set out to increase the population. Government grants were given to men to marry war widows, and polygamy became more common. Divorce is accepted, but usually is the decision of the husband. If the husband wishes to be divorced, it is normally without question or problem, while it is close to impossible for a woman to initiate divorce.

Presently, families tend to live within extended households. The extended family unit consists of the older couple, sons, their wives and families, and unmarried daughters. Other dependent relatives may also make up part of this group, and the oldest male heads the group. He manages property and makes the final decisions regarding such things as the type of education the children receive, their occupations, and whom they will marry. Typically, household and child-rearing tasks are shared among all female members of the larger families. For couples who are able to afford living in a nuclear household, women who work outside the home are still responsible for all domestic and child-care responsibilities. The challenge of the woman's role in this situation is that there is no change in cooking methods or materials, and they are isolated from the help and emotional support of other female family members¹³.

GBV: Gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence, has escalated in Iraq since the US-led invasion in 2003 until the surge of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in the country, killing at least 14,000 women in 12 years. Iraqi women have been targeted primarily by opposing jihadist groups and militias as a war tactic often used in conflict zones. However, the male-dominated society, sectarian divides and the breakdown of the rule of law have systematised gender-based violence in Iraq, even turning authorities — who supposedly should protect vulnerable populations, including women and children, in conflict — as accomplice to violence against women¹⁴.

Sexual violence is used as a tactic of terror in the armed conflict, primarily targeting women and girls of specific ethnic and religious minority groups in Iraq and Syria. Those living in areas under Daesh control are at risk of rights violations, abduction, sexual slavery,

¹³ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ge-It/Iraq.html>

¹⁴ <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/23836>



IRAQ

rape, torture and abuse. However, the less recognised impacts of displacement affect far more refugees, IDPs and host communities. As displacement becomes protracted, families resort to negative coping mechanisms under the strain of prolonged uncertainty and diminishing resources. For example, women and girls are subject to increasing restrictions that while meant to protect them, in effect reduce livelihood opportunities and undermine their already weak social position. For Iraqis, displacement has exacerbated already high rates of intimate partner violence, honour crimes, sexual exploitation, harassment and early and forced marriage that existed prior to the recent conflict. The vulnerability of certain groups, such as female-headed households, widows, women with disabilities and adolescent girls, compound the challenges they face¹⁵.

Violence against women in the home is a major problem that prevents women's full participation in society. One in five women (21%) in Iraq aged 15-49 has suffered physical violence at the hands of the husband. 14% of women who suffered physical violence were pregnant at the time. 33% have suffered emotional violence, and 83% have been subjected to controlling behaviour by the husbands. Emotional violence includes insults, threats and public humiliation, and many men seek to control the wife's social life and access to medical care. Early marriage still occurs, but is decreasing. 4% of young women aged between 15 and 19 were married before they turned 15, compared to 11% among those aged 15-49. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many women are being kidnapped and sold into prostitution. Victims are trafficked internally and to neighbouring countries, including Syria and the Gulf states. Reports have indicated that female genital mutilation affects large numbers of women and girls in northern Iraq, though the exact extent is unclear. There is an ongoing campaign among civil society organisations and the Kurdistan Regional Government to outlaw the practice. Evidence shows that many Iraqi women and girls are not fully aware of their rights. 59% of women aged 15-49 believe that it is acceptable for a man to beat his wife under certain circumstances. This figure is higher in rural areas (70%) and among women with no formal education (71%). Women aged between 15 and 24 are as likely to tolerate abuse as older generations¹⁶.

¹⁵ <https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/iraq-gbv-sub-cluster-strategy-2016>

¹⁶ <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4cf4a67d2.pdf>



IRAQ



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Ivory Coast

Produced by ANFE Italia (Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti)

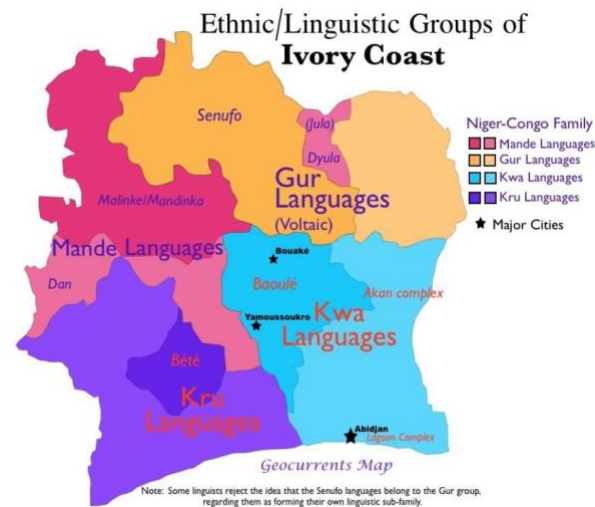


GEOGRAPHY: Côte d'Ivoire is located on the West African coast on the Gulf of Guinea. It is bounded on the west by Guinea and Liberia, on the east by Ghana, on the north by Burkina Faso and Mali, and the Atlantic Ocean to the south. Most of the people live along the sandy coastal region; apart from the capital area, the forested interior is sparsely populated.

CAPITAL: The political Capital is *Yamoussoukro* , but the economic one is *Abidjan*.

POPULATION: 24,184,810 million¹

LANGUAGE: French is the official language but there are so many local languages. Four of the eight major branches of the Niger-Congo language family are represented, including Kru and Kwa most spoken in the south. The Mandé and Voltaic or Gur are used in the North , but some variants of Mandé and Sénoufo can be heard in the southern trading areas. Most Ivoirians speak two or more languages fluently. Arabic is taught in Quranic schools, which are most common in the north, and is spoken by immigrants from Lebanon and Syria.²



¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

² <http://countrystudies.us/ivory-coast/21.htm>



Ivory Coast

LITERACY RATE: age 15 and over can read and write, 43.1% male: 53.1% female: 32.5%³

BELIEF: Ivory Coast is a secular state and the country's constitution provides for the freedom of religion. Around 40% of people follows Islam Sunni, religion firmly established in the north, and adhere to the Maliki school of thought. Voltaic and Mandè are predominantly Muslims and Juula are recognised as very devoted, they usually observe ritual washing and daily prayers of Islam; few wear Arab dress, and virtually no women wear a veil. Sufism is also popular and it is integrated with traditional native practices. Among Mandè there are also pagans (Bambarà) while the Akan and Krou ethnic groups are predominantly Christian, (Catholic 17.2%, Evangelical 11.8%, Methodist 1.7%, other Christian 3.2%). Some Akan are animist and uses syncretistic rites.⁴

ETHNIC GROUPS: The population of Côte d'Ivoire is ethnically diverse and consists of more than 60 ethnic groups which are divided into 7 principal cluster groups that can be to four major cultural regions; most of the groups has more members outside the country than within so many Ivoirians have strong cultural and social ties with people in neighbouring nations. In the southern area we find the East Atlantic (primarily Akan, divided) and West Atlantic (primarily Kru) separated by the Bandama River. The Akan, located in the eastern and central parts of the country, are the most consistent ethnic group and they are divided in Baoulé and Agni. They use a series of languages of the kwa family, branch of the Niger-Congo language and they are farmers (Baoulé are involved in the cocoa camps). The Kru, probably the oldest of Côte d'Ivoire's, are predominant in the southwest region, where they mainly practice fishing. The largest Kru population in Côte d'Ivoire is the Bété. Voltaic or Gur cultures are found in the northeast, this is a real heterogeneous group sharing a few elements such as the Language. The most numerous are the Sénoufo, involved in agriculture. Voltaic are concentrated in and around Korhogo, the largest city in the north and the most important cotton-growing area of the country. Mandè lives in the north-western area, the two main ethnic groups are the Malinkés and the Juula. They have different religions and uses. Mandè works on agricultural sector and also on trading (particularly the Juula)⁵. The Southern Mandé, which include the Dan, Yacouba and Gouro ethnic groups, are predominantly found in the western part of the country, and constitute about 10% of the population. Dan and Gouro cultures have numerous traits in common with the Kru peoples, but they speak languages



³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

⁴ <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/religious-beliefs-in-ivory-coast.html>

⁵ <http://countrystudies.us/ivory-coast/20.htm>



Ivory Coast

related to the Northern Mandé ⁶. In the recent past the country has hosted a large number of refugees from neighbouring countries, many of whom are stateless arriving partly for political reasons and partly as refugees fleeing from different civil wars⁷.

POLITICAL SITUATION: After its independence in 1960, the development of cocoa production (particularly in the Abidjan area) attracted numerous foreign investments and Cote d'Ivoire was one of the most prosperous states in West Africa, with two and a half decades of peace and stability under the guidance of Boigny. The global economic downturn in the early 1980s caused the collapse of the economy affecting the stability of the government, which in 1990 had to face the first protests of the population to which Boigny responded by granting some political freedoms. The economic problems also exacerbated tensions between locals and foreign migrants, as well as between internal migrants from the north and locals in the southern regions. After the death of Boigny, his successor Henri Konan Bédié, largely stopped the efforts to balance different ethno-regional interests and instead started favoring people from his own ethnic group, promoting the rise of the ideology of *ivoirité*, a conception of citizenship based on autochthonous origins ⁸, so in 1999 he was overthrown by a military coup led by General Robert Guei. The new elections in 2000 were characterized by attempts at fraud by Guei and the exclusion of Ouattara, the main opposition candidate, excluded because of mixed blood (one of his parents was foreigner). The decision unleashed the rage of the Muslims of the north, who clashed with the security force, bringing Gbagbo to power. In September 2002, part of the army and Ivoirian dissidents tried to overthrow the regime, the coup turned into a real civil war that split the country in 3: the northern controlled by the rebels (Forces Nouvelles), the south under the control of the government and peacekeeping forces a buffer zone between the two. In March 2007, Gbagbo and the leader of FN signed an agreement. In November 2010, Ouattara won the presidential election, but Gbagbo refused to hand over power, resulting in a five-month resumption of violent conflict. In April 2011, after widespread fighting, Gbagbo was formally forced from office by armed Ouattara supporters with the help of UN and French forces.⁹ The UN peacekeeping mission departed in June 2017. Ouattara is focused on rebuilding the country's economy and infrastructure while Gbagbo is in The Hague on trial for crimes against humanity. The civil war of 2002 to 2007 pushed thousands of foreign migrants, Liberian refugees, and Ivoirians to flee to Liberia or other regional countries and a lot of internally displaced; to the other hand, more than 3,000 civilians were killed in clashes between forces armies of Gbagbo and the pro-Ouattara rebel militias, with 1 million displaced persons and 500,000 war refugees¹⁰.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS Côte d'Ivoire is characterised by a serious social and economical divide between north and south. Electricity access reached 88% of the population in urban areas, while in rural areas is still limited to 29%, although increasing ¹¹. Most people living in villages, stay in temporary structures, they have simple life, fetching their own water and firewood. Their houses

⁶ <http://countrystudies.us/ivory-coast/24.htm>

⁷ <http://acs-italia.org/PDF/AFRICA/COSTA%20D%E2%80%99AVORIO.pdf>

⁸ <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/22514/Regional0imbal0t0African0countries.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁹ <http://acs-italia.org/PDF/AFRICA/COSTA%20D%E2%80%99AVORIO.pdf>

¹⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/iv.html>

¹¹ <https://www.se4all-africa.org/se4all-in-africa/country-data/cote-d%E2%80%99ivoire/>



Ivory Coast

are cone-shaped with thatched roofs; walls are generally made of mud in a wooden frame.¹² About half the population is located in the urban areas, the rich people live in multi-storey homes or skyscrapers with a lot of facilities; but the rest are poor and live in overcrowded slums without running water, electricity or other modern conveniences. In certain rural areas many children do not have access to *education*, higher education is very prestigious and available only to a select minority of the population (university *education* is available only in Abidjan). People wear both traditional and Western clothes: in the urban areas most wear Western clothing as pants or blue jeans and shirts; many women still wear the traditional brightly colored dresses (*pagnes*) with matching head scarves, specially in the rural areas while men have long, beautiful robes for ceremonial occasions. Whether the family lives in an urban or rural setting, the extended family is the basic social unit. Each ethnic group has its own traditions, collective ceremonies and rituals are important to many indigenous religions, and include dancing, ancestor worship sacrifices, mask carving, fetish priest ceremonies and divination ceremonies: for example, the *Porro* (society of the sacred grove) initiation *ceremony* of the *Senoufo* is a ritual in which every seven years a new group of boys pass through three stages of initiation that are completed when they are in their thirties. Most of the Baoulé practice the scarification as sign of identification or traditional treatments. Between men is common a simple handshake, women instead kiss each other three times on the cheeks. In general, people from *Ivory Coast* keep slightly less distance between one another when they speak. Village elders are traditionally accorded much respect and eye contact is usually avoided, particularly between father and child, and it is considered rude to stare..¹³

GENDER RELATIONS: Ivory Coast ranks at 136th out of 144 countries worldwide for gender equality in the index of Global Gender Gap ¹⁴. Ivorian Constitution guarantees gender equality and the new Family code redefines power dynamics within marriage by institutionalizing equality between husband and wife, while polygamy was forbidden in 1964 by the new Civil Code. In 2006 was created the Equality and Gender Directorate within the Ministry of the Family, Women and Social Affairs, responsible for coordinating government activities in the promotion and protection of women's rights and in 2009 the government adopted a National Policy on Equal Opportunities, Equity and Gender to promote a gender approach.¹⁵ There have been numerous projects based around women's rights and health in Côte d'Ivoire. In 2013, the World Bank held a series of workshops across the nation in an attempt to address problems of systemic inequality. The U.S. in 2014 has commissioned a regional family planning project to increase access to and use of hospitals and health centers in the country.

The State has done a lot of efforts to eliminate discriminatory attitudes and traditional harmful practices but there is a persistence of adverse cultural stereotypes as well as patriarchal attitudes, for this reasons the country suffers from widespread gender inequality. Although marriage customs are changing and becoming more Westernized, a large majority engage in traditional native wedding rituals. Divorce, although not common, is socially acceptable among most ethnic groups. In rural areas men plow the land and take care of the crops while the women grow vegetables and other basic foods, collect water and fuel, tend to domestic needs and childrearing, spin, weave and produce pottery to sell. In general, men have the most important civic and governmental positions,

¹² <http://habitat-worldmap.org/en/pais/africa/ivory-coast/>

¹³ Cote D'ivoire (Cultures of the World) Library Binding – January 1, 2010 by Patricia Sheehan , Jacqueline Ong 14 <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=IV>

¹⁵ http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/wps/nap1325_cote_d_ivoire.pdf



Ivory Coast

in addition to the role of the main tribe in the villages. Religious roles, from shamans to Catholic priests to Muslim imams, are dominated by men.

Government policy encourages full participation by women in business, but generally there is a bias among employers to hiring women, whom they consider less dependable because of their potential pregnancy, so the woman remains marginalized and deprived of basic social service

Women are underrepresented in most professions and in the managerial sector as a whole. Some women also encounter difficulty in obtaining loans, as they cannot meet the lending criteria mandated by banks, including title to a house and production of profitable cash crops, specifically coffee and cocoa. However, women are paid on an equal scale with men in the formal business sector. Men continue to dominate managerial positions and enjoy the most career mobility, usually due to a higher level of education and connections with other businessmen. The general level of schooling in Côte d'Ivoire is very low, especially for girls: in the northern areas of the country, under the influence of tradition, the population remains reluctant to educate girls, who are often responsible for domestic tasks

The social organization of Akan is basically built around the "matriclan", the matriarchal clan, where their identity, inheritance, health and politics are determined. All founders are women, but men generally have positions of leadership within society, based on their relationship through their mothers and sisters. It is expected that man will not only keep his family but also his relatives.

Also Senufo people belong to their mother's family group, power and land are passed down through a mother's family line to her sister's sons.

In the Baoule village, the women live with their husbands' families while among the Senufo, husbands and wives stay in different places with men living in rectangular houses and their wives occupying round ones. When girls get married and leave home, it is the responsibility of the sons to care for the elders of the household.

Mandè have a patrilineal kinship system and patriarchal society such as the Bété group, although monogamy is now widespread. Despite there a Law allowing women greater control of their property, in most traditional

societies, as the Bete and Juula groups, inheritance is passed down to the through the father's line to the sons, women do not have the right to inherit land but only to use that of their husbands or families,

Among the Kru and other peoples of the south-western forest zone, dwellings are clustered around a central open area. Women do most of the daily work, both at home and in the fields, where they grow such crops as yams corn (maize), cassava (manioc), and peanuts (groundnuts). The men are responsible for hunting, gathering kola nuts and oil palm nuts, and fishing.¹⁶



GBV: Côte d'Ivoire has ratified the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, as well the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa¹⁷.

¹⁶ <http://countrystudies.us/ivory-coast/20.htm>

¹⁷ <https://www.genderindex.org/country/cote-divoire/>



Ivory Coast

The law specifically forbids FGM/C and does not recognize forced marriage or dowries ("bride prices") paid to the mother's family to legitimize the marriage.¹⁸ The share of girls marrying very early, before the age of 15, is 10 percent and 33% for girl married by 18. Child marriage is associated with lower wealth, lower education levels, and higher labour force participation.¹⁹ Early marriage are common in rural areas and north and north-west regions²⁰.

Despite the presence of a law criminalising sexual harassment (Law n° 81-640) and another one punishing some forms of violence against women (Law n° 98-757), the government does not specifically outlaw domestic violence; victims underreport the crime due to cultural barriers and perpetrators benefit from general impunity (partly due to the social acceptance) when they are prosecuted, sexual violence offences are often reclassified as indecent assault, a lesser offence with less severe sentences. The generalisation of rape has contributed to making Côte d'Ivoire the country with the highest rate of HIV/AIDS. Violence against women included traditional practices, such as dowry deaths (the killing of brides over dowry disputes), levirate (forcing a widow to marry her dead husband's brother), and sororate (forcing a woman to marry her dead sister's husband). Female genital mutilation remains quite widespread in Côte d'Ivoire, practiced in early childhood. The prevalence varies according to the ethnicity, the level of schooling of the parents and the socio-economic asset; the social weight of this practice remains important especially in rural areas, in the north and in the west of the country; female circumcision is a common practice among Muslim women (80%) and animists (40%), rarer among Christians. The legislative provisions are not strictly applied as is clear from the low number of convictions and trials²¹. Displaced women suffered numerous human rights violations particularly sexual and gender-based violence²², mostly in the western and northern parts of the country, where is living the highest concentration of ex-combatants. The armed forces of Ivory Coast launched a training program on addressing sexual violence, more than 900 members of FRCI have been trained on gender-based violence as well as over 300 police officers and gendarmes; the UN is also supporting the national police to establish specialized units and gender desks, but during the crisis a lot of health and care services were interrupted.²³

¹⁸ <http://www.everyculture.com/Bo-Co/C-te-d-Ivoire.html>

¹⁹ https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/UNICEF_SOWC_2016.pdf

²⁰ <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/global/reports/advocacy/child-marriage-cote-d-ivoire.pdf>

²¹ <http://www.refworld.org/country,,,CIV,,59bbbb6c4,0.html>

²² <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Cote-DIvoire-Case-Study-April-2013.pdf>

²³ <http://www.refworld.org/country,,,CIV,,59cc9fb14,0.html>



Ivory Coast



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Facts about

Kosovo



Rohr, Anja (JVA Zweibruecken)
Ministerium der Justiz und für
Verbraucherschutz



BASIC DATA ABOUT KOSOVO

Area: 10,908 km²

Population: 1,907,59

Life expectancy 71,3 years; **male:** 69,2 years; **female:** 73,6%

Ethnic Groups: major ethnic: Albanians 95%; minor ethnic: serbs 1% and others 4%

Religion: Islam: 95,6%, Christians (catholic) 2,2%, Christians (orthodox) 1,5%.

Other 0,06%

Unemployment: 27,5%

Capital City: Pristina

Major Cities: Prizren, Peja, Mitrovica,

Languages: Albanian 94,5%, Serbian 1,6%, Bosnian 1,7%, Turkish 1,1%, romani 0,3%

Literacy: 91.9%; male: 96,6%; female: 87,5%

President: Atifete Jahjaga (2011)

Prime minister: Isa Mustafa (2014)

FLAG OF KOSOVO *C. K. Raju*

The flag of Kosovo features the geographical shape of Kosovo centered on a dark blue field in a gold color surmounted by six white, five-pointed stars arrayed in a slight arc; each star represents one of the major ethnic groups of Kosovo: Albanians, Serbs, Turks, Gorani, Roma, and Bosniaks.

The flag of the Republic of Kosovo was adopted by the Assembly of Kosovo immediately following the declaration of independence of the Republic of Kosovo from Serbia on 17

February 2008. The flag is the result of an international design competition, organized by the United Nations-backed Kosovo Unity Team, which attracted almost one thousand entries. The now-used design is a variant of one proposal designed by Muhamer Ibrahim. It shows six white stars in an arc above a



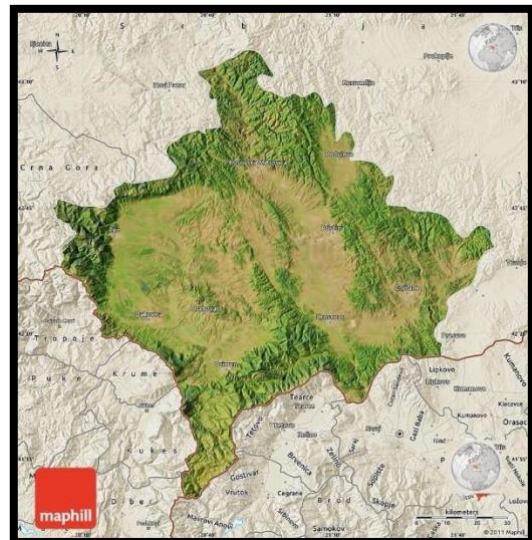
golden map of Kosovo on a blue field. They symbolize Kosovo's six major ethnic groups. Before the declaration of independence, Kosovo was under the administration of the United Nations and used the UN flag for official purposes. Both the Serbian and Albanian ethnic populations used their own flags since the Socialist Yugoslavia period. The Serbs use a red, blue and white tricolor, which forms the basis of the current flag of Serbia. The Albanian population have used the flag of Albania since the 1960s as their nationality flag. Both flags can still be seen and used inside independent Kosovo.

GEOGRAPHY *Justin Dodge*

The Republic of Kosovo has an area of 10 908 km². It is situated in South-Eastern Europe bordering Albania to the southwest, Montenegro to northwest, Serbia to northeast and Macedonia to the south. The territory lies in geographic longitudes 41° 51' and 43° 16' and the latitudes 19° 59' and 21° 47'. The territory of Republic of Kosovo is characterized with various altitudes. The lowest point of Kosovo is in the valley of river Drini i Bardhë, in the border with Albania which is only 270 m above the sea level, and the highest point is in the west of Kosovo, Gjeravica with an altitude of 2.565 m. The territory of the Republic of Kosovo is characterized by different heights above sea level. The lowest point of Kosovo is located in the valley of the river Drini on the border with Albania and reaches up to 270 m above sea level, the higher it is in western Kosovo, in Gjeravicë -

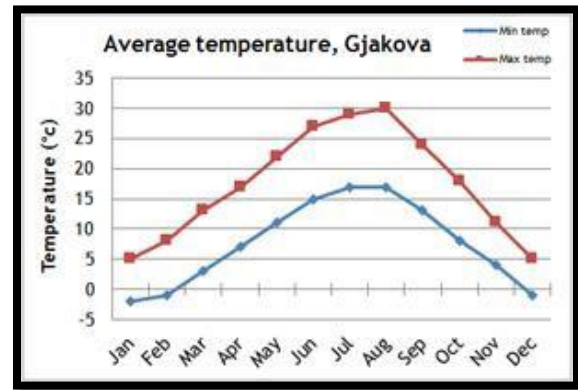


2.656 m. In the hydrological aspect, Kosovo is divided into river basins of Drini i Bardhë, Ibri, Morava e Binçës and Lepenci. The rivers of Kosovo flow into three seas: Black Sea, Adriatic and Aegean Sea. The climate of the Republic of Kosovo in most part is continental, resulting in hot summers and cold winters, with Mediterranean and continental influence (average temperature in the country ranges between + 30 °C in summer and -10 °C in winter). However, due to uneven elevations in some parts of the country, there are variations in temperatures and distribution of precipitations. Currently there are 38 municipalities with 1,469 settlements organized under the laws of the country.



CLIMATE *Justin Dodge*

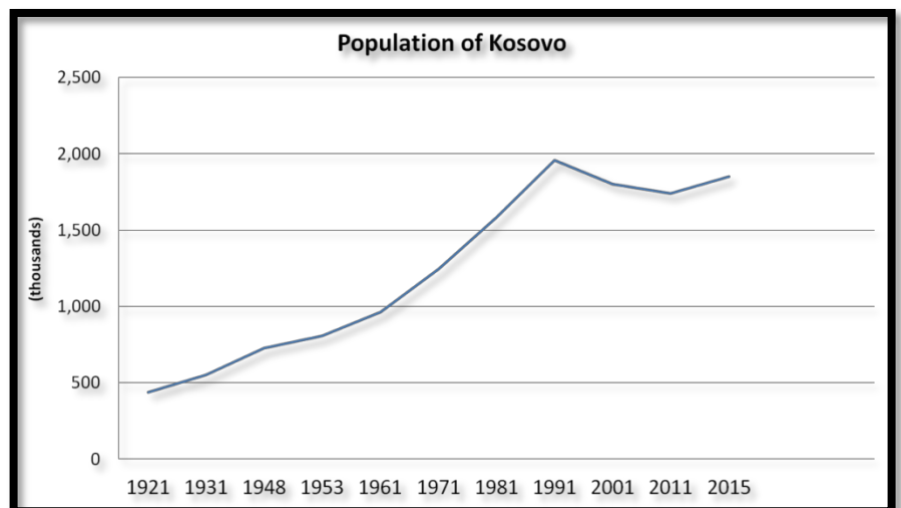
In general, the climate is continental, with cold, relatively dry winters and warm, humid summers. Summer temperatures in the mountainous areas are notably cooler, averaging about (18° C) with up to 120 days of annual snow cover in the mountains. In mountainous areas, trees cover 40% or more of the region, mostly oak and beech. Deer, bear and wild pigs abound in these areas. May and September are usually the best times to visit climate-wise.



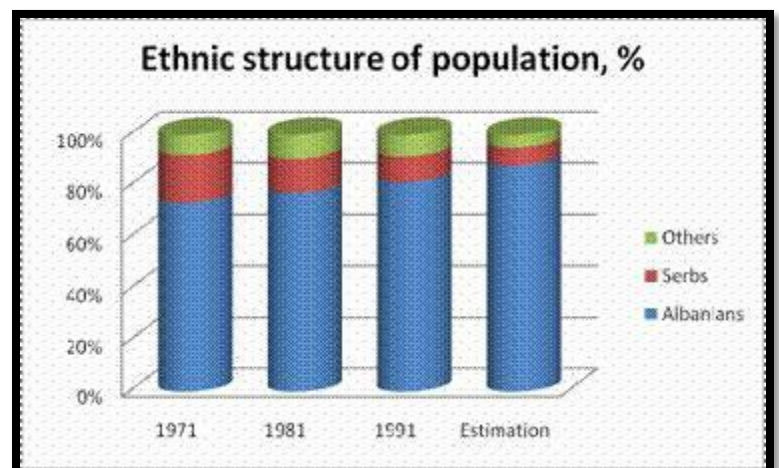
POPULATION *World Population Review*

Kosovo state structure is characterized by a very young population, where the average age is 30.2 years. In the period after 1990, Kosovo struggled with the issue of migration which had an impact both in population structure and in its growing rate.

Free and uncontrolled movement of population changed the ratio between urban and rural population. According to population census that was conducted in April 2011, 61% of the population lives in rural areas.



The population and household data for the years stated in the tables are taken from respective population censuses for those years. Number of inhabitants in the period 1947-2011 is calculated based on the results of population census, data on natural increase and the available data on the migration of people. According to the assessment of Kosovo Agency of Statistics, the average life expectancy for 2011 in Kosovo for both sexes was 76.7 years. Women had a longer life expectancy of 79.4 years, whereas men 74.1 years. In order to analyse the



demographic situation of a country, the main resource is the data generated from population census (which according to the United Nations rules is conducted every ten years) and from the vital statistics. Such information is then followed by the other part of population data and main demographic indicators such as birth rate, mortality rate and migrations. These are the three main indicators used to measure population changes in a country. Population grows or declines depending on the positive or negative natural increase and also on positive or negative migration rate.

LANGUAGE *Justin Dodge*

According to the Constitution, Albanian and Serbian are the official languages of Kosovo. Almost 95% of the population speaks Albanian as their native language, followed by South Slavic languages and Turkish. Due to North Kosovo's boycott of the census, Bosnian resulted in being the second-largest language after Albanian. However, Serbian is de facto the second most spoken language in Kosovo. Since 1999, the Albanian language has become the dominant language in the country, although equal status is given to Serbian and special status is given to other minority languages.

The National Assembly adopted the Law on the Use of Languages in 2006 committed Kosovo institutions to ensuring the equal use of Albanian and Serbian as the official languages. Additionally, other languages can also gain recognition at municipal level as official languages if the linguistic community represents at least 5% of the total population of municipality. The Law on the Use of Languages gives Turkish the status of an official language in the municipality of Prizren, irrespective of the size of the Turkish community living there. Although both Albanian and Serbian are official languages, municipal civil servants are only required to speak one of them in a professional setting and, according to Language Commissioner of Kosovo Slaviša Mladenović statement from 2015, no organizations have all of their documents in both languages.

Basic Words

Hello – C‘kemi Tungjatjeta

How are you? – Si jeni? (formal) Si je? (informal)

Reply to ‘How are you?’ – Mirë falemenderit po ju? (formal)

Mirë falemenderit po ti? (informal)

My name is... - Mua më quajnë.../ Unë guhem...

Pleased to meet you - Gëzohem që të takova

Goodbye – Pacim

Yes – Po

No – Jo

Sorry – Më fal

Please – Ju lutem (formal) Të lutem (informal)

Thank you – Falemenderit

CULTURE OF KOSOVO *Justin Dodge*

Life in Kosovo is day to day for many people as the economy is struggling and the daily way of life seems to have no real consistent. This is a country in transition and one seemingly always under the microscope. Due to past violence there seems to be very little stability in terms of the economy, jobs, or even in future housing.

The past instability is the greatest reason the way of life in Kosovo is so unstable, and this past has led to very high unemployment, with nearly half the population seeking work without jobs. Due to the emigration of most ethnic Serbs, the dynamic in the country today means about 60% of the population lives in rural areas.

The only consistent occupation in the country today is agriculture as nearly a quarter of the people, or half of the working population, have jobs in this industry. Although there is a guarantee for a job in this industry, due to weather and seasonal changes, there is no guarantee the jobs will support an entire family. None-the-less, these people work hard as most days are occupied with work from sun up to sun down, just hoping the weather gives them enough wheat, corn, and other foods to support themselves.

For the rest of the working population, many have regular working hours, but stability is a far cry for most industries in Kosovo. For the unemployed life is also unpredictable as some people are still constantly

searching for a job, while others have taken time off from this quest as the journey seems hopeless at times. School seems to be the only consistent for many children and families in Kosovo, but even in many rural areas the closest school can be a great distance away.

As incomes are very low in Kosovo, even for the people who have jobs, there is little in the way of recreation or entertainment. For many people with jobs the money made is used to support unemployed family members and the thought of going on a vacation, or spending money at a bar is rarely truly considered. However, these forms of entertainment do exist in Kosovo, although the percentage of people that can afford these forms of entertainment is small.



What the people lack in money, they make up for with family as the way of life in Kosovo is truly centered on the family, which is the reason so many people continue to seek out jobs despite the dire economy.

Cultural institutions

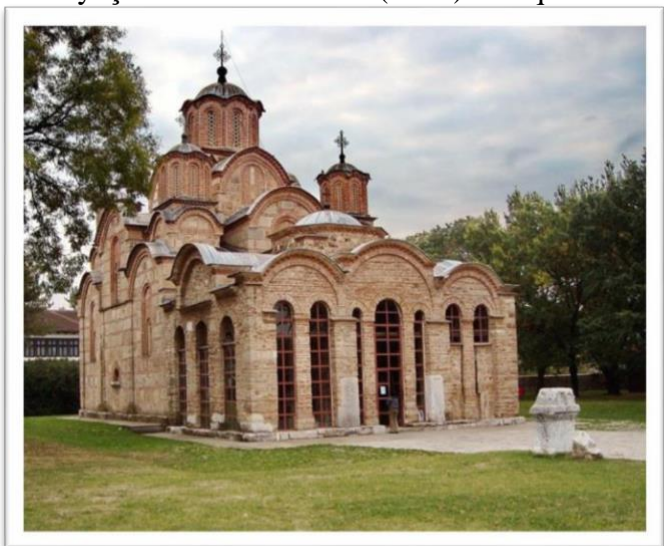
Among Kosovo's most significant historic sites are the medieval Serbian Orthodox monasteries of Dečani (Albanian:

Dečan), Gračanica (Gračanica; near Pristina), and Peć (Pejë), as well as

the Church of the Virgin of Ljeviša (near Prizren). In 2004 the Dečani monastery was designated a UNESCO World Heritage site; the others were inscribed in 2006. Two of the oldest Muslim sites are the 15th-century Çarshia and Mbretit (Fatih) mosques in Pristina. During the 1998–99

conflict, dozens of Muslim sites were destroyed, including the 18th-century Red Mosque in Pejë and the Ottoman-era bazaar in Gjakovë (Đakovica). Following the conflict, revenge attacks damaged or destroyed a number of Orthodox churches, although the World Heritage sites survived. Pristina is home to the Kosovo Museum (2002), the Academy of Sciences and Arts (1975), and the National Theatre (1946; originally located in Prizren). Construction of an opera

house, named after the pre-independence Kosovar Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova, began in the capital in 2009. Many of Kosovo's cultural and archaeological artifacts remain in Belgrade, Serb, where they were taken prior to the 1998–99 conflict.



Identity

The people of Kosovo identify based on their ethnicity. Most citizens are ethnically Albanian and may identify as either Albanians, or as Kosovars, who are also ethnic Albanians, but also tie in their nationality, hence the name Kosovar. In order to indicate these ties to both their Albanian ethnicity and Kosovan political entity, these people generally call



themselves Kosovars, which, when stated, is somewhat of a political and ethnic statement; saying they are ethnic Albanians who live in Kosovo. The second primary group of people living in Kosovo is the Serbians. While these people almost always will refer to themselves as Serbs (in the ethnical, and sometimes political sense), they may sometimes also be referred to as a Kosovac, to indicate that he or she is an ethnic Serb, but a citizen of Kosovo.



BEHAVIOR *Justin Dodge*

Most of the behavioral rules and restrictions in Kosovo are based on Islam, but more recent cultural history has altered many of these cultural aspects so today how the people of Kosovo behave is a combination of European and Islamic in origin.

As a visitor to Kosovo just try to follow the lead of the locals by dressing in alike manner (see below for details), dining in the local etiquette (see our Kosovo Dining & Food Page), and avoid sensitive conversation topics, such as politics, finances, and business unless initiated by your local counterpart. Also try to avoid being loud, rude, or showing off wealth.

Dress

The traditional dress of Kosovo was fairly distinct from its neighbors (other than Albania) as it was likely rooted in their Illyrian past. For women, this traditional clothing included long-sleeved shirts, jackets called *guna*, hats with gold embroidery, a skirt or dress of some sort, and sometimes vests. Girls tended to wear a similar outfit, but the decoration was very floral to symbolize youthfulness. For the men shirts called *telinat*, blazers called *mitani*, vests called *xhamadani*, a scarf, and a long red belt was the dress of choice. Men also traditionally wore a fair amount of rings and other decorations, including armor such as a pistol or sword.

Today this traditional dress is less frequently seen, although in some mountainous areas they can be found and they are also worn by some people on holidays or for special events, like a wedding or funeral. Today most people wear modern western-styled clothing, but most of the people are Muslim so do tend to cover up their arms and legs; only some women cover their hair.

As a visitor to Kosovo try to cover your shoulders and knees at a minimum. Also try to dress for the occasion as entering mosques or conducting business in the country

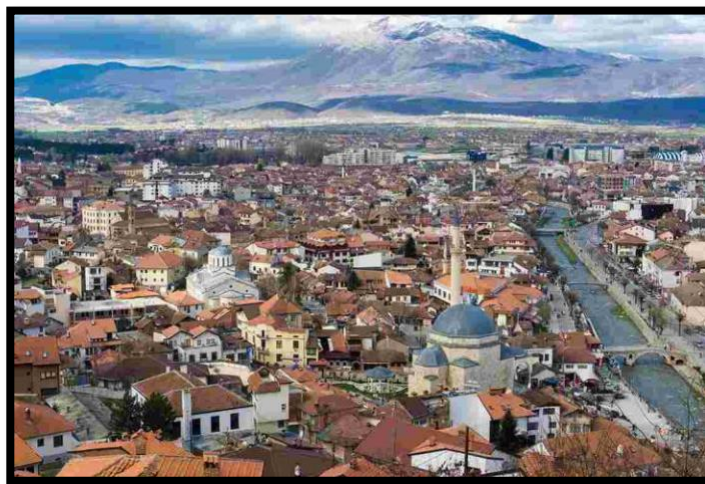
requires more formal and conservative dress, while wandering around the country has few rules since the people are quite liberal Muslims. If in doubt, dress on the more conservative side.

Sports and recreation

Skiing, football (soccer), basketball, wrestling, table tennis, and judo are among the sports popular in Kosovo. However, because Kosovo's independence was not universally recognized, the International Olympic Committee and a number of other international sports organizations denied Kosovar applications for membership. In the early 21st century, ski resorts were under repair following years of neglect and war damage. Kosovo created a network of protected natural areas, including Sharr Mountains National Park, located along the border with Macedonia.

Media and publishing

Freedom of the press was enshrined in the 2008 constitution. The publicly funded broadcaster Radio Television Kosovo provides television and radio programming, primarily in the Albanian language. There are also a number of privately owned television and radio broadcasters. The major newspaper is the Albanian-language *Koha Ditore* (–The Daily Times); other Albanian publications include *Zëri* (–The Voice), *Kosova Sot* (–Kosovo Today), and *Epoka e Re* (–The New Epoch). The Serb community relies on Serbian-language media from local outlets as well as from Serbia.



FOOD *Justin Dodge*

Culinary Influences

Kosovo's menu is based on the seasons as heavy dishes are more common in winter than in summer and in the summer the ripe fruits and vegetables tend to dominate the cuisine. However, meat has historically been expensive so most dishes are based on beans, peppers, and dairy products no matter the season. Also staying true to their historic roots, most food today is still prepared in traditional fashion, primarily by roasting it.

Over time, many of Kosovo's neighbors influenced them including the Turks, Serbs, Greeks, and Italians among others. Even today many Turkish desserts are consumed as is pasta along with Greek herbs and olive oil. Perhaps the most lasting and noticeable influence the Turks had was that many people converted to Islam, which forbids the consumption of pork products.



Another relatively recent addition to the menu is the potato, which is now commonly consumed in the country. Since that introduction, meat has also become more readily available and for less money, meaning meat has become more popular and has been incorporated into many traditional dishes.

Staple Foods

There are no true staple foods in Kosovo; various vegetables are found in most dishes though.

Regional Variations & Specialties

Flija: thinly layered pastries baked and generally served with cheese, yogurt, or honey

Hajvar: preserved red peppers with oil and salt

Pasterma: dried beef with pickled vegetables

Dining Etiquette



The most important thing to note when dining in Kosovo is the ethnicity of your hosts. Generally speaking, the ethnic Serbs and the ethnic Albanians use similar table manners, but the conversation can be vastly different based on your host's ethnicity so be sure to note this before saying something offensive.

On the dining front itself though, rules are similar to the rest of Europe: wait to be shown a seat, take your host's lead on when to begin, and eat in the continental style (knife in the right hand, fork in the left). Your local hosts may offer you an alcoholic

beverage of raki, which would be rude to turn down; remember though that it can be quite strong, so sip carefully.

At sit down restaurants with a server, a tip of about 10% is expected.

Drinks

Tea is very common in Kosovo and it is generally served as the Russians serve it: in two separate containers, one with hot water and one with strong pre-made tea at room temperature. Lemonade and mineral water, generally carbonated are also very common drinks in Kosovo, but others, such as soft drinks and coffee are also accessible.

Although Kosovo's majority (ethnic Albanians) are Muslims, most citizens do drink alcohol. Although not exceedingly popular, raki is a popular distilled brandy (generally made from grapes) found throughout the peninsula and is a regional specialty. Wines are growing in popularity and hard liquors are also available, but beer dominates the market in Kosovo.

Generally speaking, the tap water is safe to drink in Kosovo, but check with locals for any particular regional differences. Also, many people may have troubles adjusting to the local tap water, as it will most certainly be different from what your system is used to.

ABOUT KOSOVO'S PATH TO GENDER EQUALITY *Akela Lacy*

Celebrating only five years of independence and following recent fanfare surrounding its struggle to achieve recognition by 100 members of the United Nations, Kosovo may not necessarily be the first country that comes to mind in contemporary discussions of women in diplomatic leadership. Often characterized in terms of its one-way relationship (or lack thereof) with neighboring Serbia, the country has much more to offer than its anecdotal history of ethnic conflict would suggest—specifically in lessons of development as a post-conflict nation in the often overlooked regions of southeastern Europe.

At the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, Director of the Center's Women in Public Service Project Dr. Rangita de Silva de Alwis welcomed four female delegates from Kosovo to discuss the changing role and impact of women at the helm of lawmaking in their country. Panelists included Senior Legal Officer at Kosovo's Ministry of Justice Venera Kabashi; Council Member for the Capital Municipality of Prishtina Meliza Haradinaj; UN Populations Fund Project Coordinator Linda Abazi-Morina; and Chief of Cabinet for Kosovo's Deputy Prime Minister as well as Minister of Local Government Administration Blerta Miftari.

Kosovo does have an impressive track record of advancing women to positions at the leading edge of domestic and international policy initiatives. President Atifete Jahjaga was elected in April 2011 by members of the Parliament as Kosovo's first female, and the youngest ever, Head of State. Jahjaga previously served as Deputy Director of the Kosovo Police, holding rank as Major General. She finds herself among only a handful of female leaders at comparable levels of decision-making power in the region. Kosovo's President symbolizes what panelist Venera Kabashi called a –mentality changell in their society that –countries in transitionll are in need of, and which Kosovo so far seems to be modeling quite well.

The panelists each individually spoke on an issue among the many facing themselves and their fellow countrywomen, elaborating on modern conditions and the associated regulations in place or in the process of being altered. These areas included affirmative action and quotas for female political representation, advancing women in local governments as Mayors, addressing violence against women in private as well as public spheres, and the rise of women in diplomacy across disciplinary fields. Underlying the logistics of their presentations though was a message that surfaced repeatedly throughout the talk: that rhetoric does not give rise to action.



Panelists lauded the country's –highly advanced legislative frameworkll with a 30 percent quota for female members of all political parties, but acknowledged –advantages and gapsll in the system, endorsing the ultimate goal of changing attitudes towards women in such a way that at some point quotas will no longer be necessary. Even with its flaws the quota system produces material results, with compliance by a majority of municipalities—a shortcoming apparent in other points of the discussion.

Blerta Miftari spoke on the difficulties of enforcing the 2004 Law for Gender Equality adopted under the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). The law

aims to establish equal participation for women and men in local governments by designating those administrations themselves to organize institutions and activities that tackle inequality between the sexes, intended to lead naturally to equality in political representation. However there is no federal budget allocated to gender equality measures, so local governments are responsible for determining their own budgets. At first this placement of responsibility seems reasonable, but Miftari pointed out that only 23 out of 37 municipalities have elected an official for gender equality; those presently in charge of the budget for much of the country have no engagement with the issues for which they are planning alleviative measures. How can they be expected to enforce them?

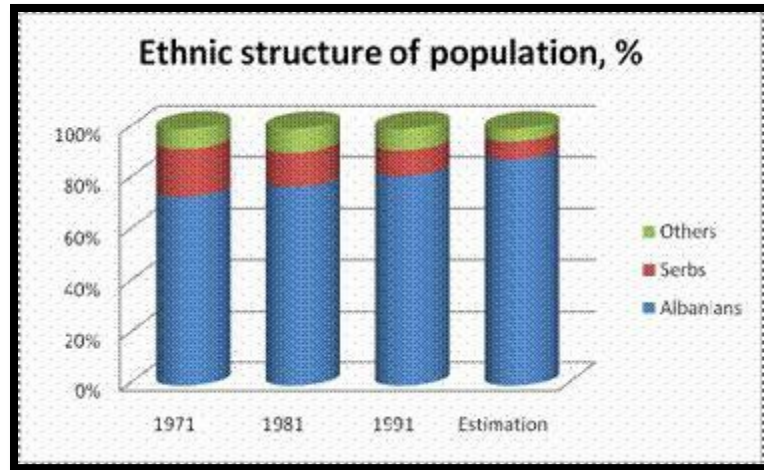
Linda Abazi-Morina of the UN Populations Fund discussed domestic violence and policies aimed at better addressing the issue, touching on the basic but important problem of defining the term. Previously, Kosovo law recognized domestic violence as any such behavior between a cohabitant couple, only recently expanding the definition to cover violence against the elderly, children, and those with disabilities. Abazi-Morina echoed Miftari in pointing to budget issues as a major constraint on improving life situations of those subjected to violence, but happily shared an increase in shelters and investigation rooms equipped to comfort victims and, if present, their children. These measures are changing the culture surrounding the sensitive issue, allowing for a more appropriate treatment of victims in relation their perpetrators and creating a society that won't accept the behavior as routine.

Representative Haradinaj echoed her colleagues in reaffirming the importance of having living laws instead of meaningless statutes, calling for the –voluntary implementation of principles of gender equalityl as necessarily preceded by a change in sociocultural mentality shift. As Kabashi mentioned at the beginning of the talk, laws can hasten the speed of this shift, building channels for success and producing role models—not just for aspiring female youth in Kosovo, but for their families as well. Kabashi noted a recent study citing an indirect symbolic impact that females in leadership positions can have for fathers with daughters: when fathers see females elected to leadership positions in their country, they want their daughters to achieve the same.

Without a place at the decision-making table for women, half of the population is robbed of a voice. This phenomenon is a human rights issue, not a gender role misunderstanding; value changes that go beyond writing laws will cement generation-spanning change. Kosovo's female population is poised to help continue to close the already-waning gap in equality between women and men. Their male colleagues' willingness to carry their weight in the struggle will determine its success.

ETHNICITY *Justin Dodge*

Today most of the people living in Kosovo are ethnic Albanians, although just a couple decades ago, in the late 1900s, the population was much more diverse. The Albanians are a unique ethnic group with few close relatives; they are one of the oldest ethnic groups in all of Europe and are considered quite distinct ethnically. The past diversity in the country can still be seen in much smaller numbers as most of the people living in Kosovo that aren't ethnic Albanian remain from this time. These small groups of people include Serbs, Montenegrins, and others.



During the Kosovo War in 1999, over 700,000 ethnic Albanians,[18] around 100,000 ethnic Serbs and more than 40,000

Bosniaks were forced out of Kosovo to neighbouring Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Serbia. After the United Nations took over administration of Kosovo following the war, the vast majority of the Albanian refugees returned.[citation needed] The largest diaspora communities of Kosovo Albanians are in Germany and Switzerland accounting for some 200,000 individuals each, or for 20% of the population resident in Kosovo.

Many non-Albanians – chiefly Serbs and Romani – fled or were expelled, mostly to the rest of Serbia at the end of the war, with further refugee outflows occurring as the result of sporadic ethnic violence. The number of registered refugees is around 250,000.[19][unreliable source?][20][21] The non-Albanian population in Kosovo is now about half of its pre-war total[citation needed]. The largest concentration of Serbs in the province is in the north, but many remain in Kosovo Serb enclaves surrounded by Albanian-populated areas.



RELIGION *Justin Dodge*

There is no official religion in Kosovo, although the country is predominantly Muslim as the majority of Albanians are Muslim. Many of the ethnic Serbs are Orthodox Islam (the name of the religion, whose followers are called Muslims) is a monotheistic religion, whose holy book is called the Qur'an. The Qur'an is believed to be the word of God spoken through the prophet Muhammad from 609-632 CE (Common Era is preferred over AD (Anno Domini or "year of the Lord") since the Islamic world doesn't believe Jesus was the messiah). Islam believes Muhammad was the last prophet sent to earth by God, the last in a long line of prophets, which includes Moses, Abraham, and Jesus among others.

Muslims follow five pillars of their faith: testimony, prayer, alms-giving, fasting, and pilgrimage. These pillars, and other tenants of their faith, can give great structure to their lives as some foods, like pork, are forbidden and every Muslim is expected to pray five times a day. However, the level of participation in each of these pillars and to what degree Islam influences an individual's life varies from person to person and community to community.

Islam: 95,6% , Christians (catholic) 2,2%, Christians (orthodox) 1,5%. Other 0,06%

ECONOMY *CIA World*

Kosovo's economy has shown progress in transitioning to a market -based system and maintaining macroeconomic stability, but it is still highly dependent on the international community and the diaspora for financial and technical assistance. Remittances from the diaspora - located mainly in Germany, Switzerland, and the Nordic countries - are estimated to account for about 17% of GDP and international donor assistance accounts for approximately 10% of GDP. With international assistance, Kosovo has been able to privatize a majority of its state -owned enterprises. Kosovo's citizens are the second poorest in Europe, after Moldova, with a per capita GDP (PPP) of \$9,600 in 2016. An unemployment rate of 33%, and a youth unemployment rate near 60%, in a country where the average age is 26, encourages emigration and fuels a significant informal, unreported economy. Emigration remains challenging, however, because Kosovo lacks visa-free travel to the EU. Most of Kosovo's population lives in rural towns outside of the capital, Pristina. Inefficient, near -subsistence farming is common - the result of small plots, limited mechanization, and a lack of technical expertise. Kosovo enjoys lower labor costs than the rest of the region. However, high levels of corruption, little contract enforcement, and unreliable electricity supply have discouraged potential investors. The official currency of Kosovo is the euro, but the Serbian dinar is also used illegally in Serb majority communities. Kosovo's tie to the euro has helped keep core inflation low. Minerals and metals production - including lignite, lead, zinc, nickel, chrome, aluminum, magnesium, and a wide variety of construction materials - once the backbone of industry, has declined because of aging equipment and insufficient investment, problems exacerbated by competing and unresolved ownership claims of Kosovo's largest mines. A limited and unreliable electricity supply is a major impediment to economic development, but Kosovo has received technical assistance to help improve the sector's performance. In 2012, Kosovo

privatized its electricity supply and distribution network. The US Government is cooperating with the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and the World Bank to conclude a commercial tender for the construction of Kosovo C, a new lignite -fired power plant that would leverage Kosovo's large lignite reserves. MED also has plans for the rehabilitation of an older coal power plant, Kosovo B, and the development of a coal mine that could supply both plants.

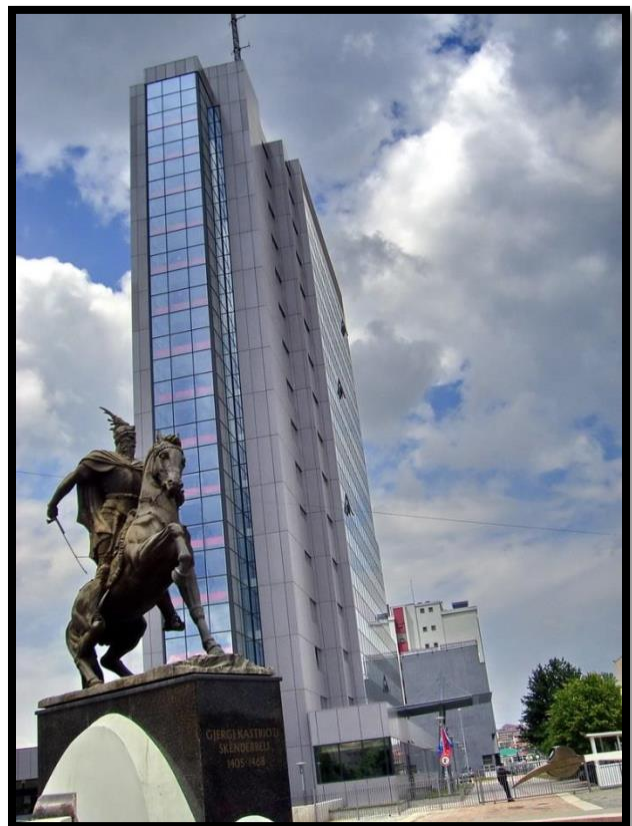
GOVERNMENT OF KOSOVO *Christian Miller*

The Government of Kosovo exercises executive authority in the Republic of Kosovo. It is composed of government ministers, and is led by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is elected by the Assembly of Kosovo. Ministers are nominated by the Prime Minister, and then confirmed by the Assembly. Isa Mustafa is the current Prime Minister of Kosovo. He was elected after the June 8, 2014 elections. His government consists of Albanians, as well as ministers from Kosovo's minorities, which include Bosniaks, Turks and Serbs.

Self-declared independence

Talks initiated by the UN in 2005 on the future of Kosovo led in 2007 to a plan, submitted by UN envoy Martti Ahtisaari, that laid the groundwork for self-rule but stopped just short of full independence. Rapid endorsement of the plan by Kosovar Albanians was countered with intransigent opposition from the Serbian government. Months of further talks between Serbian and Kosovar leaders failed to resolve Kosovo's future status, and by early 2008 Kosovo was determined to secede.
John B. Allcock
John R. Lampe

On February 17, 2008, Kosovo formally declared independence. Serbia, backed by Russia, called the declaration illegal. Serbs living in Kosovo largely opposed Kosovar independence as well; they soon elected their own assembly as a direct challenge to Kosovo's new constitution, which took effect in June. In October the UN General Assembly, following a request by Serbia, submitted the question of the legality of Kosovo's independence to the International Court of Justice. Meanwhile, Russian objections postponed the withdrawal of the UN mission, which ultimately was expected to transfer its powers of oversight to the European Union (EU). The EU finally deployed its mission, known as Eulex, in December. Eulex, made up of about



2,000 officials from a number of European countries, would oversee police, judicial, and customs activities in Kosovo. In November 2009, in what many viewed as a test of its commitment to democracy, Kosovo held its first elections since independence. International monitors determined that the process, conducted on the municipal level, was peaceful and, in general, fair, despite the refusal of many of the remaining Serbs to participate. By 2010 a new World Bank loan promised to address the problem of real estate registry (a proper system was needed to ensure transparent property transactions and to protect minority property rights), but a June report of the Council of Europe expressed continuing international concern over the wider judicial reform that would be needed to establish the rule of law. The same concerns informed the decision of the EU to extend the Eulex mission for two years, through mid-2012. The July 2010 decision of the International Court of Justice to recognize Kosovo's declaration of independence was expected to strengthen the determination of the Kosovar Albanian government and the Eulex authorities, as well to consolidate Kosovo's sovereignty within its declared borders—largely if not unanimously recognized by the international community.

Meanwhile, the status of the small Serb minority remained unsettled, and the government in Pristina continued to face difficulty in establishing authority over the Serb-dominated areas north of the Ibër (Ibar) River. Obviously unsettled as well were relations with Serbia, still a major trading partner. However, Serbia's support of a UN resolution passed in September 2010, which called for EU-mediated talks between Serbia and Kosovo, offered some hope for the normalization of relations. Kosovo's level of unemployment continued to exceed 40 percent, but economic growth persisted—although at a reduced pace given the international financial crisis that began in 2008 and the attendant drop in remittances sent back from abroad. Still missing was sizeable direct foreign investment, which at some point will be needed to replace the substantial aid—more than \$3 billion since 1999—provided by the United States and Europe. A young population and a variety of mineral deposits are nonetheless resources to be tapped if Kosovo's political leadership can respond to the challenges of domestic reform and international accommodation. In November 2010 the Assembly of Kosovo overwhelmingly passed a motion of no confidence in the country's minority government, led by Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (Partia Demokratike e Kosovës; PDK), prompting the dissolution of the body and the scheduling of elections. The fall of the government followed the September resignation of Pres. Fatmir Sejdiu, who in October withdrew his Democratic League of Kosovo (Lidhja Demokratike e Kosovës; LDK) from the coalition that had governed Kosovo since independence. The elections, held in December 2010, returned the PDK to power, and Thaçi remained prime minister.

Although there were reports of widespread voting irregularities, a revote in January 2011 affirmed the earlier results.

Unrest continued in northern Kosovo throughout 2011, as ethnic Serbs, with the support of Serbia, created parallel institutions in defiance of the Kosovar government in Pristina. EU police and some 6,000 NATO troops maintained an uneasy peace in the region, and tensions sometimes erupted into violence. Nevertheless, negotiations between Kosovo and Serbia continued throughout the year in an effort to normalize relations between them. Although the unemployment rate in Kosovo approached 50 percent and organized crime and corruption remained endemic problems, the European Commission determined in late 2012 that the country had made sufficient progress to begin negotiations for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement—a critical step toward accession to the EU. In April 2013 Kosovo and Serbia reached a milestone agreement that granted a degree of autonomy to ethnic Serbs in northern Kosovo in

exchange for de facto recognition of Kosovo's authority in the region. Serbian negotiators stopped short of recognizing Kosovo's independence, however. Political gridlock following a general election in June 2014 hampered the EU reform agenda, and six months passed before a new government could be formed. A compromise between the LDK and PDK was reached in December, whereby LDK leader Isa Mustafa was made prime minister. Thaçi was named deputy prime minister and foreign minister, with both parties agreeing that he would become president in 2016, upon the conclusion of Atifete Jahjaga's term in that office. In August 2015 Kosovo and Serbia made great strides in normalizing their relations. The two countries concluded negotiations that addressed energy and telecommunications issues, with Kosovo gaining its own international telephone prefix, and Serb communities within Kosovo being granted a measure of autonomy. Backlash against the EU-brokered deal was intense, and in October opposition lawmakers set off tear-gas canisters on the floor of parliament in protest. Later that month Kosovo concluded a long-desired Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU. Although EU officials stated that additional political and economic reforms would be necessary before full accession could be considered, some \$700 million in developmental aid was made available to Kosovo to achieve those goals.

KOSOVAR REFUGEES *Christian Miller*

By the end of April 1999, about 600,000 residents of Kosovo had become refugees; another 400,000 were displaced inside Kosovo, meaning that half of the two million residents of Kosovo were refugees or internally displaced people. About 375,000 Kosovars moved south to neighboring Albania (population 3.2 million and per capita GDP \$700) and 150,000 had moved to Macedonia (2.1 million and \$1700); others moved to Montenegro and Bosnia. As they left Kosovo, Serbs reportedly stripped many Kosovars of passports, property deeds and other records.

A repeated justification for NATO's bombing of the Serbian military was to prevent ethnic cleansing, marking one of the first times that a humanitarian goal was invoked to go to war. Serb treatment of Kosovars has been called the "glue" of NATO solidarity. The NATO bombing campaign was launched to stop Serb aggression against Kosovars. Instead, after the bombing began, the Serbs stepped up their effort to drive Kosovars out of Kosovo. A successful conclusion of the NATO campaign would be their return of Kosovars to a peaceful Kosovo.

Governments of the European Union, led by Germany, favored aiding the refugees as close to Kosovo as possible rather than accepting them for resettlement. Emma Bonino of Italy, acting humanitarian affairs commissioner of the European Union, said that: "The further away people are from home, the more difficult it is for them to go back." The EU provided assistance to establish refugee camps in Albania and Macedonia rather than moving hundreds of thousands of refugees out of the area. NATO troops took the lead in establishing shelters and providing food, and then turned the operation of the refugee camps over to UNHCR and other relief agencies.

Moving Kosovars out of the region proved to be problematic. On April 4, it was announced that 100,000 Kosovars would be airlifted to temporary safety, including 20,000 to the US and to Turkey; 10,000 to Germany; 6,000 to Norway; and 5,000 each to Austria, Canada and Greece. There were calls for each EU nation to accept a quota or share of the refugees, but Great Britain, France and Italy opposed such a quota scheme.

As they registered in the refugee camps, Kosovars were asked where they would like to be relocated; most chose Germany. Countries accepting Kosovars set up screening procedures, determining who had education, relatives and financial resources or was in greatest need of resettlement; the informal goal was to relocate 1,500 Kosovars a day. Many European countries are reluctant to take the entire contingent they promised to accept until other countries accept refugees, and Sweden noted that it was reluctant to accept extended families as part of the 5,000 refugees that it agreed to accept because, with no relatives left behind, Kosovars may be reluctant to return.

Smugglers are reportedly active in the refugee camps in Albania and Macedonia, promising to take people to the European country of their choice for \$5,000. In many cases, the smuggling fee is paid by relatives in the destination. In a few cases, Macedonians have been caught coming into refugee camps to register as refugees in order to get relocated to Europe.



By the end of April 1999, about 10,000 Kosovars had been flown to Germany. Once in Germany, Kosovars are treated like asylum seekers, provided with accommodations and meals and DM80 a month for adults and DM40 a month for children. The cost of caring for the Kosovars was put at DM1,000 a person each month, divided equally between the federal and state governments. There are about 300,000 Kosovars in Germany, including 100,000 who are under orders to leave: Germany has stopped

deportations to Kosovo.

Foreigners commissioner Marieluise Beck called on the German government to allow private citizens to sponsor Kosovars; there are about 100,000 Kosovars in Germany. During the Bosnian war, Germans were permitted to sign affidavits of support for Bosnians who had Temporary Protected Status in Germany.

The US planned to shelter 20,000 Kosovars in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, but they were reluctant to travel so far from Kosovo without any assurance of entering the US.



Kosovars in Guantanamo would have restricted rights to apply for asylum, according to a 1993 US Supreme Court ruling. [Guantanamo Bay is the place where 50,000 Cuban and Haitians were housed in the early 1990s at a cost of about \$250 million. Most of the Haitians were returned to Haiti; most of the Cubans were eventually permitted to enter the US.]

In late April, the US agreed that 20,000 Kosovars could enter the US as refugees, eligible for welfare, housing and other resettlement assistance, if they had US relatives as distant as aunts, uncles and cousins. Legal US residents may also agree to sponsor Kosovars who are their relatives, with priority given to admissions from the 130,000 Kosovo Albanians in Macedonia. For more information, call 800-727-4420.

After one year of US residence, the Kosovars could become legal US immigrants. Some Albanian-American groups were critical, noting that accepting the Kosovars as refugees sent the signal that they would be unlikely to return soon. The US has granted temporary protected status to about 3,000 Kosovars in the US when the bombing began. The US resettled 2.3 million refugees since 1975; most were from Vietnam and the former Soviet Union. The US, which anticipates 78,000 refugees in FY99, resettles

more refugees than all other countries combined. About 1.8 million of the two million residents of Kosovo before fighting began were ethnic Albanians. Many reports compared the Kosovo refugee situation to that of Bosnia. In the spring and summer of 1992, over 750,000 Bosnians fled from attacking Serbs. About 350,000 Bosnians moved to Germany, and Germany spent \$11 billion caring for them until they began to trickle back to Bosnia after the 1995 Dayton peace agreement. By April 1999, about 80,000 Bosnians remained in Germany. Bosnians in the US are concentrated in Chicago and St. Louis. The Kosovo conflict prompted thinking about "permanent refugees." The UNHCR has traditionally thought of three solutions for refugees: "going home, being locally integrated, or being resettled" in a third country. The Geneva-based International Organization on Migration (IOM) and the Vienna-based International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) released a report on Kosovar migration that concluded that about half of the 400,000 persons displaced by the conflict had left the province before NATO airstrikes began in March 1999. Most went to other nations of the ex-Yugoslavia. Some of those fleeing Kosovo used smugglers to get into Western Europe, traveling to Hungary and then across the Slovak and Czech Republics to Germany. Germany apprehended three times more Kosovo Albanians attempting to cross the German-Czech border in the first half of 1998 than in the same period of 1997.

Almost half of the attempts to enter Switzerland illegally on the Italian-Swiss border during the first half of 1998 were by Kosovo Albanians or Albanians. The report noted that about 40 percent of the Bosnians who fled to Western Europe have returned to Bosnia since the signing of the Dayton Peace agreement in December 1995; most of those who returned went back to areas in which their ethnic group is predominant. As Kosovars streamed into Albania in April 1999, some made their way to Vlore, a city of 90,000 from which people and goods are smuggled to Italy, 42 miles away. The smuggling business developed after the collapse of communism in Albania in 1991, first taking Albanians, then migrants from around the world, into Italy in high-speed boats. Most of the boats are equipped with several engines, and can take 30 to 40 migrants to Italy in 60 to 90 minutes at a cost to the migrants of \$500 to \$1,000 each. Italy is financing efforts to reduce the smuggling, and the high-speed boats are no longer openly moored in the bay at Vlore. On March 24, Greek officials boosted security along Greece's northern borders with Albania and Macedonia to head off an expected wave of refugees following the air strikes on Serbia. Greece, though a NATO member, will not participate in any direct military action against Serbia.

References

- <http://www.geoba.se/country.php?cc=XK&year=2018> View: 06.09.2017
- <https://en.wikivoyage.org/wiki/Kosovo> View: 06.09.2017
- <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/kosovo> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.indexmundi.com/kosovo/literacy.html> View: 06.09.2017
- <https://tradingeconomics.com/kosovo/unemployment-rate/forecast> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/flags/countrys/europe/kosovo.htm> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.beinkosovo.com/kosovo-geography/> View: 06.09.2017
- <https://www.britannica.com/place/Kosovo/Cultural-life> View: 06.09.2017
- <https://www.infoplease.com/world/geography/kosovo> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.diplomaticourier.com/2013/09/03/kosovo-s-path-to-gender-equality/> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2015/10/kosovo-the-role-and-position-of-women-in-central-and-local-institutions-and-political-parties> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/kosovo/culture/> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/kosovo/culture/food-drinks/> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/kosovo/culture/ethnicity-language-religion/> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/kosovo/culture/social-life/> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/kosovo/geography-weather-wildlife/> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/kosovo/11426805/Exodus-from-Kosovo-Why-thousands-have-left-the-Balkans.html> View: 06.09.2017
- <https://www.quora.com/Why-do-many-people-leave-Albania-Serbia-and-Kosovo> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-kosovo-refugees-20150215-story.html> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://www.euronews.com/2015/03/27/fleeing-kosovo-over-the-border-and-back-again> View: 06.09.2017
- <http://kosovoflag.facts.co/kosovoflagof/kosovoflag.php> View: 06.09.2017
- <https://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/more.php?id=1801> View: 06.09.2017



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



LIBYA

Produced by the University of Malta

FAST FACTS:

- Libya is a country in North Africa
- The most widely spoken language is **Arabic**. Other languages include Tamazight - i.e. Berber languages; Tamahaq spoken by the Tuareg; Italian and English spoken by the older generations
- The main ethnic groups are Arabs, Berbers, Tebus and Tuaregs. Tebus live in the south-western and south-eastern regions of Egypt, and have been socially excluded and marginalised due to their darker skin
- The majority of Libyans are **Sunni Muslims**
- Since 2011, when the Libyan Civil War began, Libya has been torn between two governments and different militias and armed groups. Militias have continued to clash, and engaged in arbitrary detentions, torture, attacks and other
- **Women's participation in the labour market** is significantly lower than men's and there are significant income disparities between the sexes
- **Purdah, the custom of secluding and veiling women** is a traditional feature of Libyan cultural life
- Libyan legislation inadequately addresses domestic violence, and **cases of domestic violence often go unreported for fear of social stigma or rejection by the husband/family**



- **Domestic violence is widespread in Libya**, particularly in rural areas, where corporal punishment on wives or daughters is widespread. More generally, many Libyan men and women believe that in certain circumstances it is acceptable for a husband to beat his wife
- **Honour crimes** are common in Libya. Women and girls who become pregnant after being raped are at risk of being murdered by their own families
- Ghaddafi forces used **rape as a weapon of war**, and in recent years, numerous abductions of women and girls, forced disappearances, sexual harassment incidents and other have occurred
- Although rape is criminalised, **the law does not recognise marital rape**



LIBYA

GEOGRAPHY: Libya is located in North Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Egypt, Tunisia, and Algeria. It shares its southern border with Chad, Niger, and Sudan¹.



CAPITAL: Tripoli

POPULATION: 6,416,794².

LANGUAGE: Arabic; Tamazight - i.e. Berber languages - without official status, which are spoken by Libyan Berbers in the Jebel Nafusa region (Tripolitania), the town of Zuwarah on the coast, and the city-oases of Ghadames, Ghat and Ajila. Tuaregs speak Tamahaq, the only known northern Tamasheq language. Italian and English are sometimes spoken in the big cities, although Italian speakers are mainly among the older generation³.

LITERACY RATE: 90%⁴

ETHNIC GROUPS: Arabs, Berbers, Tebus and Tuaregs; other 3% (including Greeks, Maltese, Italians, Egyptians, Pakistanis, Turks, Indians and Tunisians). Berbers descend from North-African indigenous populations. Libyan Tuaregs inhabit the south-west of Egypt and are

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Libya>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/libya-population/>

³ <http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/libya-guide>

⁴ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?page=3>



LIBYA

divided in two main communities: one originating from the border area between Libya and Algeria; the other formed by immigrants from Niger and Mali. Tuaregs and Berbers both speak Tamazight, but Tuaregs consider themselves as a different ethnic group.

Tebus live in the south-western and in the south-eastern regions of Egypt. They have been socially excluded and marginalised through Ghaddafi's Arabization policy. **Tebus are often referred to as 'Black Africans' and have been largely discriminated against due to their darker skin**⁵.

BELIEF: Sunni Muslim 96.6%, other 3.4%⁶. **Sharia Law is in use in Libya**⁷, and the cult of saints is widespread⁸.

POLITICAL SITUATION: **Libya has been in a state of disarray since 2011**, when anti-government protests against the rule of Gadhafi broke out in Benghazi and Tripoli. Numerous protesters perished, attacked by the security forces. The protests spread through the country, sparking the **2011 Civil War**.

Since 2011, Libya has been torn between two governments and different militias and armed groups. **Militias have continued to clash, and engaged in arbitrary detentions, torture, attacks and other**. Criminal gangs and militias have abducted politicians, journalists, and civilians for financial gain. Libya's criminal justice system is dysfunctional, and lacks accountability. Despite having obtained jurisdiction over Libya through the UN Security Council, the International Criminal Court (ICC), has failed to carry out any new investigation into ongoing crimes⁹.



Protests in Benghazi in 2011

⁵ <http://mediterraneanaffairs.com/ethnic-minorities-the-main-challenge-for-the-libyan-stabilization/>

⁶ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ja-Ma/Libya.html#ixzz4mQGpFYEG> & <http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/libya-guide>

⁷ <https://journal-neo.org/2013/12/12/rus-liviya-vvodit-shariat/>

⁸ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ja-Ma/Libya.html#ixzz4mQGpFYEG> & <http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/libya-guide>

⁹ <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/09/20/world/libya-fast-facts/index.html>



LIBYA

© Encyclopaedia Britannica

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: After the Revolution in September 1969, and in accordance with Sharia law, alcoholic beverages were outlawed, bars and nightclubs were closed, and entertainment of both modest and provocative nature was banned. The use of the Islamic Hijri calendar was also made mandatory.

There are numerous rules governing etiquette in Libya. Greetings are generally enthusiastic and warm, and generally involve handshakes accompanied by smiling and direct eye contact. Although eye contact is important, it should be intermittent rather than fixed. Men shake hands, but should wait for a woman to extend her hand first. The most commonly used greeting is "Asalaamu alaikum" ("Peace be with you") to which one would respond with "wa alaikum salam" ("and Peace be with you")¹⁰.

GENDER RELATIONS: The legal age for marriage is 20 years for both men and women in Libya, but judges can allow marriage at an earlier age. Marriages are arranged by the parents in consultation with members of the extended family. Wives are under legal obligation to look after their husbands and take care of the house and the children; in return, husbands should support them financially.

Polygamy is legal in Libya, but remains quite uncommon¹¹. **Men can repudiate their wives, but such unilateral divorces must be registered in court to be valid. On the other hand, women can only obtain a divorce under limited conditions, or request a khula divorce and renounce their dowry.** Divorced women often face social stigma and financial difficulties. Abortion is only legal if the pregnant woman's life is in danger.



Libyan wedding

© People and Countries

A higher percentage of women than men have no formal education or did not complete their primary education¹²; however, low educational attainment applies mostly to older generations of women¹³. Women's participation in the labour market is significantly lower than men's and there is significant income disparity between the sexes; women cannot work heavy jobs, cannot work at night, or for more than 48 hours a week. Women are not very involved in the civic life of the country¹⁴.

¹⁰ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ja-Ma/Libya.html#ixzz4mQGaWjfi> & <http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/libya-guide>

¹¹ <http://www.ifes.org/surveys/ifes-survey-status-women-libya>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ja-Ma/Libya.html#ixzz4mQGwRuCG>

¹⁴ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/libya>



LIBYA

There are no official legal restrictions on women's access to public space and freedom of movement, but societal norms curtail women's ability to move freely, especially in the evenings or in rural areas. Freedom of movement has been further restricted by the ongoing conflict¹⁵.

GBV: Libyan legislation inadequately addresses domestic violence, and cases of domestic violence often go unreported for fear of social stigma or rejection by the husband/family. Despite it being under-reported, domestic violence is widespread in Libya, particularly in rural areas, where it is deemed acceptable for men to punish their wives or daughters. More generally, many Libyan men and women believe that in certain circumstances it is acceptable for a husband to beat his wife¹⁶.

Honour crimes are common in Libya; women and girls who become pregnant after being raped are at risk of being murdered by their own families¹⁷. Although rape is criminalised, the law does not recognise marital rape. A convicted rapist can either marry the victim if they agree to it, or serve a prison sentence of up to 25 years. Ghaddafi forces used **rape as a weapon of war**, and in recent years, numerous abductions of women and girls, forced disappearances, sexual harassment and other have occurred¹⁸.

There is no evidence or data indicating that female genital mutilation (FGM) is a general practice, although reports suggest that FGM may be practised among nomadic tribes in rural areas, and among migrant groups from Sub-Saharan Africa¹⁹.

¹⁵ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ja-Ma/Libya.html#ixzz4mQGpFYEG> & <http://www.commisceoglobal.com/country-guides/libya-guide>

¹⁶ https://mhps.net/?get=315/asma-khalifa_libyan-women-in-conflict-uhgpw.pdf & <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/libya>

¹⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13760895>

¹⁸ https://mhps.net/?get=315/asma-khalifa_libyan-women-in-conflict-uhgpw.pdf & <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/libya>

¹⁹ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2017/country-chapters/libya> & https://mhps.net/?get=315/asma-khalifa_libyan-women-in-conflict-uhgpw.pdf



LIBYA



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



MALI

Produced by ANFE Italia (Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti)



GEOGRAPHY: Mali, the largest country in West Africa, is bordered by seven other states: Algeria lies to the north and northeast, Niger to the east, Burkina Faso to the southeast and the Ivory Coast, to the south. On the west are Senegal and Mauritania. The region is almost entirely arid desert or semi desert¹ and the majority of the population lives in the southern region with the Niger and Senegal rivers, far from the Sahara desert, about 68% of the population is rural, with 5-10 of people living a nomadic lifestyle.

CAPITAL: Bamako

POPULATION: 17,885,245 million²

LANGUAGE: The official language is French but there are also 13 other national languages and at least other 40 African dialects in use. The most common dialects are: Bambara, Mandinka, Wolof, Fula followed by other indigenous vernaculars³.

LITERACY RATE: total 33.1%; male 45.1% and female 22.2%⁴.



BELIEF: Islam is the predominant religion in Mali (Sunni and Sufi constitute an estimated 95% of the population; the remaining are Christians or people who adhere to traditional religions. There are several mosques (particularly in Bamako) associated with a fundamentalist Muslim⁵.

1 <http://www.geographia.com/mali/>

2 <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html>

3 <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/mali-population/>

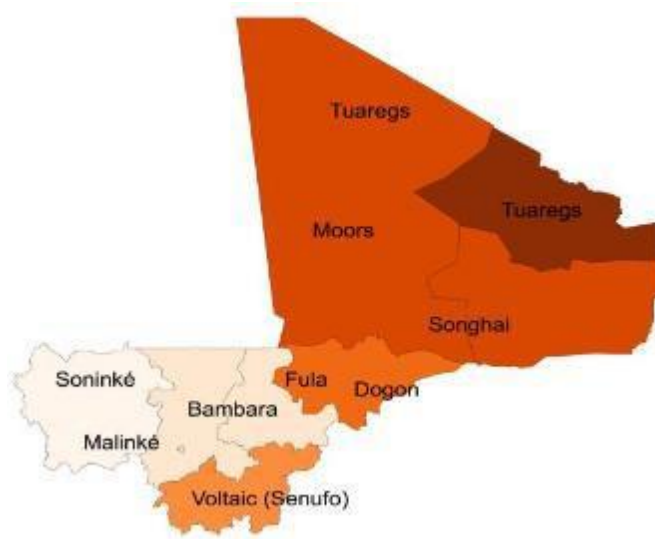
4 <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html>



MALI

ETHNIC GROUPS: The largest group is the Bambara, living in central and southern Mali along the middle Niger Valley; the main minority groups are Peuhl also called Fula or Fulani (14.7%), Tuareg (7.7 per cent). Maure, Soninké (Saracolé) (10.8 per cent), Senoufo (10.5 per cent), Minianka. Dogon (8.9 per cent), Bozo (2.9 per cent), Songhai (1.6 per cent), Diawara, Xaasongaxango (Khassonke)⁶.

Although the various administrations have always tried to favor pluralism and integration among the ethnic groups, for some time the relations between the Tuareg population living in the north and the Malian government are very tense⁷.



POLITICAL SITUATION: Since its independence from France in 1960, Mali has passed through droughts, periodic rebellions (mainly by Tuareg), a coup and more than 20 years of dictatorship until democratic elections in 1992. In 1994, and after the failure of the Pact National of April 1992, the Malian government signed a peace accord with the Tuareg, one that commits the government to the development of all northern populations. In early 2012, there was another military coup and an occupation of the northern regions by armed groups so in 2013, France intervened militarily upon the government's request. Authorities agreed a United Nations-sponsored peace with Tuareg separatists in 2015, but parts of the country remain tense, with Tuareg rebels sporadically active. Security, critical to economic recovery and poverty reduction, is fragile, with attacks by armed groups on the UN force and the Malian army continuing, mostly in the north. Meanwhile, a jihadist insurgency in Mali's north and central regions continues, with al-Qaeda-linked militants carrying out attacks⁸.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: Islam practiced in Mali usually is moderate, tolerant but is adapted to local conditions. Women generally do not wear veils⁹ and people are encouraged to be sensitive to the local dress code (e.g. the wearing of shorts is discouraged for both women and men). Men, when greeting one another, usually shake hands and then they put the right hand to the chest as a show of respect; holding hands with other men while walking is a sign of friendship. Men greeting women just use a simple handshaking; in certain parts of southern it is common for women to bend

⁵ <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/256257.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ml.html>

⁷ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ja-Ma/Mali.html>

⁸ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13881370>

⁹ <https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/cs/profiles/Mali-new.pdf>



MALI

their knees when greeting elders. Direct eye contact is considered unpolished and in some case as threat as well as to point people with the index finger; in case of invitation to dinner it is rude to bring a gift, because it is the owner of the house who has to provide everything¹⁰. Most of the people live in small villages and pursue such traditional occupations as farming, fishing, herding, crafts, and trade. Most of the Tuareg and Moors, living in the north of the Niger River, are herders, they raise cattle, sheep, and goats and are always on the move in search of water and forage for their animals. The Tuareg are not traditionally fundamentalist and do not follow strict Sharia law Malian ethnic groups are patrilineal, and residence tends to be patrilocal; in rural areas and to a large extent in the cities, domestic units consist of an extended family (parents, sons, their wives and children, and unmarried daughters). People living in the big cities usually have a higher social standing and reproduce Western education, so in the cities it is possible to find couples who live independently from their extended families¹¹.

GENDER RELATIONS: Mali is assessed at 138th position out of 144 countries worldwide for gender equality in the 2016 Global Gender Gap Index¹². The country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women in 1985, and the Optional Protocol on violence against women in 2000; Mali also signed the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2005¹³. Despite in recent years the government has tried to remove some discriminatory statements regarding women, the new Family Code adopted in 2011 grants men sole parental authority and allows them to have up to four wives (man hold rights of access to and control over land and decide which parts, if any, women are allowed to farm); men are to be considered the head of the family and women have to obey their husbands¹⁴. However, a bold step has been made towards bringing about women's empowerment in Mali by adopting a landmark gender quota bill which requires a minimum of 30 percent of elected and appointed officials to be women. The discriminatory practices can vary significantly depending upon the location, the education, class, and the relationship between husband and wife. Rural women are extremely overworked and have reduced access to health care than city women. Gender inequalities seems to be smaller among younger people, those living in urban areas and those more educated¹⁵. Gender inequality has been reduced in primary education due to campaigns that encourage the enrolment of girls in school but no progress is visible in secondary education because of lack of targeted action and a prevailing sexist attitude. Girls are discriminated against in terms of access to education because families concerned about the safety of girls tend to keep them at home. Polygamy is legal, and relationships between co-wives are tense and competitive. Arranged marriages are less common, although still practiced. Women are expected to take care of household chores and children and they are involved in agricultural activities, especially in the collective fields of their husband's extended family without receiving any income. In general, they are less represented than men in the more lucrative sectors of the economy such as state employment, private enterprises, and big trade.

10 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13881370>

11 *ibidem*

12 <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=MLI>

13 https://www.genderindex.org/country/mali/#_ftn2

14 <https://www.fidh.org/en/region/Africa/mali/Mali-s-new-Family-Law-women-s>

15 <http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/CARE-IMAGES-Mali-Summary-Report-FINAL.pdf>



MALI

GBV: There is a very high support for some traditional practices, including excision or dowry being (practiced by most ethnic groups, with the exception of the Tuareg) and early marriage. Despite a slight decrease in forced marriage rates, marriage with minors is still very common (one in two couples get married before the age of 18). The legal age for marriage in Mali is 16 years for girls and 18 for boys, however many young women are promised as brides even before age 16 according to traditional customs and to Sharia ; in rural areas and partly also in some urban areas, marriages are combined (this practice reflects the importance of establishing alliances between the various families). FGM are not forbidden by law, although if, the Government in 2002, established ‘the National Program to Fight the Practice of Excision. Many Malians still view FGM as a necessary ritual for young girls in the name of self-preservation, safe sexual life and healthy families; most FGM are carried out on *girls between the ages of 6 months and 9 years*; almost two-thirds (61 %) of women aged 20-49 years were married or lived as such before the age of 18¹⁶. There are high rates of *violence*, including *sexual violence*, both *witnessed and experienced* during childhood and is common to think that a husband has the right to punish or abandon his wife in some cases (specially among *men and women with low education*); most of females reported having experienced physical or psychological violence, mainly inflicted by their husbands and most recent partners. A research shows that women with some income are at high risk of violence, more than women without revenue, maybe because they can be a trigger for men's use of IPV¹⁷. At present, there is no legislation regarding violence against women in Mali and most of the victims of violence domestic decides not to report because if social pressure or fear of retaliation, also police is reluctant to intervene in this situations. Terrorists and armed groups occupying parts of northern Mali violated the rights of local population, forcing women and girls to wear Islamic veil and flogged and publicly stoned women falsely accused of breaking the law. In addition, displaced women due to the lack of community-based protection mechanisms and the proximity of armed groups to population centres, making it particularly dangerous to access isolated water points and forests, faces violence such as collective rape or forced marriage. in some cases, also sexual slavery.¹⁸ The National Government and the United Nations country team have worked together to train the national army, the police and the gendarmerie on conflict-related sexual violence¹⁹.

¹⁶ https://www.google.it/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi5hOCXk_vX

AhVPzaQKHR8ZDD8QFgg4MAI&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.usaid.gov%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocuments%2F1860%2FMali%2520Gender%2520Assessment%2520Addendum%2520Final.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3Bftfzv4ICqMyVhP-h1D1

¹⁷ <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/12.01.2014.%20Gender%20Based%20Violence%20Englsh%20factsheet.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://minusma.unmissions.org/en/impact-crisis-women-mali>

¹⁹ <http://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/countries/mali/>



MALI



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



MOROCCO

Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)

Geography

Northern Africa. Morocco borders Algeria to the east and southeast, Western Sahara to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, and the Mediterranean Sea to the north.¹



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Population 35,241,418 (2017)²

Population distribution The highest population density is found along the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts; a number of densely populated agglomerations are found scattered through the Atlas Mountains³.

Capital Rabat

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Morocco>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2266.html>



MOROCCO



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Language Arabic (official), Berber languages (Tamazight (official), Tachelhit, Tarifit), French (often the language of business, government, and diplomacy).

Literacy Rate 69% (2012)⁴ **GPI** 0.74 ⁵

Ethnic Groups Arab-Berber 99%, other 1%

Religion/Beliefs Muslim 99% (official; virtually all Sunni, <0.1% Shia), other 1% (includes Christian, Jewish, and Baha'i); note - Jewish about 6,000 (2010 est.) Moroccans are tolerant of the small percentage of Christians and Jews living in the country, believing they worship the same God.

Political Situation

⁴ Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175>)

⁵ The *gender parity index (GPI)* of the adult literacy rate is the ratio of the female to male literacy rates of the population aged 15 years and over. A GPI value between 0.97 and 1.03 is usually interpreted to indicate gender parity. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175/3>)

⁵ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/The-United-Kingdom-of-Morocco.html>



MOROCCO

The first king of Morocco, Mohamed V, took the throne in 1957, soon after receiving independence⁶. Since then until today, the Kingdom of Morocco has sustained a constitutional monarchy based on Islamic law and French and Spanish civil law systems. The three branches of the government are the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary. The officers of executive branch are all appointed by the King. Provincial governors are also appointed by the King.⁷

In Morocco today there is an abundance of political parties, most of which belong to one of two major groupings. There are about a dozen Islamic fundamentalist political parties, all of them illegal although unofficially tolerated. Relations between the King and the many parties have often been disturbing.⁸ The King also claims to be a descendant of the prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam. He also holds the position of the religious head of state, and all local religious leaders are subordinate to his decisions.

Morocco serves as one of the countries of origin and transit for undocumented migration into Spain from North Africa. Unemployment and underemployment are big problems for the unskilled and uneducated. There are a large number of homeless people begging in the streets, and 13 % of all Moroccans fall below the poverty line.⁹

Cultural Traditions

Moroccans are famous for their hospitality and proudly serve their guests as much food as they can afford. It is considered disgraceful to allow guests to leave a meal unsatisfied.¹⁰

Street markets with local foods and handicrafts can be found in every major city. Intense haggling over the price of most of these goods is the local custom. Maintaining good personal relations with everyone is very important as favours, bribes, kickbacks, and connections all come into play when making the final deal.¹¹

When greeting one another, Moroccans usually shake hands and touch their heart to show personal warmth. Segregation of the sexes is very important in almost every social situation outside the home. Only very modern, Westernized women are active in public life. In the Berber countryside, the appearance of women in public may be slightly more common than in major cities. Traditionally, elders are respected and honored by the entire community.

⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14121438>

⁷ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/The-United-Kingdom-of-Morocco.html>

⁸ ibid

⁹ ibid

¹⁰ ibid

¹¹ ibid



MOROCCO

Moroccans have a very flexible concept of punctuality. Dates, appointments, business meetings, and people tend to run behind schedule without concern. Saving face, especially in public, is of the utmost importance and may lead to white lies being told to cover any embarrassing or shameful situation. When tensions do occur, yelling, expressing frustration, and generally creating a public scene is acceptable and quite ordinary.

Among Moroccans exists a wide gap between the poor and rich. A strong belief in fatalism, that things are meant to be exactly as they are, and the Islamic principal of giving to those in need, lends to the acceptance of social and economic inequality.

At the top level of the class system exists the royal family, members of the government, and wealthy Moroccans who do not work. An upper middle and middle class is comprised of professionals, mostly educated in Europe. They do not perform any physical labour, and would consider it lowering themselves to do any of their own housework. Physical work must be left to provide jobs for those who have no alternative source of employment. Another group, called Sherfa, are those who claim descent from the prophet Muhammad and typically do not work. A relatively new class, called Muhajerin, is comprised of nearly 2 million Moroccans who emigrate in order to support their families in Morocco and live abroad. Berber farmers in the countryside have little access to the education and career progress compared to those in larger cities. People of the middle and upper classes.¹²

The number of languages spoken and the proficiency acquired are primary identifiers of social class in Morocco. Well-spoken French is perceived as a characteristic of a sophisticated individual and the inability to speak any French usually means a lack of education. Fluency in Arabic is expected of any respectable individual, while those who speak only Berber dialects are looked down upon. Other symbols of status are headgear and clothing. Moroccans have occasion to wear both traditional and Western clothing and is the quality of what is being worn that symbolizes one's status. Turbans worn by Berber men are often white while those of Arab men are orange. Women who wish to show that they are Islamic fundamentalist cover their heads to the hairline with a scarf or the hood of a jellaba when in public. Young women are increasingly challenging traditions such as this, some even daring to sit in public cafés and smoke cigarettes with uncovered heads.¹³

In modern Morocco devotion to Islam and loyalty to the King are still cornerstones of national identity.¹⁴ The five main pillars observed by Muslims are: making a public profession of faith, praying five times a day according to the position of the sun, fasting during the month of Ramadan, giving alms to those in need, and making a pilgrimage to Mecca once in a lifetime. Moroccans have added a few unique features of their own to

¹² <http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/The-United-Kingdom-of-Morocco.html>

¹³ ibid

¹⁴ ¹⁴ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Morocco>



traditional Islam. Two of these features, whose origins are likely attributed to Berber religious practices, are Baraka and Murabitin. Baraka refers to spiritual power that manifests in the form of a blessing or good fortune, similar to the concept of good karma in Buddhism. Murabitin are the individuals who possess good Baraka, similar to the concept of sainthood in Catholicism. Baraka may rub off on individuals who spend time with Murabitin.¹⁵

Gender and family relations

Uneducated women may find employment by providing domestic services to families other than their own. Those who are fortunate enough to receive university degrees, mostly belonging to high socio-economic status, may become doctors, lawyers, university professors, or other professionals.

In the domestic context, a gender-based hierarchy allows male children far greater freedom and opportunity than female children. Girls as young as four and five are expected to help with household chores and to care for their younger siblings. Cooking, cleaning, and child rearing are the traditional duties assigned to women.¹⁶

In almost every aspect of Moroccan life, the status of men is higher than that of women. For the most part, women remain in private, domestic places, and are subject to ridicule and harassment by men in public life on the streets. Worship in mosques is generally reserved to men and all Muslim leaders are male. A few hours, however, are set aside each week to allow women to worship. Within the family, the maintained virginity of a young woman is guarded, as it is vital to her acceptance for marriage. On the other hand, male sexual activity before marriage is regarded as normal. Life is both socially and economically difficult for women with no husband and no education. Female prostitution in the country is widespread.¹⁷

Parents still have considerable influence over the choice of their children's spouse, although in some less traditional families this practice is changing. Once a person with the appropriate economic and family background has been agreed upon, the groom offers a bride-price to the family of the bride-to-be. Islamic law dictates that Muslim women must marry Muslim men; it is acceptable, however, for a Muslim man to take a non-Muslim woman as his wife. If divorce occurs, it is likely to be instigated by the man, as a divorced woman has little chance to remarry and may have a difficult time providing for herself.¹⁸

The extended family is of utmost importance as it is a source of status and reputation as well as financial support. One's personal dignity and honour are an extension of the family name. The concept of *hshuma*, or shame, is spread to the entire family if one member of the family is known to have misbehaved. Therefore, there is great pressure

¹⁵ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/The-United-Kingdom-of-Morocco.html>

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ *ibid*

¹⁸ *ibid*



MOROCCO

to protect the reputation of all members of the family. Moroccans view married life as the only normal way for adults to live, and the idea of living alone is abhorrent. Polygamy is allowed under Islam, although it is rarely practiced. In such cases, the wives may live together in one house, or depending on the family's economic status, each wife may reside in her own dwelling with her offspring.¹⁹

GBV

Morocco scores very high on the Gender Inequality Index (113)²⁰ and Global Gender Gap Index (137)²¹. It means that in Morocco, onequality between women and men is very high.

Women who suffered violence of any type are not full protected by de Government. The constitution prohibits discrimination and any king of discriminative violence, but it refers to the general population and does not focus on women as victims. Sexual harassment, physical domestic violence, and some aspects of gender-based discrimination are contemplated by the law. There are more severe penalties for the crime of rape due to amendments to the penal code, although rape is not condemned because of its harm to the victim; rather it is considered a moral crime. In 2015 the Ministry of Justice criminalized forced marriage and sexual harassment. NGO's defending women's rights criticized the fact that they were excluded from its elaboration and that discriminatory laws were maintained. As an example, articles 418 and 420 of the draft law provide mitigating circumstances for cases of "honour killing". Article 475, according to which rapists could evade prosecution by marrying their underage victim was repelled.²²

Although Morocco is a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as, since July 2015, its optional protocol, the country only recognises its obligation to eliminate discrimination against women as long as this does not contradict Sharia Law. The Moroccan government, however, withdrew its reservations to article 9 concerning women's right to nationality and to pass on their nationality to their children as well as article 16 regarding marriage and family life in April 2011.²³

Counselling services and shelters for women victims of violence are generally set up by civil society organisations but they lack resources, and as a result, they are not numerous. This situation is even worse in rural areas.²⁴

¹⁹ <http://www.everyculture.com/Ma-Ni/The-United-Kingdom-of-Morocco.htm>

²⁰ *Gender Inequality Index*: A composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Source: Human Development Report, UNDP (2016) (http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf)

²¹ The *Global Gender Gap* Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria. Source: World Economic Forum, the Global Gender Gap Report 2016.

²² <http://euromedrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/EMHRN-Factsheet-VAW-Morocco-EN-2015.pdf>

²³ *ibid*

²⁴ *ibid*



MOROCCO





MOROCCO

This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.




Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



NIGERIA

Produced by the University of Malta

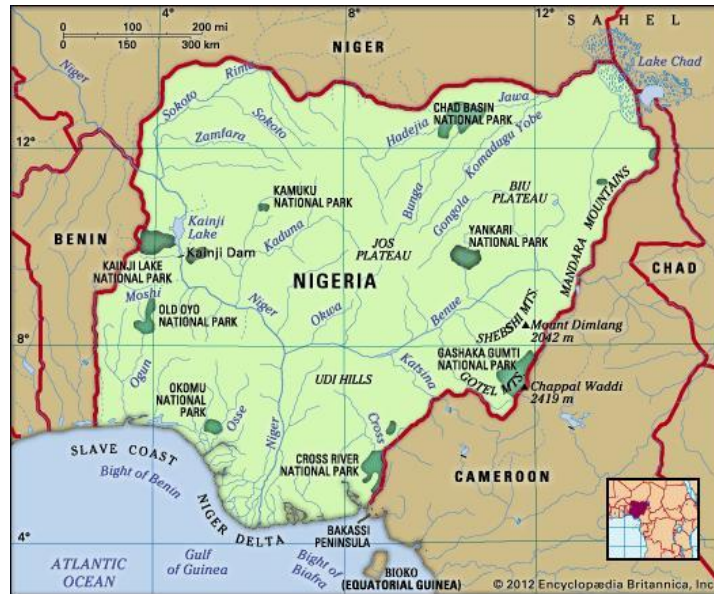
FAST FACTS:

- Nigeria is a country in West Africa. It is not only large in area, but also Africa's most populous country
 - English is Nigeria's official language; however, due to the large population, there are many linguistic differences reflected in the 200-500 spoken languages and dialects
 - The majority of the population is **Muslim** and concentrates in the north of the country; the remainder is **Christian** and inhabits primarily the south. 5–10% of the population practice **indigenous religious traditions**
 - Nigeria has witnessed numerous military coups and **ethnic and religious tensions are rampant**. In recent years, communal attacks led by the Islamic State-aligned **Boko Haram** have led to the death of thousands of civilians. The imposition of **Sharia law** in the north has caused many Christians to flee
 - Women and girls are worse off in the north, where **poverty levels are very high**
 - The **maternal mortality rate is extremely high**, due to poor childbirth services and lack of emergency obstetric care
 - **Early marriage is widespread in northern Nigeria**; girls are often married off to older men, many of whom already have several wives
- 
- The map shows the geographical outline of Nigeria. The word 'NIGERIA' is written in bold capital letters in the center of the map. A red dot with a white outline is placed in the northern-central region, labeled 'ABUJA' in capital letters.
- **Many displaced women and girls have survived sexual and gender-based violence when fleeing the armed conflict**
 - Many women and girls have been released from captivity under Boko Haram, where they suffered forced marriage, rape and other sexual and physical violence
 - **'Boko Haram' wives** face stigma and isolation within the community
 - Lack of basic services in displacement sites exacerbates **sexual exploitation of women**, who often trade sex for food
 - **Domestic violence has increased alongside displacement. Marital rape is not recognised by law in the north-east**
 - An estimated **24.8% of women aged 15-49 undergo FGM**



NIGERIA

GEOGRAPHY: Nigeria borders with Niger to the north, with Chad and Cameroon to the east, with the Gulf of Guinea of the Atlantic Ocean to the south, and with Benin to the west. Nigeria is large in area and is Africa's most populous country¹.



CAPITAL: Abuja

POPULATION: 192,011,451²

LANGUAGE: English is Nigeria's official language; however, there are approximately 200-500 spoken languages and dialects in Nigeria, out of which the most spoken are Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Fulfude, Kanuri Central, Ijaw, Pidgin English, Tiv, Ibibio, Edo. Click [here](#) to find out more about the different languages and dialects and which areas they are spoken in.

LITERACY RATE: 60%³

ETHNIC GROUPS: Nigeria is the largest country in Africa: in the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria there are over **500 ethnic groups** and over 500 languages spoken. The largest ethnic groups are:

Hausa: 25% of the Nigerian population; Muslim; engaged in raising cattle and other stock, growing crops and trading.

Yoruba: 21% of the Nigerian population; Muslim or Christian, with some Yoruba holding ancestral beliefs.

¹<https://www.britannica.com/place/Nigeria>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population/>

³ <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS>



NIGERIA

Igbo: Christian and strong opponents of the Sharia law; engaged in the oil trade in Nigeria's south-eastern region; fought in the war of independence with the Nigerian government in 1967 and still feel marginalised in Nigerian society.

Ijaw: 10% of the population; living in an oil-rich area in Nigeria; have traditionally been in conflict with the rest of the Nigerian population.

Kanuri: 4% of the population living in the north-east of Nigeria; mainly Sunni Muslims (Boko Haram are mostly of Kanuri descent).

Fulani: Muslim and now largely bound to the Hausa due to inter-marriages.

Ibibio: 3.5% of the population; Christian.

Tiv: 3.5% of the population; mostly practicing Tiv religion⁴.

BELIEF : Muslim, 40–45% is Christian, and 5–10% practice indigenous religious traditions. The north is largely Muslim with different strands of Islam represented, including Sufi brotherhoods, Salafi interpretations of Islam rejecting Sufism, Shi'a communities, and intermesh with indigenous beliefs. The south is largely Christian; however, the Christian minority is rapidly shrinking⁵.

POLITICAL SITUATION: Nigeria has witnessed numerous military coups since its independence from British rule in 1960. Despite the fact that the country now has an elected government, the general security situation in north-east Nigeria, particularly in the Borno State, remains unstable. The Nigerian Armed Forces are conducting counter-insurgency operations against Boko Haram on Lake Chad Basin, inside the Sambisa Forest and in villages bordering Cameroon and Niger. Thousands of people have died over the past few years in communal attacks led by the Islamic State-aligned Boko Haram.

Many Boko Haram captives have been rescued thanks to the [“Deep Punch” operation](#); however, as a result, the number of people seeking refuge in IDP (internally displaced people) camps has drastically risen⁶. Ethnic and religious tensions are rampant and separatist aspirations are on the rise, exacerbated by the imposition of Sharia law in the north, which has caused thousands of Christians to flee⁷.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: Nigeria is a hierarchical society, where age and position are valued and play a fundamental role. Older people are greeted and served first, admired and

⁴ <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/largest-ethnic-groups-in-nigeria.html>

⁵ <https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/nigeria-overview> &

<http://www.nigerianmuse.com/20101205024305zg/sections/general-articles/ethnic-minority-groups-in-nigeria-current-situation-and-major-problems-by-abdul-raufu-mustapha/>

⁶ <http://reliefweb.int/report/nigeria/nigeria-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-sgbv-monthly-update-april-2017>

⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13949550>

NIGERIA

respected. The most common **greeting** is a handshake. Smiling is considered very important; men may place their left hand on the other person's shoulder while shaking hands. Observant Muslims **will generally not shake hands with the opposite sex**.

Nigerians are generally sociable and outgoing. They often use hand gestures in their communication; they may also use indirect eye contact to show they respect for the other person. Direct eye contact from strangers is generally considered inappropriate.

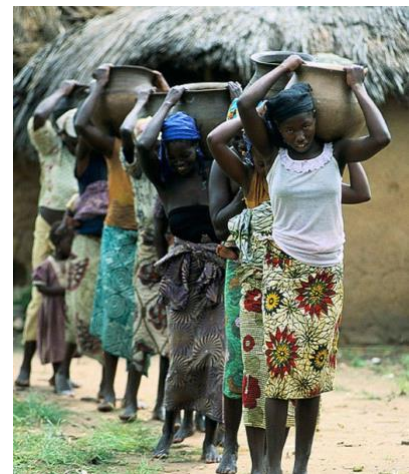
Extended families are still the norm and are in fact the foundation of the social system. Hierarchy and seniority lie at the basis of family relationships, and the family is expected to provide financial aid and guidance to all its members (even extended family) ⁸.

GENDER RELATIONS: Nigeria is in the top 30 most unequal countries in the world when it comes to income distribution. Of the numerous people who enter the labour market every year, a mere 10% secure a job in the formal sector, and just one third of these are women⁹.

Women and girls in Nigeria have significantly worse life chances than men and women elsewhere, although there are non-negligible geographical disparities, particularly between north and south. Poverty levels are much higher in the south, where health and education outcomes for girls are also significantly worse. Moreover, lack of opportunities contributes to exacerbating ethnic and religious conflict.

Most women live in rural areas, and work mainly in the informal sector in subsistence agriculture and off farm activities. They are five times less likely than men to own land, and women with dependants are subjected to higher taxes than men. Regardless of their qualifications, women employed in the formal sector earn much less than their male counterparts. Women occupy less than 30% of public sector posts, and only 17% of senior positions¹⁰.

The maternal mortality rate is extremely high, with one Nigerian woman dying in childbirth every ten minutes, due to poor access to safe childbirth services, and lack of adequate and affordable emergency obstetric care.



© [World Bank Photo Collection](#)

Nigeria's fertility rate has declined, but remains high in the north-west, where use of contraceptives is very low¹¹. **Early marriages** are extremely common, with girls being married off to older men, as is **polygyny** (the practice of having multiple wives). As a result of extreme

⁸ <http://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/nigeria-guide>

⁹ <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/british-council-gender-nigeria2012.pdf>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

NIGERIA

poverty and displacement, families tend to marry their girls as early as possible, so as to obtain the dowry and have fewer children to maintain¹².

GBV: Boko Haram militancy and counter-insurgency measures have generated chronic insecurity in the north-east, resulted in severe human rights violations, and increased the number of IDPs (internally displaced people). Over 1.8 million people have been internally displaced in the North East, 76% of which are in Borno State¹³. IDPs who have fled to areas previously controlled by Boko Haram are living in sites managed by the Nigerian military, where living conditions are poor and access to food, water, shelter, health care is limited. The lack of basic services in displacement sites has resulted in the **sexual exploitation** of women and girls, who trade sex for food or freedom to exit the camps. Sexual exploitation is often at the hand of site managers and men in a position of power. Harassment of women and girls is also common.



IDP camp in Nigeria
© Metronaija

Numerous displaced women and girls have suffered sexual and gender-based violence when fleeing the armed conflict, and face stigma upon return to their communities. Women and girls released after being held captive by Boko Haram, suffered forced marriage, rape, sexual and physical violence. Among them, are 'Boko Haram wives' are often isolated and stigmatized for fear of them being radicalized. Children born out of sexual violence are at risk of abandonment and violence, and are often considered a threat to the community.

Particularly in the north-east, women who have suffered sexual violence and exploitation are stigmatised and excluded. For this reason, few women come forward about abuse. The UNHCR reports that 1,581 households have women and girls who are survivors or at risk of SGBV (for a total of 1,821 reported separate incidents/threats). Of these, 1,149 households reported incidents of early/forced marriage, 216 households reported domestic

¹²https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/gbv_swg_nigeria_vulnerability_screening_round03_nov_2016.pdf

¹³ Ibid.



NIGERIA

violence/neglect, 45 households reported immediate threats of SGBV incidents, 25 households have women and girls engaging in survival sex and 22 households reported rape/sexual assaults.

Domestic violence and neglect have risen alongside displacement. Many men abuse their wives or refuse to provide for their needs and those of their children. Moreover, criminal legislation in the north-east fails to recognize marital rape and entitles men to physically chastise their wives¹⁴.

According to a recent report¹⁵, 20 million women and girls in Nigeria have undergone female genital mutilation, 10% of the global total. Many girls are cut when they are very young, with 82% of women stating that they were cut before turning five. Despite the Government of Nigeria passing legislation criminalising FGM in 2015, the practice is still common, with an estimated 24.8% women aged 15-49 undergoing FGM. Wealthy women living in cities are most likely to undergo FGM; nevertheless, support for the practice is more widespread among poorer women living in rural areas¹⁶.



¹⁴https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/assessments/gbv_swg_nigeria_vulnerability_screening_round03_nov_2016.pdf

¹⁵ <http://28toomany.org/countries/nigeria/>

¹⁶ Ibid.



NIGERIA

This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.

PAKISTAN

Produced by the University of Coventry (UK)

GEOGRAPHY: Pakistan is located in the south of Asia, bordering the Arabian sea beneath it. It is surrounded by India to the east, Iran and Afghanistan to the west and China to the north¹. Its capital is Islamabad, in the foothills of the Himalayas in the northern part of the country, and its largest city is Karachi, in the south on the coast of the Arabian Sea².



CAPITAL: Islamabad

POPULATION: 197,002,757. Pakistan ranks number 6 in the list of countries by population³.

LANGUAGE: There are many languages spoken in Pakistan. Punjabi is the most frequently used language with 48% of its population speaking it, Sindhi accounts for 12%, Saraiki (a Punjabi variant) 10%, Pashto (alternate name, Pashtu) 8%, Urdu 8%, Balochi 3%, Hindko 2%, Brahui 1%, English (official; lingua franca of Pakistani elite and most government ministries), Burushaski, and other 8%⁴. Urdu is the mother tongue of only a small proportion of the population of Pakistan, but it is the country's only official language; it is taught in the schools along with the regional languages⁵.

¹<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html>

²<https://www.britannica.com/place/Pakistan>

³<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/pakistan-population/>

⁴<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html>

⁵<https://www.britannica.com/place/Pakistan/Plant-and-animal-life#toc23690>

LITERACY RATE: 57%⁶.

ETHNIC GROUPS: Pakistan has 6 major ethnic groups and many minor ethnic groups⁷. The main ones are:

Punjabi: Accounts for 44.7% of people in Pakistan. Punjabi identity is traditionally cultural, linguistic and geographical and is independent of historical religion and origin. Muslims and Hindus form the religious majority among the Punjabi.

Pashtun: Pashtun is an ethnic group predominant in Afghanistan and Pakistan characterized as warriors. This ethnic group forms 15.4% of the Pakistani population.

Sindhi: This ethnic group forms 14.1% of Pakistan's population. Sindhis' culture is heavily influenced by Islam especially the traditional first names.

Saraiki: Saraiki is a subgroup of Punjabi people in Pakistan and speaks Saraiki dialect spoken by the Punjabi. This ethnic group forms 8.4% of the Pakistani population.

Muhajir: Account for 7.6% of the population. Muslims who fled to Pakistan after the partition in 1947.

Balochi: Make up 3.6% of the population. A group of tribes speaking the Balochi language.

BELIEF: Almost all of the people of Pakistan are [Muslims](#) (96%) or at least follow Islamic traditions, and Islamic ideals and practices suffuse virtually all parts of Pakistani life. Most Pakistanis belong to the [Sunni](#) sect, the major branch of Islam. There are also significant numbers of [Shī'ite](#) Muslims. Among Sunnis, [Sufism](#) is extremely popular and influential. In addition to the two main groups there is a very small sect called the [Ahmadiyyah](#), which is also sometimes called the Qadiani⁸. Christians and Hindus constitute a very small percentage (3.6%).

POLITICAL SITUATION: Pakistan's disputes with neighbouring India and Afghanistan periodically erupt in violence. Domestic attacks involving disparate terrorist and insurgent groups, and counter-offensives by Pakistan's military, have killed tens of thousands of Pakistanis over a decade and forced nearly 1.5 million from their homes. Sectarian violence against minorities is fuelled by a narrow vision for Pakistan's national identity that has been promoted by political movements and state institutions. The inability of state institutions to reliably provide peaceful ways to resolve competing interests has encouraged groups to see violence as a legitimate alternative. The violent instability of Pakistan, the world's sixth-most

⁶ UNESCO 2014

⁷ <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/ethnic-groups-in-pakistan.html>

⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Pakistan/Religion>

populous nation, poses a threat to regional and international security. However, the country has expanded its economy and begun addressing energy shortages and investing in infrastructure, steps that have begun to boost the economic growth vital to improved stability⁹.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: Family organization is strongly patriarchal, and most people live with large extended families, often in the same house or family compound. The eldest male, whether he is the father, grandfather, or paternal uncle, is the family leader and makes all significant decisions regarding the family and its members. Traditionally, a woman's place in society has been secondary to that of men, and she has been restricted to the performance of domestic chores and to fulfilling the role of a dutiful wife and mother. However, in the Punjab, cotton picking is exclusively a woman's job, and women may keep the money thus earned for their own purposes. Endogamy is widely practiced, often to a degree that would be considered inappropriate in Western society; the preferred marriage for a man within many Pakistani communities is with his father's brother's daughter.

Pakistani clothing styles are similar in many ways to those found in India. The *shalwar-kamiz* combination—a long knee-length shirt over loose-fitting pants is the most common traditional form of attire. As a more formal overgarment, men wear a knee-length coat; women frequently wear a light shawl. Among conservative Muslim communities, women sometimes wear the burqa, a full-length garment that may or may not cover the face¹⁰.

Festivals play an important part of the culture. Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are the two main religious festivals. They are celebrated with great happiness throughout the country¹¹.

The women of Pakistan are regular voters as are the men, and women also are regular attendees at colleges. Islam gives women rights to child custody, to alimony, and to inheritance, and they also have the right to conduct business and enter any profession. Women are engaged in agriculture production and the services sector. Women judges have been appointed to four high courts as well as several lower courts and a 10 percent quota was established for women to become police officers.

There are growing numbers of violent crimes against or involving women and the government has introduced the concept of women police stations, which have been opened in Rawalpindi, Karachi, and Abbottabad in the North West Frontier¹².

GENDER RELATIONS: Gender relations in Pakistan rest on two basic perceptions: that women are subordinate to men, and that a man's honour resides in the actions of the women of his family. Thus, as in other orthodox Muslim societies, women are responsible for maintaining the family honour. To ensure that they do not dishonour their families,

⁹ USIP 2017

¹⁰ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Pakistan/Daily-life-and-social-customs>

¹¹ <http://www.sharnoffsglobalviews.com/pakistani-culture-traits-244/>

¹² <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Pakistan.html>

society limits women's mobility, places restrictions on their behaviour and activities, and permits them only limited contact with the opposite sex.

Space is allocated to and used differently by men and women. For their protection and respectability, women have traditionally been expected to live under the constraints of *purdah* (*purdah* is Persian for curtain), most obvious in veiling. By separating women from the activities of men, both physically and symbolically, *purdah* creates differentiated male and female spheres. Most women spend the major part of their lives physically within their homes and courtyards and go out only for serious and approved reasons. Outside the home, social life generally revolves around the activities of men. In most parts of the country, except perhaps in Islamabad, Karachi, and wealthier parts of a few other cities, people consider a woman--and her family--to be shameless if no restrictions are placed on her mobility.

As with public life in general, work appears to be the domain of men. Rural women work for consumption or for exchange at the subsistence level. Others, both rural and urban, do piecework for very low wages in their homes. Their earnings are generally recorded as part of the family income that is credited to men.

The traditional division of space between the sexes is perpetuated in the broadcast media. Women's subservience is consistently shown on television and in films. And, although popular television dramas raise controversial issues such as women working, seeking divorce, or even having a say in family politics, the programs often suggest that the woman who strays from traditional norms faces insurmountable problems and becomes alienated from her family¹³.

GBV: Gender based violence is one of the most pervasive violations of rights of women in the country. According to the official figures released by the Ministry of Human Rights, 8648 incidents of human rights violation were reported in the country between January 2012 and September 15, 2015. These included 90 incidents of acid burning, 481 of domestic violence, 860 honour killings, 344 rape/ gang rapes, 268 sexual assault/harassment and 535 cases of violence against women. Another report by War Against Rape released in July 2015 stated that four women were raped every day in Pakistan in 2014, a 49 percent increase in the number of cases as compared to 2013. Human Rights Commission of Pakistan recorded 987 cases of honour crimes in 2015 with 1096 female victims and 88 male victims, out of which at least 170 were minors. The Acid Survivors Foundations conducted a study entitled "Situational Analysis" on acid violence 2015 in collaboration with National Commission on the Status of Women. The analysis revealed that from 2007 to June 2015, there were 1231 victims of acid violence in the country and 1004 acid attacks were reported. About 70 percent of the victims were women falling in the age bracket of 17-30 years. Sadly, GBV is on increase despite different government initiatives taken recently.

¹³ <http://countrystudies.us/pakistan/36.htm>

Major categories of crimes against women most prevalent in Pakistan are murder, kidnapping and rape/gang rape. Honour killing and suicide remained the major categories as indicated in different reports. Legal framework is not supportive to women, thereby aggravating the situation by leaving no breathing space to those who at times find it difficult to escape the vicious trap of violence. In Pakistan the underlying causes of violence are due to deep rooted social and cultural values. Sadly, women facing discrimination and violence cannot get support from society or the government. The government must formulate gender-sensitive policies in collaboration with the civil society so that crimes against women can be minimised. Such policies will help in changing attitudes in the long run¹⁴.

“It’s our tradition,” one parliamentarian from Balochistan famously remarked when justifying the burying alive of some women in his province. Unfortunately, his argument resonates with the majority that perceives and justifies honour killings as cultural tradition. These traditions persist because they have been allowed to persist by the state, by the laws and by the clergy. Government has been reluctant to clamp down on religious extremist groups to preserve their vote bank. This covert support has had enormous implications for the fight against extremism and issues such as gender violence. Recently, the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) proposed its own women protection bill, recommending ‘a light beating’ for the wife if she defies the husband. Such regressive proposals seek to legalise violence against women on religious grounds. Following the proposal, the chairman of the CII drew fierce criticism, persuading many Pakistanis to rally for the council to be permanently disbanded. But given patronage-based politics, the chairman remains protected and the council unchallenged¹⁵.

¹⁴ <https://idjournal.co.uk/2017/01/29/gender-based-violence-in-pakistan/>

¹⁵ <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/14-Jun-16/gender-based-violence-in-pakistan>



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)

Geography

Western South America, bordering the South Pacific Ocean, between Chile and Ecuador¹



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Population 32,166,473 (2017)²

Population distribution Approximately one-third of the population resides along the desert coastal belt in the west, with a strong focus on the capital city of Lima; the

¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pe.html>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>



Andean highlands, or sierra, which is strongly identified with the country's Amerindian population, contains roughly half of the overall population; the eastern slopes of the Andes, and adjoining rainforest, are sparsely populated³.

Capital Lima



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Language Spanish (official) 84.1%, Quechua (official) 13%, Aymara (official) 1.7%, Ashaninka 0.3%, other native languages (includes a large number of minor Amazonian languages) 0.7%, other (includes foreign languages and sign language) 0.2% (2007 est.)

Literacy Rate 94% (2015)⁴ **GPI** 0.94⁵

Ethnic Groups Amerindian 45%, mestizo (mixed Amerindian and white) 37%, white 15%, black, Japanese, Chinese, and other 3%⁶

Religion/Beliefs Roman Catholic 81.3%, Evangelical 12.5%, other 3.3%, none 2.9% (2007 est.)⁷

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2266.html>

⁴ Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175>)

⁵ The *gender parity index (GPI)* of the adult literacy rate is the ratio of the female to male literacy rates of the population aged 15 years and over. A GPI value between 0.97 and 1.03 is usually interpreted to indicate gender parity. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy/#!/tellmap/-1003531175/3>)

⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pe.html>

⁷ *ibid*



Political Situation

The constitution decrees a popularly elected president serving a five-year term. The president selects the prime minister who presides over the rest of the ministers. The country also possesses a unicameral legislature popularly elected to five-year terms. Peru, as other Latin-American nations, is very prone to vote for and support the most charismatic figures of the political leaders.⁸ Candidates rather than parties or ideologies are the key voting elements. The current chief of state is Pedro Kuczynski, who was been elected in 2016.⁹

Peru has more military activity. On one hand, Peru faced the serious challenge of one of the most ruthless guerrilla groups on the continent, popularly known as the Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso). On the other hand, the increase of the cocaine drug trade also contributed.¹⁰

The poverty rate has dropped substantially during the last decade but remains stubbornly high at about 30% (more than 55% in rural areas). There is a shortage of doctors, nurses, and health care facilities, particularly outside the Lima urban area, and the country faces a difficult path to adequate health service for its population. Sanitation is another major problem, with most cities lacking adequate sewerage as well as street lighting and paving.¹¹

Cultural Traditions

Differences in lifestyles and attitudes are pronounced. Peruvians of Spanish descent and Mestizos live mainly along the coast and control most of the country's wealth. The Spanish-speaking Mestizos make up the middle class of Peruvian society. They hold managerial, administrative, and professional jobs, but some are also small landowners and labourers. The complex ethnic and cultural mixture of Peru presents an intertwining of aboriginal pantheism, Spanish mysticism, and African religious practices.¹²

Peru maintains an implicit caste system, but is a non-official system. Race and/or ethnicity is the major variable to divide the population into groupings. In Peru's racial hierarchy, Whites occupy the highest positions in the country and also possess the highest level of schooling. The rest of the population concentrates in the lowest part depending on their skin colour and implied cultural status. Language and dress are the most common symbols to designate either caste or class differences in Peru. Native American communities still maintain their indigenous languages. Many of these Indian

⁸ <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html>

⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-19928905>

¹⁰ *ibid*

¹¹ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pe.html>

¹² <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html>



communities have also maintained some form of traditional dress. The ownership of cars, expensive clothing, knowledge of English or other foreign languages are typical markers of elite status in contemporary Peru. Indians are still portrayed as backwards and inferior and perform the hardest and less remunerative forms of labour. Through the lack of opportunities to improve their social situations, most Afro-Peruvians have been limited to rural work or domestic labour.¹³

The control of one's emotions and feelings is highly valued among all Peruvians, but especially among men. Respect for elders, shown through such actions as giving up one's seat for elderly people on buses, also has a strong place among public values. These values of discipline and respect for others are in sharp contrast to a political scene marked with great levels of authoritarianism and widespread corruption. Public expressions of sexuality, including that of homosexual behaviour, is strongly discouraged.¹⁴

Gender and family relations

A division of labour by gender is even further reinforced today. In spite of women gaining more formal education and public occupations, widespread international migration has left women in charge of households and encouraged them to get involved in social movements. Peru could be described as a patriarchal society. Men are preferentially treated in most, if not all, aspects of society. Sons are preferred over daughters, are given more freedom, and are less burdened with household chores and family obligations. Men are expected to provide for their families, however, there is a large number of female-run households where the mother has to work and provide for her children.¹⁵

In general, Peruvians have free choice about who they can or cannot marry, with class and money being the two most significant variables in terms of marriage decisions. The Peruvian model for a domestic unit is the Western nuclear family. Men in general have the highest authority within the house, although women also have much of the decision-making power, especially concerning children and family matters, even though it tends not to be explicitly recognized.¹⁶

Indian mothers tend to carry their infants in slings upon their backs even while performing agricultural labour. Indian mothers also openly nurse their children in public places, a practice that is shunned upon by many of the more Westernized Mestizo and White mothers.¹⁷

¹³ <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Peru.html>

¹⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ *ibid*

GBV

Peru's rank in Gender Inequality Index is 86¹⁸, and for Global Gender Gap Index, its rank is 80.¹⁹

In 2016, 68.2% of Peruvian women who were once married suffered some type of violence by the husband or partner. Among the types of violence, psychological and/or verbal violence was the most common (64.2 %), followed by physical violence (31.7%) and sexual violence (6.6%).²⁰ Violence by the husband or partner was higher among divorced, separated or widowed women (87.5%); (71.4%), low economic (70.9%) and rural residents (70.3%).²¹

Women victims of psychological and/or verbal violence reported having experienced some form control by their husband or partner (60.5%), the most frequent expression of control is the insistence on where the women have gone (43.5%) and jealousy (39.2%)²².

Women were also asked if they had sought help and where they went, with the results showing that most approached nearby friends or relatives (44.1%), while 27.2% sought help in some institution.²³ In 2016, among the most frequent reasons for not seeking help, they mentioned that it was not necessary (44.5%), they felt ashamed (16.0%) and did not know where to go /did not know about services %).²⁴

Peru does not have specific legislation for Gender Based Violence, although its constitution includes some measures related to domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment or human trafficking.²⁵

The National Program against Family and Sexual Violence of the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES), is the body responsible for designing and implementing a level national actions and policies for prevention, care and support for people involved in acts of family violence from a gender perspective. This program has a free 24 hours emergency phone line (Line 100) that offers orientation to victims of domestic violence, referring cases to any of their 89 Emergency Women's Centers or to shelters, which provide temporary protection to victims of violence whose life is in

¹⁸ *Gender Inequality Index*: A composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Source: Human Development Report, UNDP (2016)

¹⁹ The *Global Gender Gap* Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria. Source: World Economic Forum, the Global Gender Gap Report 2016.

²⁰ Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, 2014. Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Familiar (ENDES) 2016. Lima, Peru, p. 401

²¹ *ibid*, p. 402

²² *ibid*, p. 406

²³ *ibid*, p. 429

²⁴ *ibid*, p. 433

²⁵ <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/peru>



danger. Prevention, promotion and development activities as well as research, are part of the awareness-raising program.²⁶

²⁶ *ibid*



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



ROMANIA

Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)

Geography

Romania is in South-eastern Europe, between Bulgaria and Ukraine. It is dominated by the Carpathian mountains in the north and centre of the country¹.



©Goaway

Population 19,237,513 (2017)²

Population distribution Urbanization is not particularly high, and a fairly even population distribution can be found throughout most of the country, with urban areas attracting larger and denser populations.³

Capital Bucharest

¹ https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/romania_en

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2266.html>



ROMANIA

Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)



© [Driving Direction and Maps](#)

Language Romanian (official) 85.4%, Hungarian 6.3%, Romani 1.2%, other 1%, unspecified 6.1% (2011 est.) *Note:* Romani populations are usually underestimated in official statistics and may represent 5–11% of Romania's population⁴.

Literacy Rate 99% (2011)⁵ **GPI** 0.99 (2011)⁶

Ethnic Groups Romanian 83.4%, Hungarian 6.1%, Romani 3.1%, Ukrainian 0.3%, German 0.2%, other 0.7%, unspecified 6.1%

Relations between Hungarians and Romanians are tense and have resulted in political conflict and occasional violence. Despite efforts made by the government to integrate minorities, discrimination still exists.⁷

Religion/Beliefs Eastern Orthodox (including all sub-denominations) 81.9%, Protestant (various denominations including Reformed and Pentecostal) 6.4%, Roman Catholic 4.3%, other (includes Muslim) 0.9%, none or atheist 0.2%, unspecified 6.3% (2011 est.).

⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2266.html>

⁵ Percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on his/her everyday life. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy#!/tellmap/-1003531175>)

⁶ The *gender parity index (GPI)* of the adult literacy rate is the ratio of the female to male literacy rates of the population aged 15 years and over. A GPI value between 0.97 and 1.03 is usually interpreted to indicate gender parity. Data by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (<http://tellmaps.com/uis/literacy#!/tellmap/-1003531175/3>)

⁷ <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html>



Political Situation

Romanians had been living for 24 years under a dictatorial communist regime lead by Ceausescu, until its collapse in 1989. Ceausescu, whose regime was based on repressive rule and personality cult at home, was executed during the uprising against his government. After this period, an economic and political reform programme started to be conceived. A constitution that was approved by the Romanian Parliament at the end of 1991 was drafted. This document established a bicameral parliament consisting of a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate.⁸

Currently, the president (post occupied by Klaus Werner since 2014) is the head of state and is elected by popular vote for a four-year term. The 1991 constitution established also a multiparty system. Sixteen main parties are represented in the government. These parties are composed of ex-communists, democrats, and groups representing the interests of ethnic minorities. After the corrupt and often brutal policies of Ceausescu and other leaders, the people are wary of government officials in general.⁹

Regarding the economy, Romania, which joined the EU in 2007, began the transition from communism in 1989 with an inefficient pattern of outputs and an obsolete industry. Romania's macroeconomic gains have only recently started to spur creation of a middle class and to address Romania's widespread poverty. Corruption and red tape continue to permeate the business environment. Economic growth rebounded in the 2013-16 period, driven by strong industrial exports and excellent agricultural harvests.¹⁰

Cultural Traditions

Each geographic region in Romania has its own culture. The Hungarian, German, and Roma minorities maintain their own traditions reflected in their folk arts, cuisine, and dress.¹¹

Romanians' lives are generally guided by the religious traditions to which they adhere. Eastern Orthodoxy followers (mostly ethnic Romanians) participate in ceremonies during thw Holy Week and at Easter. Roman Catholic and Protestant churches adepts (Hungarians and Germans) put a greater emphasis on the celebration of Christmas. The Hungarian and German traditional dress is only worn on special occasions while the folk costume of ethnic Romanians has been retained in the rural areas.

The overall standard of living is low compared to that of Western Europe. In the cities, most of people wear Western-style clothing. In rural areas, as mentioned above, some people still wear the traditional 'garb', namely wool skirts and embroidered vests for women and white blouses, pants cinched with a belt and a cap or hat for men. Throughout the country, mostly Roma women are still wearing long flowing colourful

⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Romania>

⁹ <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/#ro>

¹¹ <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html>



Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)

skirts, and Roma men are continue dressing in white shirts with colourful sashes. Unmarried women wear their hair in braids, while married women cover their heads with cloths called *naframa*.¹²

Romanians are known for hospitality and generosity. Guests are always fed. Men indicate their respect for women by a tip of the hat, a kiss on the hand, or standing to offer them a seat. It is also customary for younger people to defer to their elders.¹³

Gender and family relations

The majority of women work outside the home, although they tend to occupy lower-level positions, generally in traditional female fields, such as primary school education. Women also make up a large proportion of agricultural workers that has been rising as men have been abandoning farming. While the definition of women's work has expanded, that of men's work has not, and women who work outside the home are still expected to do all the housekeeping.¹⁴

It is common for Romanian families to live together. Urbanization forces many people to live in close quarters and has led to smaller families. Many of the country's health problems are related to reproductive health and child care.¹⁵

GBV

Based on several indexes, Romania is ranks medium-in terms of gender inequality. The Gender Inequality Index¹⁶ rank for Romania is 72, and the Global Gender Gap Index¹⁷ places the country in 76th position.

Statics shows that 24 % of women in Romania has ever experienced at some point in their lives some kind of physical and/or sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner, and 6 % has been experiencing it in the last 12 months. 2 % have experienced sexual violence by a stranger¹⁸; 8 % of women have been stalked and 32% of women have experienced sexual harassment.¹⁹

¹² <http://www.everyculture.com/No-Sa/Romania.html>

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ *Gender Inequality Index: A composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labour market. Source: Human Development Report, UNDP (2016)* (http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf)

¹⁷ *The Global Gender Gap Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria. Source: World Economic Forum, the Global Gender Gap Report 2016.*

¹⁸ <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/europe/romania?typeofmeasure=2adb4f35f599429e8138b117fd26ae56>

¹⁹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). *Violence against women: an EU-wide survey — Main results*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.



Although rates of human trafficking are not high, an estimated 5.4 per 100 000 people in Romania were registered as victims of human trafficking between 2010 and 2012.²⁰

Romania criminalises different forms of violence but does not include violence against women law. The law on preventing and combating violence in family in Romania (Law No. 217/2003) was amended in 2012 to provide for restraining orders: the new law includes verbal violence, psychological violence, physical violence, sexual violence, economic violence, and social violence²¹

Rape is a crime in Romania, including rape within marriage²². In addition, as of 1 February 2014, the Romanian penal code criminalised rape and sexual harassment. Romania has no specific law outlawing female genital mutilation (FGM) and general criminal law includes no provision for crimes committed outside Romania. However, Romania has granted asylum in a number of cases based on fear of FGM²³.

The five sexual assault services in Romania are all run by NGOs and are part of the Breaking the Silence on Sexual Violence network. These services provide information, psychological counselling and legal assistance. For those experiencing domestic violence, Romania has 73 shelters with 828 beds and a national helpline for victims of family violence that is free of charge and available 24 hours, which provides advice and referral²⁴

Romania signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) on 27 June 2014 and ratified it on 23 May 2016²⁵

²⁰ Eurostat (2015). *Trafficking in human beings*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, p. 23.

²¹ European Institute for Gender Equality (2016) *Combating violence against women: Romania*. Eige's publicarions, Lithuania, p.2

²² European Women's Lobby (2013). *EWL barometer on rape in the EU 2013*, p. 58.

²³ European Institute for Gender Equality (2013). *Female genital mutilation in the European Union and Croatia — Report*.

²⁴ WAVE (2015). *Report on the Role of Specialist Women's Support Services in Europe*, p. 46

²⁵ Council of Europe (2011). *Chart of signatures and ratifications of Treaty 210*.



ROMANIA

Produced by the University of Seville (Universidad de Sevilla)



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



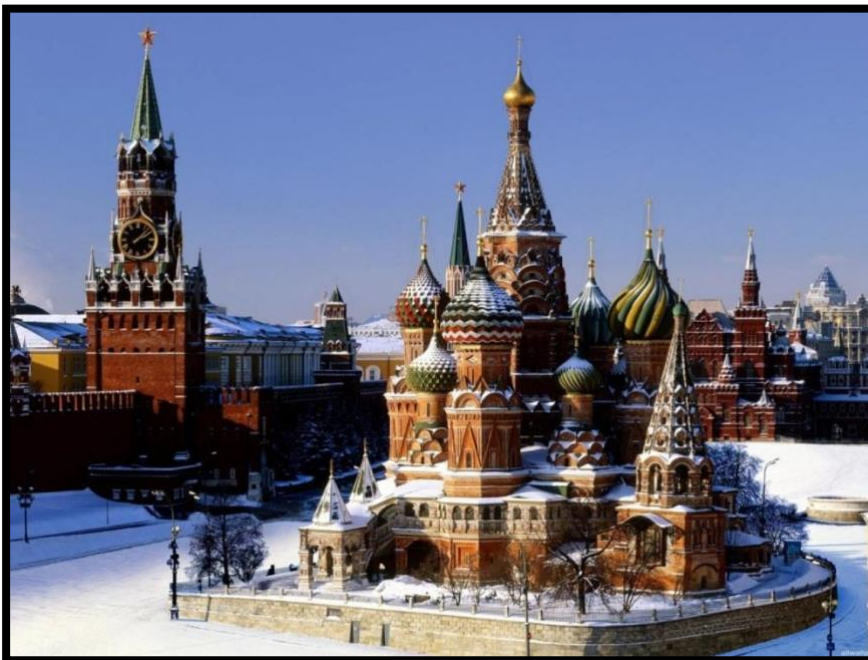
Facts about

Russian Federation



Produced by: Justizvollzugsanstalt
Zweibrücken

(DE)



CONTENTS

- 1. Basic data about Russia..... 2
- 2. Russian Flag... .. 2
- 3. Geography 2
- 4. Climate... .. 3
- 5. Population..... 4
- 6. Languages..... 4
- 7. Culture of Russia... .. 5
- 8. Behavior... .. 7
- 9. Gender roles and status... .. 8
- 10. Food..... 8
- 11. Religion in Russia..... 10
- 12. Ethnicity 11
- 13. Basic economy..... 13
- 14. Government of Russia... .. 13
- 15. References... .. 14



Basic Data about Russia

Area: 17 075 200 km²

Population: 146 305 000

Life expectancy: females: 59 years; males: 73 years

Ethnic groups: over 185 ethnic groups; Russian 81%;
Tatars: 3,9%; Ukrainians 1,4%; Bashkirs
1,15%

Religion: majority Christiana (orthodox)

Unemployment: 5, 2%

Capital city: Moscow; 11 504 000

Major cities: Saint Petersburg, Novosibirsk

Literacy: 99, 7%; female: 99, 7%; male: 99, 7%

Language: Russian

Government/ President: Federal Semi-Presidential
Constitutional Republic of Russia/
Vladimir Putin

Russian Flag *Abdulrahman*

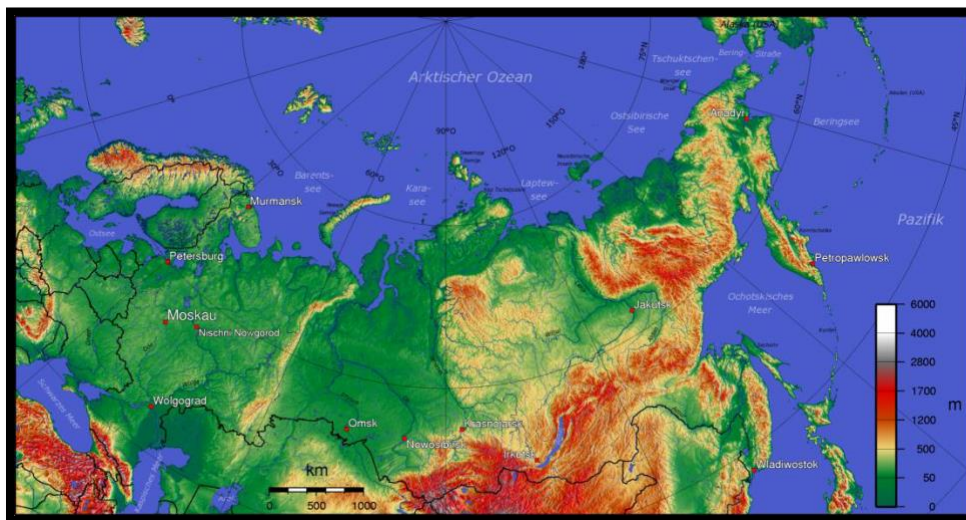
Russian flag is composed of three horizontal stripes of equal width. Red, blue and white are considered traditional Pan-Slavic colors and wide number of states adopted them in the 19th century since Russia was at that time the only independent Slavic state. During the rule of the Communist Party, the tricolor was replaced by the red flag with a hammer and a sickle in the upper left part of the flag. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Kremlin decided to return to traditional tricolor. There are many theories explaining the symbolism of the tricolor. White can represent the aristocracy, Belarusians, God, peace, purity, or honesty; blue Ukrainians, tsar, persistence, or faith and fortitude; red can stand for Russians, people, power, or blood shed for the country.



Geography *Justin Dodge*

Russia is the world's largest country by size and it stretches across almost half the world. It reaches north almost to the North Pole, west into Europe, south into the Caucas Mountains and the Steppe, and in the east all the way into Asia and up to China. It borders the following

bodies of water: Arctic Ocean (north), Baltic Sea (west), Black Sea (southwest), Caspian Sea (southwest), Sea of Japan (east), Pacific Ocean (east), and the Bering Sea (east) along with numerous smaller seas and bays. It also borders Norway(northwest), Finland (northwest), Estonia (west), Latvia (west), Belarus (west), Ukraine (west), Georgia (southwest), Azerbaijan (southwest), Kazakhstan (south), China (south and southeast), Mongolia (south), and North Korea (southeast). Additionally, it controls islands a short distance from both the United States and Japan, plus Russia controls the region of Kaliningrad, which sits on the Baltic Sea and borders Poland (south) and Lithuania (northeast). Geographically, Russia has nearly everything. Any landmass that stretches over half the earth will be diverse and Russia is no exception. European Russia (bordered by the Ural Mountains in the east) is where most of the population lives as this region is home to numerous rivers, lakes, and lowlands. Asian Russia (east of the Ural Mountains) is very inhospitable as much of this region is at elevation and receives little rain. This area also boasts most of Russia's geographic diversity as there are numerous mountain ranges, long isolated rivers, and some large lakes. As a whole, Russia's diversity ranges from swampland in much of the north to alpine peaks in the Caucasus Mountains and huge lakes such as Lake Baikal in Siberia to volcanic ranges like the Kamchatka Peninsula.



Climate *Justin Dodge*

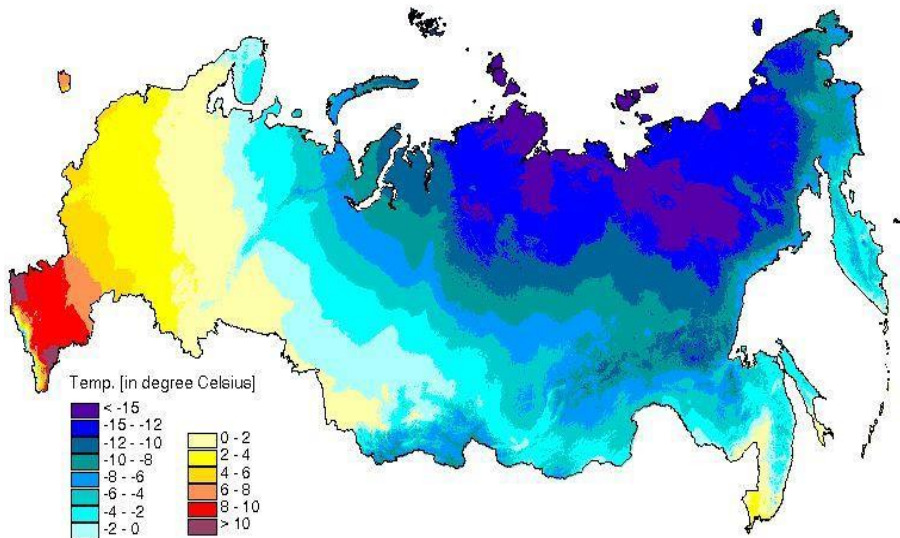
Russia's seasons are very distinct, there are great geographical differences, and taking into consideration the fact that Russia is the world's largest country, generalizing weather in the country is difficult.

Along the Black Sea coast temperatures average about 45° F (7° C) during the winters, while Moscow and St. Petersburg average 14° F (-10° C), and, although the far north tends to get the coldest, even cities along the trans-Siberian train route like Izhevsk average -6° F (-21° C) in winter. The Caucasus Mountains are also cold, but not unbearable, however the Urals are very cold and much of them only receive a few hours of daylight during winter days.

The country experiences a major thaw in the spring, making everything muddy and difficult to maneuver on foot, while falls (autumns) can experience quick drops in temperature.

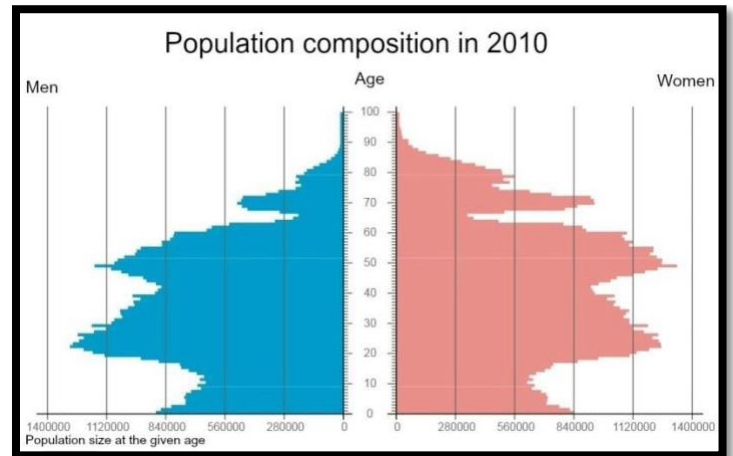
The Caucasus and Ural Mountains are pleasant and accessible in the summers (although they can be very dry and dusty), the cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg have long days with average temperatures between 65-70° F (18-21° C), Siberia comes into bloom and reveals beautiful hidden lakes, and the Black Sea coast rarely gets above 80° F (27° C), which compared to a winter in Moscow, feels like a sauna.

Mean Annual Temperature in Russia



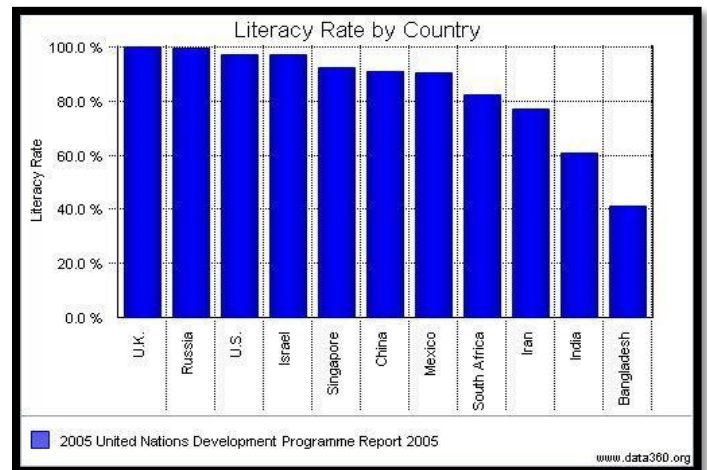
Population *World Population Review*

The population of Russia represents 2.06 percent of the world’s total population which arguably means that one person in every 49 people on the planet is a resident of Russia. Also Russia is one of the few countries with a negative growth rate, and its 2016 population is estimated at 143.4 million, a decline from an estimated population of 146.3 million in 2015. It's currently the 9th most populous country on earth, despite being the largest by area.



Language *Justin Dodge*

The official language of Russia is Russian, which is a member of the eastern Slavic linguistic group. Russian is written in the Cyrillic alphabet and is most similar to Belarusian and Ukrainian. Like the various ethnic groups in Russia, many of them also have a unique language, many of which are either a Turkic language (related to many languages in Central Asia and in Turkey) or a Uralic language (related to Hungarian, Finnish, and other minor



languages in Scandinavia and Russia). Russian is the most commonly spoken language and nearly everyone learns Russian as the main means of communication between ethnic groups. English and other popular international languages have only recently begun being taught in mass numbers, but many young people have at least a working understanding of English today.

Culture of Russia *Justin Dodge*

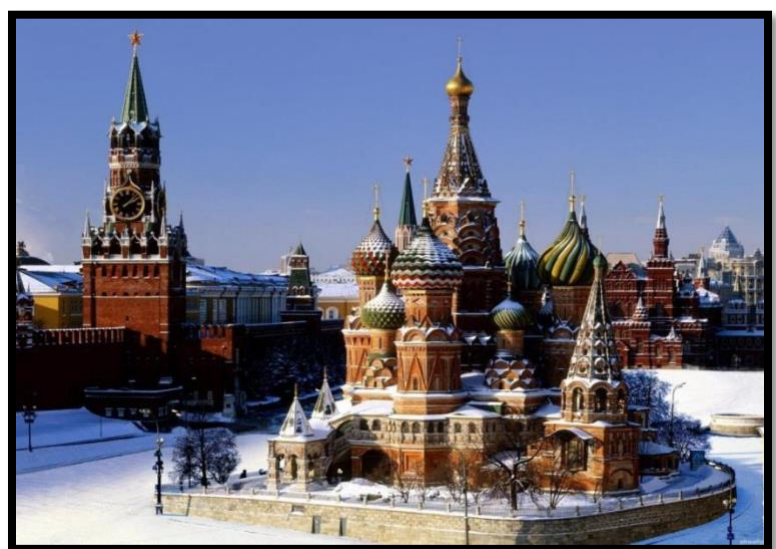
The way of life in Russia has incredible variations. Go to Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, and a village and in many ways they may appear to be different countries. St. Petersburg has a youthfulness and liberal aura as a student center, Moscow exudes power and wealth, Yekaterinburg feels like an industrial town allowing life in the desolate unknown, and villages seem to move slowly, but peacefully. The traditional Russian culture is heavily based on rural living and village life, but the Soviet heavily industrialized and urbanized the people, changing the daily way of life in

the country. Today nearly 75% of the people are urban and nearly a third work in industries, such as mining, oil, coal, metals, machinery, and military equipment. Only about 10% of the people still work in agriculture and the rest work in the services fields. Although the farmers tend to work from sun up to sun down, for most people the work day begins at about 8:00 or 9:00 am



and continues to about 5:00 or 6:00 pm. The GDP per capita in Russia is about \$18,000, but the wages differ greatly from urban to rural settings and some occupations, such as engineers in the oil industries and lawyers everywhere, make significantly more money than nearly any

other occupation. Education is very important to the Russians and getting into some university programs can be very difficult (although bribery helps). Like workers, most students get to school via public transportation in the cities. School runs at about the same hours as most work schedules, but usually finish at about 3:00 pm. Evening and weekend (Saturday-Sunday) life for young singles tends to be based on grabbing a drink with friends



after work, checking out the local dance club, or perhaps going for a forest walk. Other forms of entertainment are prevalent in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but elsewhere the options are limited. For families the evening and weekends are more about spending time with family as most meals are eaten at home and during the school year homework occupies much of the evenings. The way of life as mentioned above is typical, but Russia is anything but typical. Russia is diverse in every sense of the word and the way of life and culture is no different. Moscow has high end car dealerships for those looking to spend some of their excessive millions of dollars and high end shops for the unemployed spouses of the rich to shop, while village life is simple, filled with hard working couples trying to make ends meet, but often this comes with a simplicity that revolves around going to the neighbor's banya (similar to a sauna) to enjoy conversation and company.



Identity

Russians identify in multiple different ways, but most see themselves first as Russian. This term is one that is based heavily on ethnicity and language, while the culture attached to these people has little role in the identity and citizenship has no role in the identity. Much of the former Russian culture was destroyed or re-defined under Soviet rule and today the culture vastly differs from region to region and from rural settings to urban settings so the cultural similarities are strong, but not an important aspect in defining the Russian identity. Ethnic Russians and Russian speakers abroad are always considered a part of this identity, no matter where they were born or live. Russia is home to dozens of ethnic minority groups and most of these people primarily identify with their ethnicity, but perhaps also with their language, culture, and religion. The way each group identifies varies drastically as some groups have abandoned their native language for Russian, while for others religion is very important and one of the most important parts of their identity.

Dress

Traditional Russian clothing reflects the weather as the clothing tends to be long-sleeved and warm. For Russian women this generally means long dresses that cover the arms and fall to the ground. These dresses are often times heavily embroidered and often times include the color red to some degree. However, the variations of the dresses vary greatly from region to region and even over time, although most have loose-fitting white sleeves and red on them.

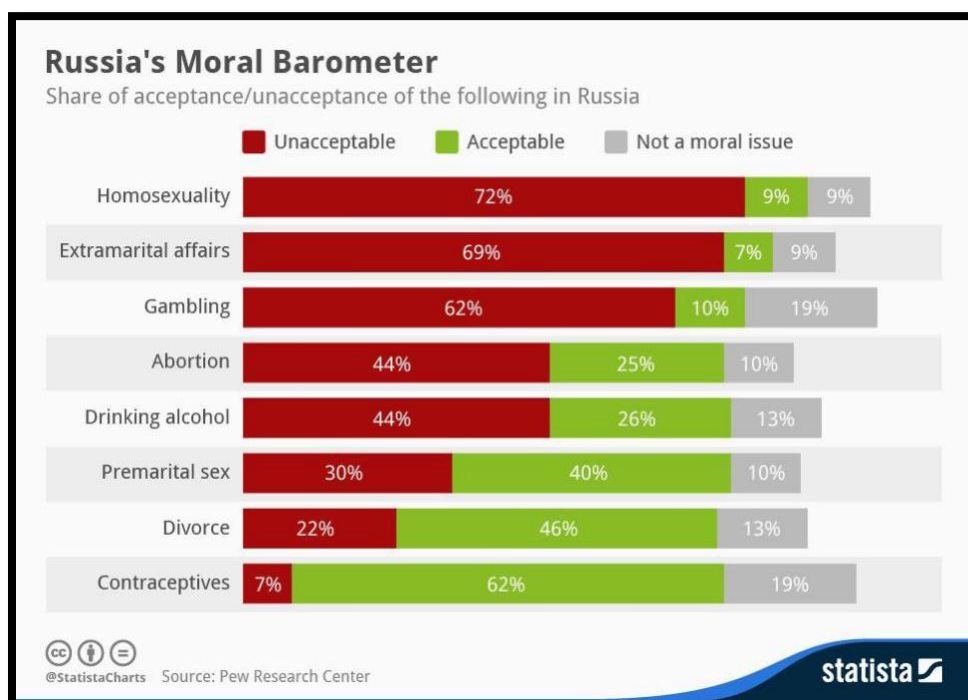
Most women also covered their heads with some sort of cloth or handkerchief. Likewise, men traditionally wore clothing similar to that of historic Europe with pants, shirts, and often times a vest. Boots were common due to the snow and mud, while hats were essential through much of the year, often times being made from fur.

Today the dress in Russia is modern western-styled clothing, but aspects of the past have survived. Boots and hats remain essential in the winters and women generally plan their outfits and hair with their hat in mind. Fur is also still a common clothing items, but today primarily for women's coats. Women also tend to dress liberally, especially in the summers when outfits can be scarce and white pants can be nearly transparent. The opposite is true for Russian men; pants are the norm, but they are almost always black, as are shoes and boots. Blue jean and tennis shoes are expensive so uncommon in Russia today.

As a visitor to Russia any western-styled clothing is fine, but try to avoid anything with a political message or anything that may indicate where you are from (although foreign shirts are somewhat of a status symbol in Russia). Despite your best efforts to fit in, blue jeans and tennis shoes will give you away as a foreigner unless you are in Moscow. Other than this, just try to dress for the occasion; many churches, nice restaurants, and political sites require long pants and long-sleeved shirts for entry, while Black Sea beaches are fit for swimsuits and the clubs at night can be rather risque.

Behavior *Justin Dodge*

The people of Russia maintain much of the Soviet mentality as they rarely get involved in other people's personal affairs and tend to keep to themselves when in public. Due to this attitude, the people take offense at few things. Although everyone will notice odd behaviors and cultural abnormalities, rarely will anyone point out your cultural mistakes. As a visitor to Russia try to follow the lead of the locals by dressing in alike manner (see below for details), dining in the local etiquette (see our Russia Dining & Food Page), and avoid sensitive conversation topics, such as politics, finances, and business unless initiated by your local counterpart. Also try to avoid being loud, rude, or showing off wealth.



Gender roles

Russians do not refer to women as —the weaker sex—nor do they think women are weak at all—but instead women are —the prettier sex.‖ As such, women do everything they can to live up to that idea. Whenever they are out in public, Russian women dress pristinely, always in high heels, regardless of the weather. Even now that it is starting to get colder and winter is settling in, women continue this custom with high heeled boots. It would be a social scandal to wear sweatpants or running shoes unless one is on their way to the gym.

In response to the gracious exterior display, men generally act in a way that Americans would describe as —gentleman-like.‖ They give up their seats on the metro, hold out a hand to help you off a bus, and hold doors open for women, even if they are strangers. As one of my professors pointed out, it is ingrained in their minds that if a woman is in their presence, they, as men, should be on their best, most polite behavior. While these ideas of chivalry have been discouraged in the United States—due in part to extreme feminism—the gender roles of men in Russia have nothing to do with the idea of women needing their help. On the contrary, men help women because they are women, i.e. —the prettier sex.‖ Maybe the most shocking part of Russian gender roles is the idea that love always outweighs work. That means that the majority of Russian women devote their efforts to finding a husband, and then caring for their children. That is not to say that women don't receive educations or have careers here, because they most certainly do. In general, though, most set aside their career until their children are grade school age, meaning that they leave behind a job they might have had prior to having a child. Russians prefer to care for their children without the help of a nanny, and the idea of preschool is a foreign concept. They are completely devoted to their family and the love within it.

Food *Justin Dodge*

Historic Russian food is based on surviving the cold, long winters. For this reason, Russian food is based on animal byproducts, including meats and fats, and heavy vegetables, like potatoes and other carbohydrates. Additionally, due to the short growing seasons there are few fruits or vegetables in the traditional diet other than mushrooms.

Over time, other ingredients have been introduced as bread products and cakes have exploded in popularity as both are now regularly served. As a slowly expanding nation, however, there have been few outside influences on Russian cuisine.

Rather, the largest influences on Russian food are by the nationalities that the Russians took over. Few of these foods have made the national dining table, but they do allow for vast variety from region to region within Russia.

Staple Foods

Bread: the Russians love their breads from standard white bread to pastries with fruits, nuts, and chocolate; one of these varieties is served with nearly every meal



Regional Variations & Specialties

Not surprising for a massive country stretching about one third across the planet, Russia has too many Regional Variations to mention. Differing areas have different ingredients available, creating hundreds of dishes unique to particular regions, plus Russia is a very diverse country and contains significant minority populations of dozens of ethnic groups. Each of these groups has traditional dishes, most of which haven't expanded in popularity beyond the local region's borders

Like the numerous Regional Variations in Russia, there are also dozens of specialties. The following are just a couple of the more commonly known, due to local popularity or to their foreign presence:

Beef Stroganov: beef cooked in a cream and mushroom-based sauce, sometimes served over noodles

Borsch: beet soup served in hundreds of versions based on the region and chef; typically served with sour cream

Pelmeni: bread-like dough stuffed with any number of combinations, from fruits to meats

Pickled Herring: herring served cold, a common snack in Russia and some Scandinavian countries

Dining Etiquette

Although the Russians don't believe they're superstitious, they are the exact opposite so before arriving for dinner there's at least one superstition you must be aware of.

As you arrive to a Russian's house for dinner, don't even think about offering your hand to them until you have completely crossed the threshold. The arrival, however is the most complicated part of dinner.

Arrive on time and with a cake; enter the house or apartment completely, then offer to shake

hands. After this you must remove your shoes and you're ready to move on. You will most likely be treated as an honored guest and you should return this favor by dressing nicely. If you are male you are expected to socialize with the other men, if you are female you should offer to help prepare the meal and the invitation will almost certainly be accepted. Men who offer to help in the kitchen are commonly laughed at and if you make it into the kitchen you will most certainly be kicked out with a nervousness that you are crossing a cultural barrier.

Once the meal is served, eat in the continental style (fork in the left hand, knife in the right), keep your hands within sight (but don't put your elbows on the table), and wait



to be served. Russians tend to serve the oldest or most honored person first so wait until they determine your status has arrived.

To continue on the differing roles for each sex, women don't cut bread nor do they pour drinks; the men must take on these roles so if you see a woman's drink empty fill it up and if you are a woman, it won't be long before a fellow diner fills your glass. Before emptying your glass though, you have to start drinking and before that begins you must wait for a toast, which is typically first given by the host.

It is considered rude to turn down food or to clean your plate. Try everything offered to you and once you're finished eating, leave a little food on the plate to show that the amount served was more than enough; this is a great compliment to the host. The only exceptions to this are that you must finish your bread and your alcoholic drinks.

If dining in a restaurant, the host or inviter is expected to pay. If you are a guest, you are expected to offer to pay, but this offer will most likely be turned down.

Tipping is not common in Russia and after experiencing the standard poor service nearly everywhere you won't be inclined to tip anyway. The only exception to this rule is in nice restaurants catered to foreigners, particularly in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Service in these locations substantially improves and tips are expected in the form of about 10% for a meal.

Drinks

All popular non-alcoholic drinks are available in Russia and they have a great selection of juices. Tea is among the most popular drinks in the country, as is mineral water, both still and carbonated water.

However, Russia is first and foremost known for their vodkas. There are hundreds of local vodkas distilled in the country, but in today's culture, beer is more commonly drunk. At celebrations though, the traditional vodka dominates. The country also has numerous other drinks, including international beers, wines, and hard liquors.

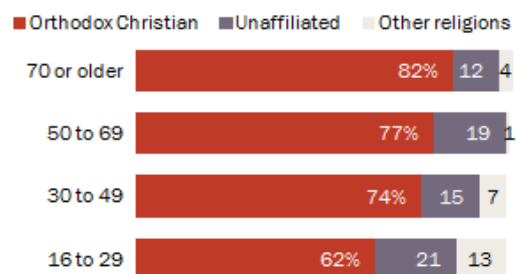
The tap water in Russia should not be consumed because in many places it is not safe.



Religion *Justin Dodge*

There is no official religion in Russia and, partially due to the intentional destruction of religion during time spans under the communists, the country is primarily atheist or does not adhere to a specific faith. The most popular religion is Russian Orthodox, but less than a quarter of the people actually adheres to this religion. There is also a significant Muslim population as many of the minority groups are, generally speaking, Muslim, although many others have converted to Orthodoxy or abandoned an attachment to any particular religion. Most people will claim to be religious or a believer of a Higher Being, but do not practice a particular religion nor do they prescribe to any individual faith.

Religious Identification Among Russians, by Age, 2008



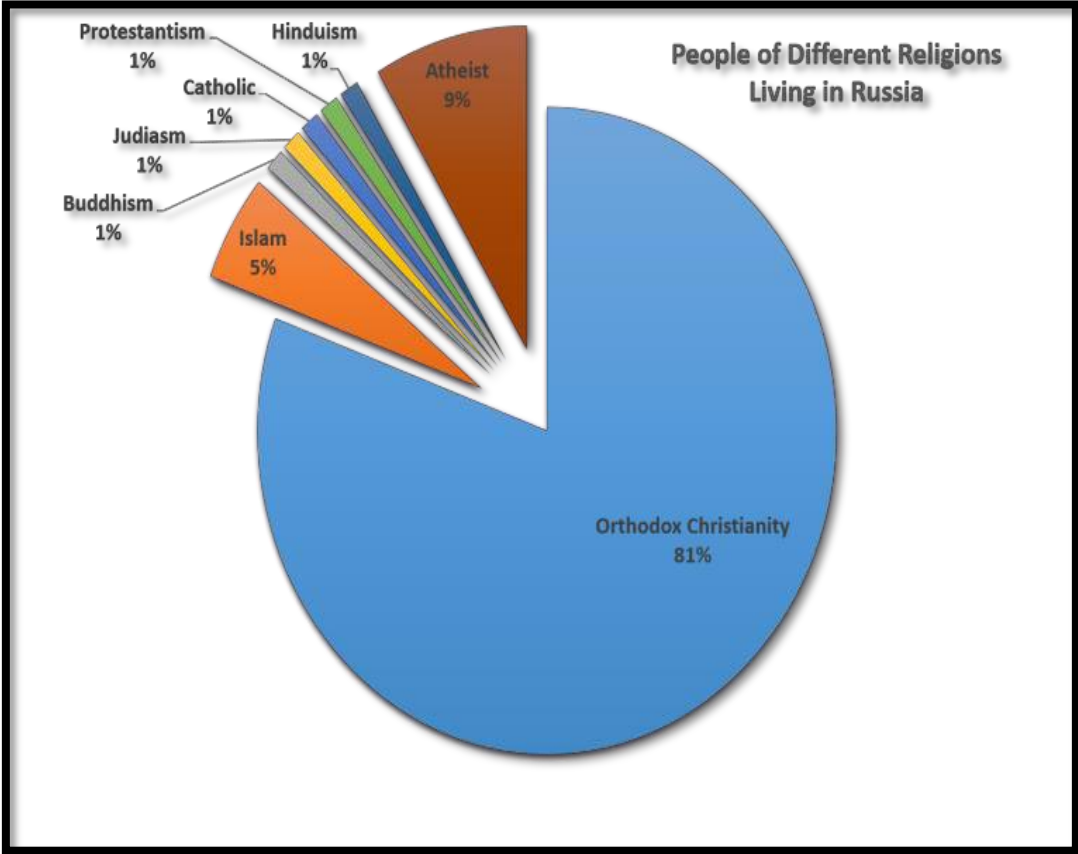
Source: International Social Survey Programme. Respondents who did not answer the question are not shown.

"Russians Return to Religion, But Not to Church," February 2014

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Orthodoxy is a Christian religion that claims to be the most loyal to the Christian faith and religion as it was described by Jesus and the Gospels in the New Testament. Christianity, including Orthodoxy, was founded after the death of Jesus in about 30-33 AD; various branches of Orthodoxy were officially recognized by governments long before Catholicism was recognized in the Roman Empire.

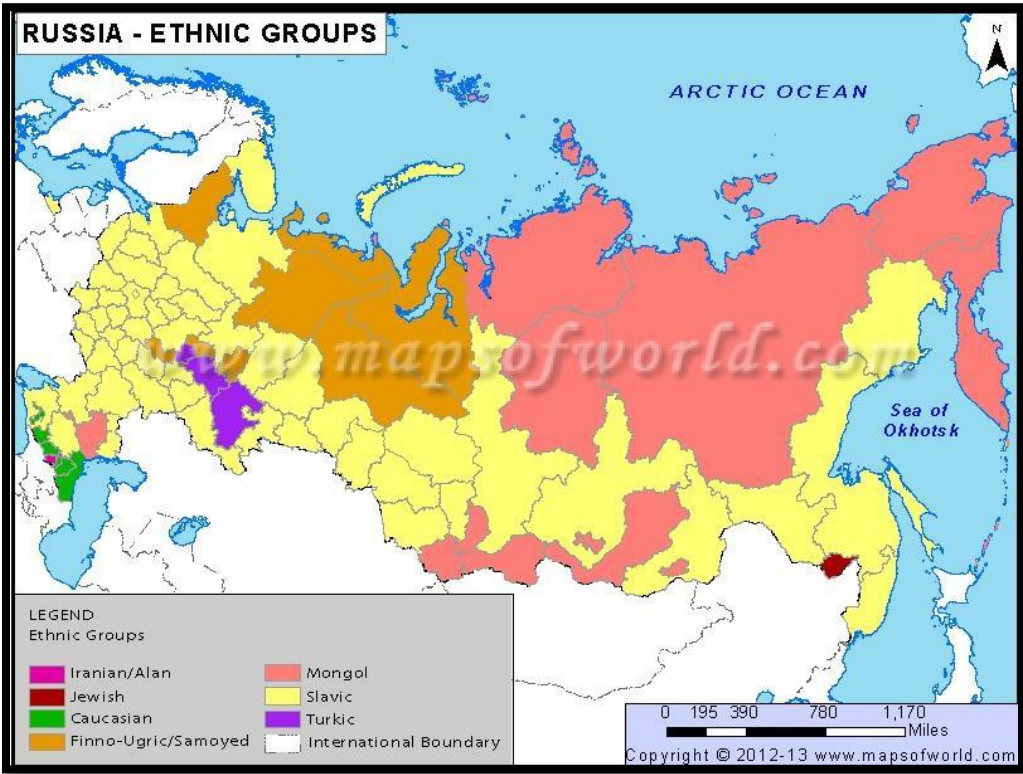
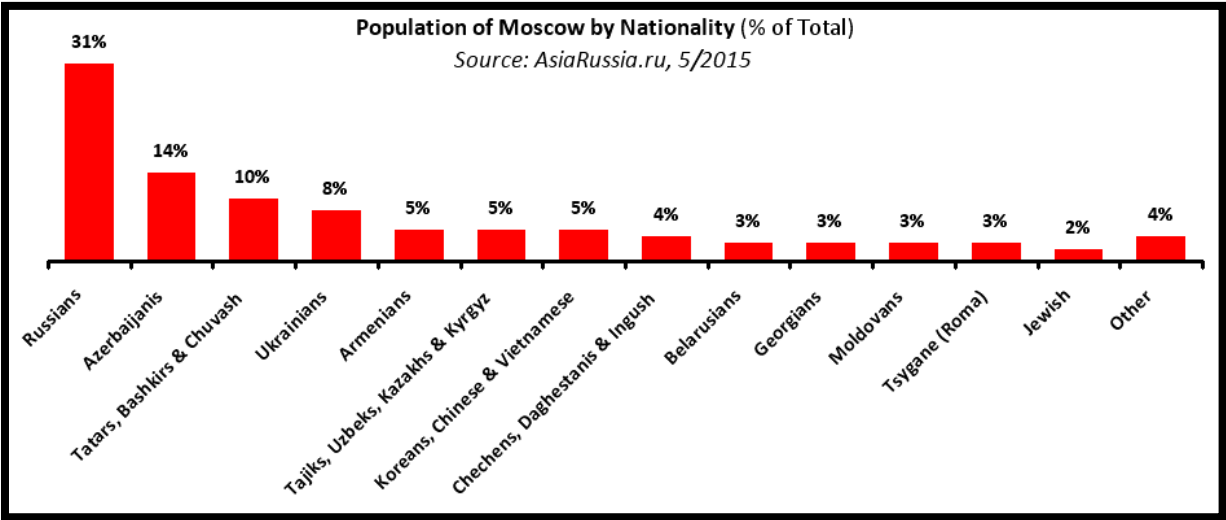
Orthodoxy and Catholicism have many of the same beliefs; both believe that there is a single God who created everything and a savior, the son of God, Jesus Christ who is the forgiver of sins. However, Orthodoxy is decentralized so each bishop oversees their local country or region, giving each orthodox country a different leader. In this way, no bishop has more power than any other, meaning the tenants and interpretations of the faith remain relatively unchanged. These beliefs are based on the teachings of the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, in particular the life and teachings of Jesus, which is found in the gospels (in the New Testament).



Ethnicity *Justin Dodge*

Most of Russia is ethnically Russian, but there are dozens of ethnic minorities in the country and some regions have a high percentage of these minorities than they have ethnic Russians. The Russian ethnicity is a part of the eastern Slavic ethnicities, making their closest relatives the Belarusians and Ukrainians. Of the minority ethnic groups, many are people of neighboring countries, such as Belarusians, Kazakhs, Chinese, etc., but others belong to more unique ethnic groups. The largest of these ethnic groups is the Tatars, who are an ethnically

Turkic people who spread across the country with the Mongols. Many of the other minority groups are also Turkic people from the Central Asian or Ural Mountain regions.



Basic Economy *World Bank*

After almost two years of recession, Russia has entered a path to recovery. With global growth and trade starting to strengthen at the end of 2016, Russia's economy showed signs of overcoming the recession caused by the shocks of low oil prices and economic sanctions.

Tradable sectors benefitted from the relative price adjustment and stabilizing commodity prices in the second half of 2016, and became

the main drivers of economic growth, partly through increased exports. There was a positive momentum in non-tradable sectors as well, which slowed the pace of contraction compared to 2015. The incipient positive momentum appears to have spilled into early 2017.



Unemployment in Russia decreased slightly, inflation slowed and real-wage growth resumed. But poverty also increased, as the sharp decline in pension income more than offset the incipient recovery in real wages. However, the prevalence of extreme poverty remained marginal.

Government *Amber Pariona*

The government of Russia is considered a federal semi-presidential republic, according to the 1993 Constitution. Under a semi-presidential structure, the President – Vladimir Putin, and the Prime Minister share governing responsibilities as the head of state and head of government, respectively. The President does, however, hold more power. Multiple political parties are represented throughout the government and its administration. Three branches share the responsibilities of running the country: the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch.



References

- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/russia/culture/food-drinks/> View: 14.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/russia/culture/social-life/> View: 14.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/russia/culture/social-life/> View: 14.09.2017
- <http://www.safaritheglobe.com/russia/culture/ethnicity-language-religion/> View: 14.09.2017
- <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/russia-population/> View: 14.09.2017
- <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/posts/the-prettier-sex-understanding-gender-roles-in-russia> View: 14.09.2017
- <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/russia/publication/rer> View: 14.09.2017
- <http://world-flags.over-blog.com/2015/12/russia.html> View: 14.09.2017
- <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-type-of-government-does-russia-have.html> View: 14.09.2014
- <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/russia/publication/rer> View: 14.09.2014



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic



Demonym

Sahrawi - Western Saharan

The Arabic word *Ṣaḥrāwī* صحراوي literally means "Inhabitant of the Desert". The word Sahrawi is derived from the Arabic word *Ṣaḥrā'* (صحراء) meaning desert. The men are called a "Sahrawi" while the women are called a "Sahrawiya".

Geography

Western Sahara is an area of northwestern Africa, bordered by the Moroccan province of Tarfaya in the north, Algeria in the northeast, Mauritania in the east and south, while west coast overlooks the Atlantic.

The Polisario Front is the Western Sahara's national liberation movement, fighting for the independence of the Western Sahara since 1973—originally against Spanish rule; after 1975, against Mauritania and Morocco; since 1979, against Morocco only. The organization is based in Algeria, where it is responsible for the Tindouf refugee camps. The organization has maintained a cease-fire with Morocco since 1991 but continues to strive for the territory's independence as the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) through peaceful negotiations.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Population 570,866 inhabitants (2009)

According to the Ethnologue database, there were more than three million Hassaniya speakers in 2006, of whom 2.7 million resided in Mauritania. The number of Hassaniya speakers identifying as Sahrawi in the modern political sense is unknown, and estimates are hotly contested by partisans in the Western Sahara conflict. Actually most estimates however centre around 200,000 to 400,000. These populations are centred in southern Morocco, Western Sahara, and in the Tindouf Province of Algeria, where large number of refugees from Western Sahara are located.

Capital city El-Aaiún (179,542 inhab.)

Other cities Tifariti – Ad Dakhla – Smara – Cape Bojador – El Marsa

Total area 266 000 km²

Languages Hassaniya Arabic, Berber languages, Modern standard Arabic, Spanish, French within Moroccan-controlled areas



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Sahrawis' native language is the Hassāniya, a variety of Arabic originally spoken by the Beni Hassan Arabian tribes of the Western Sahara. It has almost completely replaced the Berber languages originally spoken in this region. Though clearly a western dialect, Hassāniya is relatively distant from other North African variants of Arabic. Its geographical location exposed it to influence from Zenaga and Wolof. There are several dialects of Hassaniya; the primary differences among them are phonetics. Today Hassaniya is spoken in south-western Algeria, northern Mali, Mauritania (has the biggest concentration of speakers), southern-Morocco and Western Sahara. Some Sahrawis speak Tashelhit and/or Moroccan Arabic as a second language due to interaction with neighbouring populations.

Modern standard Arabic and the Amazigh language (a standardized version of Moroccan Berber languages) is the official language of the Moroccan administered part of Western Sahara, while Standard Arabic is the only official language in Mauritania, Algeria and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

Due to the past colonization of Western Sahara and Cape Juby by Spain, Spanish is spoken by some Sahrawis, especially among the Sahrawi diaspora, with the Sahrawi Press Service, official news service of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

The current Moroccan constitution (adopted in July 2011) mentions, in its 5th Article, the Hassaniya language and recommends its preservation as a cultural heritage of Morocco.

Ethnic groups

Berber and Arabs

As described above, the Hassaniya speaking tribes are of Arabian, Beni Hassan descent, who fused with the dominant Sanhaja Berber tribes, as well as Black African and other indigenous populations (e.g. indigenous Soninke speaking groups). Even though cultural arabization of the Berber people was thorough, some elements of Berber identity remain.

Some tribes, such as the large Reguibat, have a Berber background but have since been thoroughly arabized; others, such as the Oulad Delim, are considered descendants of the Beni Hassan, even though intermarriage with other tribes and former slaves have occurred; a few, such as the Tekna tribal confederation, have retained some Berber dialect of the area. Often, though not in the case of the Tekna, the Berber-Arab elements of a tribe's cultural heritage reflects social stratification. In traditional Moorish-Sahrawi society, Arab tribes of the Tekna confederation claimed a role as rulers and protectors of the disarmed weaker Berber tribes of the Takna confederation. Thus, the warrior tribes and nobility would be Arab.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



However, most tribes, regardless of their mixed heritage, tend to claim some form of Arab ancestry, as this has been key to achieving social status. Many (the so-called chorfa tribes) will also claim descendancy from the Prophet Muhammad himself. In any case, no tribal identity is cut in stone, and over the centuries a great deal of intermarriage and tribal re-affiliation has occurred to blur former ethnic/cultural lines; groups have often seamlessly re-identified to higher status identities, after achieving the military or economic strength to defeat former rulers. This was, for example, the case of the largest of the Sahrawi tribes, the Reguibat. A Berber-descended zawiya (scholarly) tribe who in the 18th century took up camel nomadism and warrior traditions, they simultaneously took on more and more of an Arab identity, reflecting their new position alongside the traditional warrior castes of Arab Hassane origin, such as the Oulad Delim and the Arabic-speaking tribes of the Tekna confederation.

Social and ethnic hierarchy

Generally speaking, the Hassaniya populations were (or are) divided into several groups, of different social status.

At the peak of society were the aristocratic "warrior" lineages or clans, the Hassane, supposed descendants of the Beni Hassan Arab tribe (cf. Oulad Delim). Below them stood the "scholarly" or "clerical" lineages. These were called marabout or zawiya tribes (cf. Oulad Tidrarine). The latter designation the preferred one in among the Western Sahara-centered tribes, who would also almost invariably claim chorfa status to enhance their religious credibility. The zawiya tribes were protected by Hassan overlords in exchange for their religious services and payment of the horma, a tributary tax in cattle or goods; while they were in a sense exploited, the relationship was often more or less symbiotic. Under both these groups, but still part of the Western Sahara society, stood the znaga tribes—tribal groups labouring in demeaning occupations, such as fishermen (cf. Imraguen), as well as peripheral semi-tribal groups working in the same fields (among them the "professional" castes, mallemin and igawen). All these groups were considered to be among the bidan, or whites.

Below them ranked servile groups known as Haratin, a black population, according to some sources descendants of the original Sahara population, but more generally seen to be the descendants of freed slaves of African origins. (Note that "Haratin", a term of obscure origin, has a different meaning in the Berber regions of Morocco.) They often lived serving affiliated bidan (white) families, and as such formed part of the tribe, not tribes of their own. Below them came the slaves themselves, who were owned individually or in family groups, and could hope at best to be freed and rise to the status of Haratin. Rich bidan families would normally own a few slaves at the most, as nomadic societies have less use of slave labour than sedentary societies; however, in some cases, slaves were used to work oasis plantations, farming dates, digging wells etc.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Religion / Beliefs

Religiously, the Sahrawis are Sunni Muslims of the Maliki rite or school. Historically, religious practice has been pragmatically adapted to nomad life and local tradition. Also, since the late medieval period, various Sufi *Turuq* (brotherhoods or orders) have played an important role in popular religious practice; the most important among these are the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya. Further, among the Hassaniya tribes, certain lineages reputed to be descended from the Prophet Mohammed, the chorf, have played an important role in intertribal religious society.

Political Background



Following the Spanish evacuation of Spanish Sahara, Spain, Morocco, and Mauritania signed the Madrid Accords on November 14, 1975, leading to both Morocco and Mauritania moving in to annex the territory of Western Sahara. On 26 February 1976, Spain informed the United Nations that as of that date it had terminated its presence in Western Sahara and relinquished its responsibilities, leaving no Administering Power. Neither Morocco nor Mauritania gained international recognition, and war ensued with the independence-seeking Polisario Front considered by the United Nations as the legitimate representative of the Sahrawi people with right to "self-determination and independence."

The creation of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) was proclaimed on February 27, 1976, as the Polisario declared the need for a new entity to fill what they considered a political void left by the departing Spanish colonizers. While the claimed capital is the former Western Sahara capital El-Aaiún, in Moroccan-controlled territory, the proclamation was made in the government-in-exile's provisional capital, Bir Lehlou, which remained in Polisario-held territory under the 1991 cease-fire. On February 27, 2008, the provisional capital was formally moved to Tifariti. Day-to-day business, however, is conducted in the Tindouf refugee camps in Algeria, which house most of the Sahrawi exile community. As of 2017, the SADR has been recognized by 85 states. Of these, 39 have since "frozen" or "withdrawn" recognition for a number of reasons. A total of 40 UN states maintain diplomatic relations with the SADR, while a further 7 also recognise the state. Sahrawi embassies exist in 18 states.

Although it is not recognised by the United Nations, the SADR has held full membership of the African Union (AU, formerly the Organisation of African Unity, OAU) since 1982.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Economic situation

Despite independent governance, Sahrawi refugees rely on international assistance to combat malnutrition, health deficits, and economic inactivity. According to UN estimates, the camps require 130 million USD annually to operate successfully but only receive roughly 70 million USD (Eptako, 2013). As a result, malnutrition and anemia plague the camps, education and healthcare suffer, and employment is limited. Sahrawis depend on food assistance from the World Food Program and other organizations, and the majority of employed Sahrawis in the camps do not receive salaries but rather stipends from the UNHCR. Life in the Algerian desert region presents few options, and the inability of Polisario leaders to curb these circumstances or secure governance in the Western Sahara reaps increasing frustration among Sahrawis and particularly the disenfranchised youth—making the camps susceptible to crime and extremism.

The majority of the territory of Western Sahara - the Southern Provinces - is currently administered by the Kingdom of Morocco. As such, the majority of the economic activity of Western Sahara happens in the framework of the economy of Morocco.

In the Moroccan-administered territory, fishing and phosphate mining are the principal sources of income for the population. The territory lacks sufficient rainfall for sustainable agricultural production, hence most of the food for the urban population must be imported. All trade and other economic activities are controlled by the Moroccan government, as usual in Western Sahara. Morocco has signed a fishing treaty with the EU including Western Sahara as part of Morocco, although it was declared illegal by the legal services of the European Union. Moroccan Energy interests in 2001 signed contracts to explore for oil off the coast of Western Sahara, but some companies had abandoned since then.

The Free Zone (POLISARIO-administered territory) is mainly uninhabited. There is practically no economic infrastructure and the main activity is camel herding nomadism. The government-in-exile of the Polisario Front had also signed contracts for oil exploration, but there is no practical work, due to the fact that the zones given are on the Moroccan-controlled part of the territory.

Currency

Sahrawi peseta,
Moroccan dirham
Algerian dinar
Mauritanian ouguiya



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Cultural Traditions

The Saharawis are ethnically mixed descendants of Berbers, Arabs, and Black Africans. They come from 22 different tribes, although tribal affiliation has much less importance today than in previous centuries. Before the arrival of Spanish colonists, the Saharawis lived nomadic lives, travelling from central Mauritania to southern Morocco and into eastern Algeria. The majority, though, lived and herded camel and goats throughout the territory that today is known as the Western Sahara. As with most peoples living in the Sahara, the Sahrawi culture is mixed. It shows mainly Arab, Berber and Arab-Berber characteristics, like the privileged position of women.

Sahraoui society is marked by several customs, traditions and specific festivities connected to the different aspects of life, for example, birth, Akika – or the celebration of the seventh day after birth of a baby, circumcision, engagements, weddings, divorces, death and burial as well as religious ceremonies, including religious feasts and the two months of Chaabane and Ramadan.

There are also other types of tradition linked to traditional culinary art including popular dishes and beverages and traditional dress. To that is added the sense of generosity, hospitality and entertainment, the furnishing and decoration of homes, the principles of education, the spirit of solidarity and the relation between human beings and cattle, as well as with other animals; in particular the camel - that tireless « vessel of the desert ».

These customs and traditions are indispensable tools for understanding the semiotic dimensions and the cultural implications of popular Hassani culture. They also constitute an important factor to understanding the life style in the Southern Provinces and are reflective of the human creativity describing the distinctive feature of the Sahrawi space throughout history.

Hair braiding constitute a tradition of the Sahrawi woman going way back in time and eventually becoming an important feature of her overall look. She has managed to develop braids in several different patterns designed to match the occasions in which she partakes. The braids worn on ordinary days are different from those worn for weddings, ceremonies and celebrations. Elderly women wear so-called « Ghafa », « Malfoufa », and « Mchenfa » braid while the « Sala mana », « Baz » and T'azil » braid are more frequently found among young girls.

The Sahrawi people rely on songs, storytelling, drawings and paintings to perpetuate their traditions and their history to the younger generations. War and the building of camps have caused a break-up in this cycle. The Ministry of Culture wants to maximize chances given to the younger generation to become competent in this field. The Sahrawi people should be ready, after independence, to carry on the construction work using important elements taken from their own tradition and culture.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Sewing tents is an important activity for the Sahrawi people and is seen as spiritual when considering the strong relationship between Sahrawis and the tent. It represents their traditions and their cultural heritage. It also refers to joy, celebration, and happiness. Sahrawi people who see a tent will feel good and be reminded of joyful and happy memories. It is not just a spatial unit reserved for living space but refers to all relationships linking the members of a given family. Thus, it represents all the concrete relations within the family.

A tent is a symbol that links Sahrawi people and their traditions and customs regardless of the person's age. It represents memories for the old people and continuity for the youth. A tent is also the traditional and spiritual link between Sahrawi people and the environment where they grow up. I do not think that there is a standing barrier between the love of the Sahrawi people and the tent. It remains as a symbol of Hassani culture. For all these reasons most Sahrawi women want to continue sewing tents to protect and secure the continuity of this unit in Sahrawi culture.

Education

The Polisario Front, which runs the camps, has attempted to modernize their society, placing a public emphasis on education, the eradication of tribalism and the emancipation of women. The role of women in camps was enhanced by their shouldering of the main responsibility for the camps and government bureaucracy during the war years, as virtually the entire male population was enrolled in the Polisario army.

Education was also assisted by refugee life. While teaching materials are still scarce, the "urbanization" of the refugee camps and the abundance of free time for camp dwellers (after the situation normalized circa 1977) greatly increased the effectiveness of literacy classes. The Polisario Front claims presently that nearly 90% of refugees are literate, the number having been less than 10% in 1975, and several thousands have received university education in foreign countries as part of aid packages (mainly Algeria, Cuba, and Spain).

A great deal of attention has been concentrated on the campaign for the elimination of illiteracy. The majority of the adults have the opportunity to learn to read and write; higher level courses result in a greater standard of education.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Migrations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXdJYbkdk1o>

After the Madrid Accords which transferred administration of the Spanish Sahara to Mauritania and Morocco in 1976, an exodus of refugees fled the violence that ensued, with substantial numbers ending up in the Polisario Front movement's base areas in the Algerian Sahara, where refugee camps were set up in the Tindouf Province, and a smaller number in camps in Mauritania. The camps in Tindouf were named after towns in the Western Sahara (Awserd, El-Aaiún, Smara and Dakhla).

Algerian authorities have estimated the number of Sahrawi refugees in Algeria to be 165,000. For many years this figure was referred to by UNCHR, but in 2005 the organization reduced the number of "vulnerable refugees" to 90,000, until a census to determine the exact number of refugees in the camps could be done. The Moroccan government contends that the figure is much lower, around 45,000 to 50,000, and that these people are kept in the refugee camps against their will by Polisario.

Mauritania houses about 26,000 Sahrawi refugees, classified by UNHCR as "people in a refugee-like situation". This population consists both of original refugees to the territory, and of former Tindouf dwellers who have since migrated to Mauritania. Additionally, between 3,000 and 12,000 Sahrawis live in Spain, the former colonizer.

Today, the Saharawis are split into a number of populations: those living under Moroccan occupation in the Western Sahara, those living in the refugee camps in Algeria, and those living abroad in countries like Mauritania, Spain, Italy, Norway, Cuba, and the United States. Saharawis have once again become nomads, only this time, their paths take them across the globe rather than across the desert; and their quest is for freedom, rather than water for their herds.

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2014/10/18/radar/human-rights-tindouf-refugee-camps>
<https://muse.jhu.edu/chapter/1068188> The ideal Refugees



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Gender and Family relations

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPiibyWRH4A> (Nomadic women)

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309359594_Refugee_women_in_the_Sahrawi_camps_towards_gender_equality (Refugee women in the Sahrawi camps: towards gender equality)

Polisario has attempted to modernize the camps' society, through emphasis on education, eradication of tribalism and emancipation of women.

The role of Sahrawi women was central already in pre-colonial and colonial life but was strengthened further during the war years (1975–1991), when Sahrawi women ran most of the camps' administration, while the men were fighting at the front. This together with literacy- and professional education classes produced major advances in the role of women in Sahrawi society. The return of large numbers of Sahrawi men since the cease fire in 1991 may have slowed this development according to some observers, but women still run a majority of the camps' administration, and the Sahrawi women's union UNMS is very active in promoting their role.

Refugee camps are typically perceived as militarized and patriarchal spaces, and yet the Sahrawi refugee camps and their inhabitants have consistently been represented as ideal in nature: uniquely secular and democratic spaces and characterized by gender equality.

Wedding

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZbph-kBvrl> (Sahrawi women | Nomads of the Sahara)

When a young Sahrawi man decides to get married, he informs his family, especially his mother who undertakes to inform his father, for it is unseemly, in the eyes of the Sahrawis, for a young man to directly inform his father of his matrimonial intentions. A Sahrawi father is expected to receive “the glad tidings” of his son’s intentions, through the mediation of one of the family members or one of his close friends.

In spite of the fact that it is allowed by the Shari'a, polygamy is a forbidden practice in Sahrawi culture.

Divorce

In the provinces of the south, divorce is considered an ordinary event if it is the result of the mutual will of both parties and occurs in accordance with Islamic law.

When the Sahrawi woman divorces, her family and close relatives organize a great occasion in sign of support.

The ceremony of divorce has been proposed as an example of World Cultural Heritage since it's unique in the world.



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



Gender Based Violence

<https://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10092/11184/Women-of-the-Sahara.pdf?sequence=1>



“Concealing Violence Against Women in the Sahrawi Refugee Camps: The politicisation of Victimhood” (Chapter 5) Helena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh

https://books.google.fr/books?hl=fr&lr=&id=LTMHDAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PT152&dq=gender+violence+against+sahrawi+women&ots=ZTJnvm3kdw&sig=Qi_v0oL9In-dtnJqPB6wHPQGIlw#v=onepage&q=gender%20violence%20against%20sahrawi%20women&f=false

Abstract / After presenting a brief history of the conflict over the Western Sahara and an outline of the Sahrawi refugee camps themselves, the author analyses a selection of claims commonly made regarding Sahrawi refugee women. She then highlights the extent to which Sahrawi officials and refugee youth proclaim the absence of violence against women in the camps as a way of demonstrating the “uniqueness” of the Sahrawi camps, and argue that violence against women has been highly politicised by Sahrawi representatives and their Western observers in a number of ways. With reference to specific instances of violence she examines why certain forms of violence are silenced and categorized as “private” by the Polisario Front while others are publicly highlighted in the international arena. The author argues that different categories of violence against women serve particular political purposes and are explicitly invoked by the Polisario and that the concealment of violence against women in the camps is designed to validate the Polisario’s claims of the Sahrawi’s “uniqueness” whilst simultaneously being clearly detrimental to the well-being and safety of Sahrawi women in the camps.

“Refugee women in the Sahrawi camps: towards gender equality” by Carolina Jiménez Sánchez, 2016 / Chapter 2.2 (page 319 and following ones) *The Sahrawi people in the refugee camps in Algeria*.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309359594_Refugee_women_in_the_Sahrawi_camps_towards_gender_equality

Abstract / Is the involvement of Sahrawi women in the administration of the camps making a difference in comparison with other refugee camps? Is any kind of gender dimension being implemented?



Produced by Euro-CIDES -FR-



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



SENEGAL

Produced by ANFE Italia (Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti)



GEOGRAPHY: Senegal sits on the West Coast of Africa, bordered by the North Atlantic Ocean, Mauritania to the north, Mali to the east, Guinea to the southeast and to the southwest Guinea-Bissau. The state surrounds the Gambia's Country. Senegal is defined by rivers. The Senegal River meanders across the northern border, a behemoth of running water that is dammed in two places along its course. The Casamance River runs along the south, and is only navigable for 80 miles of its impressive 200-mile length. The Faleme River defines the eastern border.

CAPITAL: Dakar

POPULATION: 14,668,522 million



LANGUAGE: . The number of individual languages listed for Senegal is 38 but the official language is French. In the northern part , between Mauritania and The Gambia, three main languages are spoken: Wolof especially in urban areas, Pulaar, and Sereer. The southern linguistic zone, located south of The Gambia, has a larger number of languages. Jola, Malinka, Pulaar, Sereer, Soninke, and Wolof ere recognised as national languages¹.

LITERACY RATE: 57.7%; male: 69.7% and female's population 46.6%²

BELIEF: The constitution provides for the freedom of religion and defines the country as a secular state. *Senegal* is predominately Muslim 95.4%, most adhere to one of the four main Sufi brotherhoods. The Senegalese Sufi Muslim traditions provides a model of religious coexistence and tolerance, so Christians (around 4%) and other religious minorities are generally well respected.

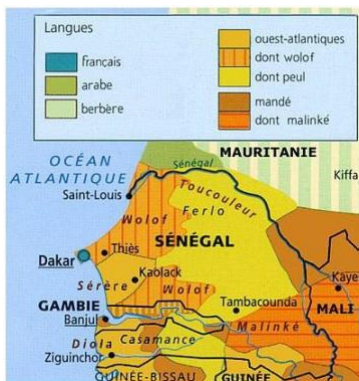
¹ <http://www.languageeducationpolicy.org/lepbyworldregion/africasenegal.html>

² <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sg.html>



SENEGAL

Most Christians live in the Casamance area, in the South of Senegal and other bigger cities like Dakar and Saint-Louis. Protestants in Senegal are equally accounted for by the Protestant Church of Senegal, and the same applies to the other Christian denominations. Hinduism is practiced by people of Indian descent. Animism, on the other hand, is practiced and highly respected by many Senegalese people who choose to maintain adequately strong ancestral knowledge. The Senegalese people practice and hold dear some old beliefs such as the power of gratitude and saying thanks, protection from water and among others. The Baobab, also known as the 'House of Spirits', is a sacred tree of great importance to the Senegalese people³. In Senegal **marabout** has an important role in the practice of Islam. The practice is transmitted from father to son and consists of a healing power and the assurance of the salvation of the faithful. The marabout also teaches the Coran and conducts ceremonies.



ETHNIC GROUPS: Senegal is a very ethnically diverse country. The Wolof represents the largest ethnic group at 43%. The Fula and Toucouleur are the second-largest group at 24%, followed by the Serer (14.7%), Jola (4%), Mandinka (3%), Maurers, Bassari, Soninke, and other communities. Wolof and Serer are farmers and usually live in small rural villages in the Centre West and in the urban areas⁴. The Fulani, speaks Pulaar and are traditionally considered very devote to Islam by the other groups; they can be divided into two distinct cultural groups: a large group of semi-nomadic herders, and the Toucouleur, who are settled farmers inhabiting the Senegal River Valley. The Jola, living Senegal's

southern Casamance *region*, are very jealous of their identity and refuses to be assimilated to the Wolof culture; most of them are fishermen and rice grower. At the present there are a lot of refugees and asylum seekers most of whom are from Mauritania and Gambia and in recent years West African migrants often use Senegal as a transit point to North Africa or Europe. There are also nearly 50,000 Europeans, French and Lebanese people in the country, along with small groups of Moroccans and Mauritians. In urban areas, there are small groups of Vietnamese and a growing number of Chinese immigrant traders⁵.

POLITICAL SITUATION: Senegal achieved the independence from France on 1960 and now is one of the most democratic and stable country of Africa. Since 1982 the area of Casamance has been characterized by separatist movements: at the origin of the rebellion there are historical, cultural and geographical differences between south and the rest of the largely arid, Islamized north and the resentment of the Diola against the Wolof people, the dominant ethnic group who have traditionally economically and politically marginalised them. The local conflict produced thousands of internally displaced people and a lot of Senegalese were killed; in 2014 the main rebel faction (Movement of the Democratic Forces of Casamance) declared a unilateral ceasefire and political discussions with the government are ongoing, but groups are still present in Casamance, and the region continues to suffer from banditry. In 2012 Macky Sall wins presidential elections and on 2016 promoted a constitutional referendum to modernize the political regime, reducing the

³ <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/religious-beliefs-in-senegal.html>

⁴ <https://info.publicintelligence.net/MCIA-SenegalCultureGuide.pdf>

⁵ <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/senegal-population/>



SENEGAL

presidential term from seven to 5 years; he also promoted a spending review abolishing the upper house, the Senate, and the post of vice president⁶. Senegal has not been targeted directly by terrorist attacks but remains vulnerable due to porous borders, increased regional instability, and the terrorist activities associated with al-Qa'i'da in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and other like-minded organizations⁷.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: Religious tolerance is a national characteristic and norm; marriages between Christians and Muslims are not unusual as celebrating the festivals of other religions or decorating Christmas trees. In the urban cities, especially the capital Dakar, there are many Senegalese from diverse backgrounds assimilate into an urban-Senegalese identity that is primarily based on the Wolof language and western uses (alcoholism and drug use, mostly cannabis, have become very common). Most Senegalese (especially in the south) today follow Islamic custom in their rites of passage, including baptism, circumcision, marriage, and death. In many rural areas, religious leaders frown on dancing and sometimes forbids drumming or dancing. Women and men may eat at separate tables in the same room or they may eat in separate rooms. Women generally do not wear veils⁸, they use dresses and it is rare to see women in jeans or pants; in the cities, most men and women wear Western-style clothing. Men typically wear shirts and trousers, and suits for dress occasions. Shorts are reserved for children, unless they are worn for sports⁹. Handshaking and putting the right hand to the chest is common between men, while holding hands with other men while walking is a sign of friendship. Men greeting women just use a simple handshaking; in certain parts of southern Senegal it is common for women to bend their knees when greeting elders. Direct eye contact is considered unpolished, in fact making direct eye contact throughout a greeting and conversation can be a sign of arrogance. The Senegalese tend to lower their gaze while conversing, especially when speaking with someone senior to themselves in age or position¹⁰. Although most Senegalese are Muslims, cross-gender touch does occur unlike many other Muslim or Arab countries. Very religious men/women though may not shake hands with the other sex¹¹.

GENDER RELATIONS: Senegal ranks at 82th out of 144 countries worldwide for gender equality in the index of Global Gender Gap¹². The Senegal's constitution guarantees equality between women

⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14093674>

⁷ <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=21607>

⁸ <https://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/cs/profiles/Mali-new.pdf>

⁹ <http://www.encyclopedia.com/places/africa/senegal-political-geography/senegalese>

¹⁰ <https://www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/senegal-guide>

¹¹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13881370>

¹² <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=MLI>



SENEGAL

and men and in 2010, the Parliament adopted a gender parity law which requires political parties to introduce *gender* parity in electoral lists ensuring that at least 50% of candidates in local and national elections are women, but women faces many obstacles to the full participation in the economic life and educational system of the country¹³. Literacy rates of women are lower than men and, according to the UN, only 20% of women participate in the work force; most of them, working in the informal economy, with low wages, unsafe working *conditions* and not benefiting from basic social services.¹⁴ The government has established a rural development agency to involve women more actively and, due to the fact that a lot of young men decides to leave the small villages, rural women have started to be involved in managing village forestry resources; in urban areas women more independent and work outside the home.¹⁵ The family code establish the marital power so the husband makes legal decisions for his wife; among most ethnic groups, also other discriminatory practices affects the family's relationship and *inheritance*, especially in rural areas where women are traditionally engaged in household chores and childcare, such as repudiation, food prohibitions, taboos, difficulties to access to the land without intermediation of a man¹⁶.

GBV: Senegal has a solid legal framework to protect women from violence and has signed the most important international agreements on the issue such us the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (in 1985), and the Optional Protocol on violence against women , in 2000 Senegal ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2005. The Government has implemented a National Strategy for Gender Equality developed to run from 2005-2015¹⁷ .The Parliament also adopted legislation mandating fines and prison terms of up to three years for sexual harassment, domestic violence is punishable but no law address the spousal rape¹⁸ ; both the Constitution and the Family Code have forbidden forced marriage, establishing fines and prison sentences for public officials who endorse these practices; the article 299 bis of Criminal Code criminalizes excision¹⁹. Despite this framework, it seems that this legal system in practice is not really effective in preventing crimes or punishing the perpetrators, and few cases reach the court. While in urban areas laws are generally respected, rural areas are still dominated religious and traditional beliefs and few women are aware of the legal rights. Some ethnic groups still practised FGM as arranged marriages. The percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before age 18 is around 32%) and a quarter of Senegalese women have experienced genital cutting (mainly during the childhood)²⁰ and almost all girls in the northern Fouta region were victims of FGM/C. FGM is more common among Muslims than Christians and some ethnic groups (Mandingue followed by the Soninké, Poular and Diola), the regions with the highest prevalence are in the south and east. FGM is seen as part of cultural identity: for some Diola is part of initiation into their Islamic women's secret society (*ñaaakaya*); for Poular and Mandingue is a way to ensure their daughter's virginity at marriage, for

¹³ <http://www.encyclopedia.com/places/africa/senegal-political-geography/senegal>

¹⁴ <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15857&LangID=E>

¹⁵ <http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Senegal.html>

¹⁶ https://www.ecoi.net/local_link/337229/466989_en.html

¹⁷ <https://www.genderindex.org/country/senegal/>

¹⁸ <http://www.encyclopedia.com/places/africa/senegal-political-geography/senegal>

¹⁹ https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/pages/attachments/2015/12/08/sen104587.fe_.pdf

²⁰ https://agrilinks.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/ING%20Landscape%20Study%20282016%29%20Senegal%20-%20published%202015_12_20.pdf



SENEGAL

the Soninké is a religious requirement. Of women that have had FGM, there is a 52.4% rate of support for continuation, versus a low 2.6% rate of support among women who have not had FGM; generally the majority of men and women believe that this practice should be dismissed.²¹ There are some local empowerments and awareness-raising programmes against FGM/C implemented in 176 communities. Another common problem is domestic violence, there is not current statistics on the field but a UN study published in 2015 revealed 507 cases in Dakar, 263 in Thies, 279 in Kaolack, 227 in Diourbel, 201 in Louga, 176 in St Louis, 110 in Fatick, and 67 in Kaffrine; according to the Ong working there, the real incidence of the phenomenon is higher than the reported cases²². Some research shows that there is a certain social acceptance of the phenomenon, most people don't seek for help, police prefers do not intervene and in some cases judges claimed lack of adequate proof for conviction²³. There are shelter and accommodation facilities for victims, such as the National Women's Assistance and Training Centre, dedicated to training women and providing them with support in the form of advice or counseling through its branches at the regional level, and the Ginddi counseling and guidance centre providing psychological and medical assistance to vulnerable women and girls²⁴.

²¹ <https://www.idrc.ca/en/project/preventing-gender-based-violence-senegal>

²² https://www.ecoi.net/local_link/337229/466989_en.html

²³ <https://www.genderindex.org/country/senegal/>

²⁴ http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fSEN%2f3-7&Lang=en



SENEGAL



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



SOMALIA

Produced by the University of Malta

FAST FACTS



- Somalia is the easternmost country of Africa, on the Horn of Africa
- There are many different ethnic groups living in Somalia, the biggest of which are: the Isaaq, the Hawiye, the Dir, the Darod, the Digil Rahanweyn, the Mirifle Rahanweyn
- The vast majority of Somalis are **Sunni** and of the **Shafi'i** school of Islamic jurisprudence. Belief in the **Evil Eye** is widespread - Somalis think that a person can pass on the Evil Eye to another by praising that person, and thus causing them harm or illness
- Since the 1980's Somalia has gone through a **civil war, state collapse, clan factionalism** in the 1990s, culminating in **globalized ideological conflict** in the 2000's
- Since 2014 the anti-government **militant group Al-Shabaab**, aligned with Al Qaeda, appears to be weakening; however, its militants and other opposition groups continue to launch suicide attacks and fuel conflict. Al-Shabaab maintains control over large areas in southern and central Somalia
- Somali society is based on a **clan system** with membership in a diya group along kinship lines
- Some Somalis believe that the Evil Eye causes illness, and summon religious leaders when a serious illness is diagnosed. Somalis believe that spirits live inside people and when they become angry, they manifest their anger through illnesses such as fever, headache and other
- The Gender Inequality Index ranks Somalia as the **fourth most unequal country globally**
- Somalia has **extremely high rates of maternal mortality, rape, female genital mutilation and child marriage**. Violence against women is common and deeply ingrained in society
- **Al-Shabaab continues to torture, threaten, abduct and kill civilians, recruit child soldiers, rape women and girls**. Most women do not report to the police due to the fees required to open a case file; moreover, **the police and the army are often perpetrators of rape themselves**. Armed militias allied with the Government and clan militias have also been found guilty of **forcing girls into marriage**



SOMALIA

GEOGRAPHY: Somalia is the easternmost country of Africa, on the Horn of Africa. It extends from south of the Equator northward to the Gulf of Aden ¹.



POPULATION: 11,424,469²

CAPITAL: Mogadishu

LANGUAGE: Somali and Arabic are the main languages spoken in Somalia. English and Italian are also spoken by most Somalis³

LITERACY RATE: 37.8%⁴

ETHNIC GROUPS: the Isaaq, the Hawiye, the Dir, the Darod, the Digil Rahanweyn, the Mirifle Rahanweyn.

The **Isaaq clan** populates the independent region of Somaliland in north-western Somalia. The Isaacs were under the British rule and they have their own administrative, economic, and security structure.

The **Hawiye** clan inhabits southern and central Somalia and the capital, Mogadishu. The Hawiye have played a key role in the country's conflicts, by striving to secure political power.

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Somalia>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/somalia-population/>

³ <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-languages-are-spoken-in-somalia.html>

⁴ <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-lowest-literacy-rates-in-the-world.html>



SOMALIA

The Dir clan populates northern Somalia and includes subgroups such as the Akisho, Gurgure, Surre, Issa, Barsuug, and the Biimaal. The Biimaal live in the south of the country, as well as in Ethiopia, Djibouti, and Kenya.

The Darod clan inhabits the autonomous region of Puntland, in the north, which has its own President and administration system. The Darod are suspicious of the southern clans.

The Digil Rahanweyn are part of the larger Rahanweyn clan and have seven subgroups including the Garre, Geledi, Tunni, Bagadi, and Jiida, comprising mainly of coastal and farming communities.

The Mirifle Rahanweyn clan engages primarily in pastoralism and agriculture in fertile areas of the country. They are divided into 21 sub-clans and speak a particular version of the Somali language known as 'maay maay'. **Inter-clan rivalries are extremely common in Somalia. The main clans are suspicious of each other and distrust political power.**

In Somalia there are also small communities of Arabs, Indians and Pakistanis who work as shopkeepers, and Italians involved in teaching and banana production. There are also immigrants from Ethiopia and other Bantu-speaking communities⁵.

BELIEF: Islam. The vast majority of Somalis are Sunni and of the Shafi'i school of Islamic jurisprudence⁶. Belief in the Evil Eye is widespread - Somalis think that a person can pass on the Evil Eye to another by praising that person, and thus causing them harm or illness⁷.

POLITICAL SITUATION: Since the 1980's Somalia has gone through a civil war, state collapse, clan factionalism in the 1990s, culminating in globalized ideological conflict in the 2000's⁸. After the fall of President Barre's government in 1991, clan-based warlords and their militias began fighting for power in Mogadishu. The Somali National Movement (SNM), brought together traditional clan elders and fought for the secession state of Somaliland, which took place in 1991. In 1998, clan leaders in the north-east region of Somalia formed the semi-autonomous state of Puntland.

Although there have been tensions over borders, Puntland and Somaliland have enjoyed relative stability; on the other hand, in Mogadishu and in areas in the south and centre of the country, different warlords have continued to fight amongst each other for power and control. In 2006, the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), a group of Sharia courts, took control of Mogadishu and large parts of the southern region. A few months later, the ICU was defeated by the Transitional Federal Government backed by the African Union & several other African

⁵ <http://www.worldatlas.com/about.htm> & <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4b29f5e82.pdf>

⁶ <https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/faq/islam-somalia>

⁷ <https://ethnomed.org/culture/somali/somali-cultural-profile#section-2>

⁸ http://www.c-r.org/downloads/Accord%2021_3Endless%20war_a%20brief%20history_2010_ENG.pdf



SOMALIA

States. Following the defeat of the ICU, the group's militant youth wing, Al-Shabaab, have continued the fight against the government. In 2012 Al-Shabaab swore allegiance to Al Qaeda.

In August 2012, the Transitional Federal Government was replaced by the first elected government in 22 years, the Somali Federal Government. Since 2014 Al-Shabaab has been weakening, but some of its militants and other opposition groups have continued to launch attacks, such as the suicide attack on a Mogadishu hotel in February 2015. Al-Shabaab maintains control over large areas in southern and central Somalia⁹.



Al-Shabaab militants

©Farah Abdi Warsameh/AP via The Telegraph

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: Somali society is based on a clan system with membership in a diya group along kinship lines. Diya groups are bound together and collectively pay or receive compensation for violence perpetrated by members or against members. Compensation for death is usually 100 camels for a man and 50 camels for a woman. Payments go to men, and women are not equal members. There is a group of elders who take decisions¹⁰.

In Somalia, if two people of the same gender are conversing, they can come close to each other, make eye contact and touch. When unmarried men and women are talking, they must address each other in a professional and detached manner, and touching is discouraged. Somali culture is very modest and public displays of affection are not encouraged: a married man and a woman will simply walk side by side. It is also very unusual to see Somali couples fighting in public. Intimate relationships are considered to be a private matter.

⁹ <https://www.insightonconflict.org/conflicts/somalia/conflict-profile/>

¹⁰ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Women%27s%20Empowerment/Gender_Somalia.pdf



SOMALIA

Women should always wear a headscarf or Hijab; showing skin or hair is considered unacceptable. Some women wear a traditional dress or Bati/Sheet. Last names are rarely used when addressing others; it is preferable to call people by their first name or their first three names. Most Somalis use nicknames even for official documents¹¹.

Somali people are very outgoing and open people, who like to converse and interact. However, one should be mindful about being too judgemental about Islam, or of some cultural practices such as polygamy or FGM, as this may be perceived as inappropriate.

Family is extremely important in Somali society. Somalis live with their parents until they get married, and in difficult times, the family support all its members¹². When a child is born, the mother and baby do not leave the house for 40 days – this period of time is called **'afatanbah'**. During the 40 days, incense is burned to protect the baby from everyday smells, which may make them sick; the mother wears earrings made from string placed through a garlic clove, and the baby wears a bracelet made from string and a local herb so as to drive away the Evil Eye. Afatanbah ends with a celebration at a friend's or relative's home.¹³

There are no confidentiality laws in Somalia and when a poor prognosis needs to be delivered, it is not delivered to the patient, but to the whole family. If this does not happen, the patient may decide not to trust medical practitioners. Some Somalis believe that the **Evil Eye causes illness, and summon religious leaders when a serious illness is diagnosed**. Somalis believe that spirits live inside people and when they become angry, they manifest their anger through illnesses such as fever, headache and other. A healing ceremony, which involves reading the Koran, burning incense and eating certain foods, aims at soothing the spirits. **Circumcision is viewed as a rite of passage and is practiced on both boys and girls**¹⁴.

GENDER RELATIONS: The Gender Inequality Index ranks Somalia as the fourth most unequal country globally. Girls marry very early and **marriages are often arranged** by the family¹⁵. **Polygamy is an accepted practice:** men can have up to 4 wives, so long as they can afford it. The more children a woman bears, the more respected she is. Thus, it is quite common for a Somali family to have seven or eight children¹⁶.

Women constitute 56.6% of the labour force in Somaliland and Puntland, and tend to work mostly in the agricultural sector¹⁷. Most Somali women engage in the sale and exchange of livestock products, and use the money earned on the household. In Puntland and Somaliland women often participate in paid employment in other sectors. Women are also in charge of the household and of raising the kids.

¹¹ https://www.international.gc.ca/cil-cai/country_insights-apercus_pays/ci-ic_so.aspx?lang=eng

¹² <https://ethnomed.org/culture/somali/somali-cultural-profile#section-2>

¹³ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Women%27s%20Empowerment/Gender_Somalia.pdf

¹⁴ <https://ethnomed.org/culture/somali/somali-cultural-profile#section-2>

¹⁵ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Women%27s%20Empowerment/Gender_Somalia.pdf

¹⁶ <https://ethnomed.org/culture/somali/somali-cultural-profile>

¹⁷ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Women%27s%20Empowerment/Gender_Somalia.pdf



SOMALIA

Women have very little access to health care; this is reflected in Somalia's maternal mortality rates, which are the highest worldwide. Women's participation in the civic and political life of the country is very limited¹⁸.

Since 1991, the use of Sharia and customary law have resulted in women's discrimination in judicial proceedings. Although Sharia does provide rights for women, it is administered by men only and is thus often misapplied¹⁹.

GBV: Somalia has extremely high rates of maternal mortality, rape, female genital mutilation and child marriage. Violence against women is common and deeply ingrained in society. Traditional or customary law is applied more often than official law, and shame attached to sexual or gender-based violence often prevents victims from coming forward, and crimes to be punished²⁰.

In 2016 the UNFPA reported that 99 % of survivors of gender-based violence were female, and 76% were IDPs (internally displaced people). Physical assault, rape, sexual assault, denial of access to resources and services, psychological abuse and forced marriage were the most common types of violence identified²¹.

In 2016 and 2017, fighting between Somali Federal Government (SFG) forces, African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) peacekeepers and Al-Shabaab has continued in central and southern Somalia. **Al-Shabaab has continued to torture, threaten, abduct and kill civilians, as well as recruit child soldiers.** Rape and sexual violence are still widespread²². Survivors are frequently forced to marry their rapist, **and women who become pregnant after being raped are often repudiated by their families.** Most women do not report to the police due to the fees required to open a case file; moreover, **the police and the army are often perpetrators of rape themselves.** Armed militias allied with the Government and clan militias have also been found guilty of **forcing girls into marriage**²³.

The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 98% of women in Somalia undergo **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** between four and eleven years of age. The most common form of FGM is infibulation, which involves the complete excision of the clitoris, labia minora, and most of the labia majora, followed by stitching to close up most of the vagina. Most men and women support the practice²⁴.

¹⁸ <https://ethnomed.org/culture/somali/somali-cultural-profile> &

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Women%27s%20Empowerment/Gender_Somalia.pdf

¹⁹ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Women%27s%20Empowerment/Gender_Somalia.pdf

²⁰ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Women%27s%20Empowerment/Gender_Somalia.pdf

²¹ <http://somalia.unfpa.org/en/publications/somalia-gender-based-violence-sub-cluster-bulletin>

²² <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/africa/somalia/report-somalia/>

²³ <http://www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/countries/somalia/>

²⁴ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/Women%27s%20Empowerment/Gender_Somalia.pdf



SOMALIA



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



SRI LANKA

Produced by the University of Coventry (UK)

FAST FACTS

- Sri Lanka is an island nation south of India. There are two official languages: **Sinhala** and **Tamil**. English is spoken competently by approximately 10% of the population, and mostly used in government.
- Sri Lanka is **religiously diverse**. Just under three-fourths of the population follow **Buddhism**, and around 12% are **Hindu**.
- The civil war ended after 25 years (in May 2009), after growing tensions between the Sinhalese and the Tamils.
- Religion pervades many aspects of life and constitutes a basic element of Sri Lanka's cultural diversity.
- In Sri Lanka, there is a strong tradition of both men and women working, with **men focusing more on income opportunities** and **women focusing on the household**.
- Currently, women's participation in the paid labour force is significant, although not evenly distributed, concentrated in professions such as nursing, teaching, tea picking, and garment construction.
- There has never been the practice of child marriage or the burning of widows in Sri Lanka.
- Sri Lanka elected the **world's first female prime minister in 1960**, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, whose daughter is the current president of the nation. While this is not indicative of the political power of women in general, Sri Lankan women have held **voting rights** since they were instituted in 1931 and have long held certain **property rights**. Most religious leaders and officiants are also male, while women tend to be overrepresented among their followers.
- Even though most groups on the island prefer for new brides to move into their husbands' homes, women traditionally retain strong ties with their own families.
- Women consistently **defer to men** across all domains of life, including the workplace and the home. Women also bear the greater weight of **social expectations and sanctions** for noncompliance.
- **Violence against women is widespread** in Sri Lanka, and is considered in many areas a part of daily life. Including incidences of rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence, incest, assault, obscenity against women, unwanted advances, perverted acts, forced pornography, forced prostitution and media violence.



SRI LANKA

GEOGRAPHY: Sri Lanka (formerly known as Ceylon), is an island country lying in the Indian Ocean and separated from peninsular India by the Palk Strait. It is located between latitudes 5°55' and 9°51' N and longitudes 79°41' and 81°53' E and has a maximum length of 268 miles (432 km) and a maximum width of 139 miles (224 km)¹.



©Encyclopædia Britannica

CAPITALS: Colombo; Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte

POPULATION: 20,950,041. Sri Lanka ranks number 58 in the list of countries by population².

LANGUAGE: Sri Lanka has two official languages; 74 % of the population speaks Sinhala (typically spoken by the Sinhalese), and 18% of the population speaks Tamil (spoken by the Tamils). English is spoken competently by around 10% of the population. It is used in government and is referred to as the link language in the constitution³.

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sri-Lanka#toc561906main>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/sri-lanka-population/> Accurate as of 9th January 2018

³ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ce.html>



SRI LANKA

LITERACY RATE: 91.2%⁴

ETHNIC GROUPS: Three ethnic groups—Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim—make up more than 99 percent of Sri Lanka’s population, with the Sinhalese alone accounting for nearly three-fourths of the people (74.9%⁵). The Sinhalese constitute the majority in the southern, western, central, and north-central parts of the country. The Tamil segment comprises two groups—Sri Lankan Tamils (11.2%; long-settled descendants from south-eastern India) and Indian Tamils (4.2%; recent immigrants from south-eastern India, most of whom were migrant workers brought to Sri Lanka under British rule). The foremost concentration of the Sri Lankan Tamils lies in the Jaffna Peninsula and in the adjacent districts of the northern lowlands. Muslims, who trace their origin back to Arab traders of the 8th century, account for about 7.5 percent of the population. Burghers (a community of mixed European descent), Parsis (immigrants from western India), and Veddas (regarded as the aboriginal inhabitants of the country) total less than 1 percent of the population⁶.

BELIEF: 70.2% of the Sri Lankan population are Buddhist, and 12.6% are Hindu. Muslim makes up for 9.7% of the population, Roman Catholic 6.1%, other Christian 6.1%, and other 0.05%⁷. Further, whilst more than 90 percent of the Sinhalese are Buddhists, both Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils are overwhelmingly Hindu. The Muslims—adherents of Islam—tend to speak Tamil. Christianity draws its followers from among the Sinhalese, Tamil, and Burgher communities⁸.

POLITICAL SITUATION: Sri Lanka’s ethnic relations are characterised by periodic disharmony. Since independence, estranged relations between the Sinhalese and the Tamils have continued in the political arena. Intensifying grievances of the Tamils against the Sinhalese-dominated governments culminated in the late 1970s in a demand by the Tamil

⁴ https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sri_lanka_statistics.html

⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ce.html>

⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sri-Lanka/Plant-and-animal-life#toc24280>

⁷ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ce.html>

⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sri-Lanka/Plant-and-animal-life#toc24280>



SRI LANKA

United Liberation Front, the main political party of that community, for an independent Tamil state comprising the northern and eastern provinces. This demand grew increasingly militant and eventually evolved into a separatist war featured by acts of terrorism. The violence to which the Tamils living in Sinhalese-majority areas were subjected in 1983 contributed to this escalation of the conflict. The secessionist demand itself has met with opposition from the other ethnic groups⁹. After more than 25 years of violence, the conflict ended in May 2009, when the government forces seized the last area controlled by Tamil Tiger rebels. But recriminations over abuses by both sides continue¹⁰.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: Sri Lanka is culturally diverse. Religion plays a role in many aspects of life and creates a basic element of this diversity. Buddhist and Hindu temples, as well as mosques and churches, are the most readily visible features of the cultural landscape. Varying degrees of colonial impact, modernising influences, and wealth and income also add to the cultural diversity.

Even though the ideal of social equality is widely diffused in contemporary Sri Lanka, caste¹¹ and class, as well as gender and ethnicity, continues to be very important within society. Class is determined by attributes such as wealth and education, while caste is determined by birth into a predetermined status hierarchy, typically understood as a matter of reward or retribution for one's deeds in previous lives. The importance and legitimacy of caste continues to be undermined by political and economic developments. Class differentiation, on the other hand, is increasing both in day-to-day social interaction and manifestations of disparities.

Traditionally, caste identity was extensively marked by ritual roles and occupations, names of individuals and places, networks of social relations, and regulations of dress and housing. Degrees of difference within the caste hierarchy were also marked by forms of

⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sri-Lanka/Plant-and-animal-life#toc24280>

¹⁰ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11999611>

¹¹ Each of the hereditary classes of Hindu society, distinguished by relative degrees of ritual purity or pollution and of social status.



SRI LANKA

address, seating arrangements, and other practices of deference and superiority. Today, where these hierarchical relations continue, there is a degree of uneasiness or even resentment toward them, particularly among the educated younger generations. Class status, in contrast, is increasingly manifested in speech, dress, employment, education, and housing. In general, elite classes can be identified by their command of English, education in exclusive schools, executive-level employment, possession of valued commodities, and access to international networks, whereas the lower classes are associated with manual labour, minimal comforts, and a lack of social contacts with the elite.

Sri Lanka has often been referred to as the model welfare state. With free and universal education and health care, subsidised transportation, and a wide range of public sector programs to assist the poor, the quality of life is high in comparison with other developing countries. Since the change in economic policies of 1977 which emphasised private sector growth, however, the quality and availability of these government services have been declining, and have been increasingly replaced by private resources accessed by the middle and upper classes. Besides the difficulty posed by reductions in state funding, the civil war has created additional challenges to the welfare system as up to 1.5 million people have been displaced, a group that has been targeted for relief and resettlement by nongovernmental organisations and private donors¹².

GENDER RELATIONS: In Sri Lanka, there is a strong tradition of both men and women working, with men focusing more on income opportunities and women focusing on the household. Currently, women's participation in the paid labour force is significant, although not evenly distributed, concentrated in professions such as nursing, teaching, tea picking, and garment construction. In manufacture and agricultural work, men are typically assigned tasks that are considered more physically demanding, while women are assigned the more repetitive, detail-oriented work at which they are thought to be better than men. Opportunity for foreign employment for women, while relatively available and well-paying, is restricted to domestic work, whereas opportunities for men are more varied, ranging

¹² <http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Sri-Lanka.html>



SRI LANKA

from manual labour to engineering. Within the home, regardless of their engagement in paid labour, women and girls do all food preparation and most other domestic work.

Leadership roles in Sri Lanka are largely held by men, with some important exceptions. Sri Lanka elected the world's first female prime minister in 1960, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, whose daughter is the current president of the nation. While this is not indicative of the political power of women in general, Sri Lankan women have held voting rights since 1931 and have long held certain property rights. Most religious leaders and officiants are also male, while women tend to be overrepresented among their followers.

The status of women is relatively high in Sri Lanka, especially in comparison to other South Asian nations. There has never been the practice of child marriage or the burning of widows in Sri Lanka. Even though most groups on the island prefer for new brides to move into their husbands' homes, women traditionally retain strong ties with their own natal families. Additionally, although it is expected among most groups for the bride's family to give the groom a dowry, in practice this property commonly remains in the possession of the wife until she passes it on, typically to her daughters.

Despite these traditional practices and the full rights of citizenship that women in Sri Lanka enjoy today, women consistently defer to men across all domains of life, including the workplace and the home. Women also bear the greater weight of social expectations and sanctions for noncompliance. In addition, sexual harassment and assault, while seldom reported to the authorities, are common experiences¹³.

GBV: Violence against women is widespread in Sri Lanka. Incidences of rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence, incest, assault, obscenity against women, unwanted advances, perverted acts, forced pornography, forced prostitution and media violence are prevalent in Sri Lankan society. These issues receive attention from diverse sectors, the State, non-government sector and civil society, which address preventive measures and provide redress for victims. Despite this attention, violence against women continues to

¹³ <http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Sri-Lanka.html>



SRI LANKA

take place in private and public, and the measures taken to prevent and redress, remain insufficient.

Gender based violence has always been prevalent in Sri Lanka. Although the lack of systematic data has prevented a full understanding of gender based violence, its prevalence and patterns, there are numerous specific writings as well as information from service providers that show a high prevalence and diverse forms of gender based violence faced by women (and children) in the country. Despite the limitations, reports show a consistent rise in the levels of violence against women in Sri Lanka; though it is unclear whether this is due to an increased awareness and reporting of incidents, or due to an increase in the number of incidents themselves.

Gender based violence ranges from sexual harassment in public spaces to acts of violence within the privacy of the home or at workplaces. It is acknowledged that the issue of who or which group in society has more power than others and who can exert acts of gender based violence is not restricted to economic power but is very much rooted in notions of social power and hierarchies in access to exercising such power. As such, the concept of gender based violence necessarily includes two aspects - violence which arises out of asymmetrical power relations resulting from socialisation processes, as well as gender based discrimination arising from structural violence against women, as can be seen, for example through the impact of violence against women because of armed conflict¹⁴.

¹⁴ <http://assets.wusc.ca/Website/Programs/WDP/backgroundPaper.pdf>



SRI LANKA



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



SUDAN

Produced by the University of Malta

FAST FACTS

- Sudan is a country located in **north-eastern Africa**, which has experienced decades of **conflict** since its independence from British and Egyptian control in 1956, mainly due to the **marginalisation of the peripheries** by the Khartoum government. Disagreements over **national identity** fuel conflict in the country
- Sudan is populated by a **variety of ethnic groups** speaking different languages and dialects. The most spoken language is **Sudanese Arabic** (a local variant of Arabic) and the most widely practiced religion is Islam, although many locals also hold traditional animist beliefs. **Belief in the Evil Eye** is common
- **Sharia law** was introduced in the judicial system in 1983, but is applied in a geographically inconsistent manner across Sudan
- Among the different ethnic groups, the **Zaghawa** concentrate in the war-ridden Darfur region and constitute the bulk of people living in **refugee camps**
- **Forced early marriage** is extremely common
- **GBV in the form of sexual violence, rape, attempted rape, abduction for sexual exploitation, injuries or**

killings following rape, has characterised the conflict in Darfur



- **Darfuri women** are subjected to **humiliation** as a result of their perceived racial differences
- The Sudanese Criminal Code punishes adultery with **death by stoning** or with 100 lashes for unmarried men and women. In the past, rape was often confused with adultery in courts, due to discriminatory legal provisions disproportionately affecting women. **Despite recent amendments distinguishing rape from adultery, women are still afraid of speaking up and reporting rape to the authorities**
- In 2014 **86.6% of women aged 15-49** reported having undergone some form of **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**



SUDAN

GEOGRAPHY: Sudan is a country located in North-East Africa. Sudan borders Egypt to the north; Libya to the north-west; the Red Sea, Eritrea, and Ethiopia to the east; South Sudan to the south; the Central African Republic and Chad to the west. Before the secession of the south, Sudan was the largest African country, with an area that represented more than 8% of the African continent¹.



CAPITAL: Khartoum

POPULATION: 42,249,982²

LANGUAGE: There are 134 living languages and more than 400 dialects in Sudan. They can be divided into four main language families: Semitic, Afro-Asiatic, Nilo-Saharan and Niger-Congo. Arabic, belonging to the Semitic language family is the dominating language, spoken only in one dialect, the Sudanese Arabic. A variant of Arabic is the **Sudanese Creole**, which is used as lingua franca in Sudan. In addition to Arabic, Beja or Bedawi (belonging to the Afro-Asiatic family) is spoken by 1.8 million people mainly in the north. Hausa is spoken by 80.000 people in the west.

Within the Nilo-Saharan language family is Dinka, spoken by the 3 million Dinka people living in southern Sudan. Nuer is a major language of the south-eastern regions spoken by the Nuer people near the border to Ethiopia. Fur is a major language of Sudan, native to the Darfur region, spoken by the Fur people. The two dialects of Nubian are spoken in the north and are often considered independent languages. Shilluk is spoken by the 600,000 Shilluk people in the area west of the White Nile. Bari is the major language spoken by the Bari people in the southernmost part of Sudan's Nile.

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sudan>

² <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/sudan-population/>



Within the Niger-Congo family, there is Zande, spoken in western Sudan by the Zande people, as well as in Congo and Central African Republic. Fulfulde, or Fulani is spoken in the north, Blue Nile and Kordofan regions by about 120,000 people. **English** is the main language in the south, used as a lingua franca in areas where Sudanese Creole is not used³.

LITERACY RATE: 75.9%⁴

ETHNIC GROUPS: There are **19 major ethnic groups** and over **597 ethnic subgroups** speaking more than 100 languages and dialects. Arab-speaking Muslims constitute 70% of the total population, followed by Nubians, Copts, Beja and others.

The **Sudanese Arabs** are the largest ethnic group in Sudan and are predominantly **Muslim**. They speak the Sudanese-Arab dialect, a local variant of Arabic. **The Nubians** are an ethnic group from the Nubia region, located by the Nile river in the northern parts of Sudan and southern Egypt. The Sudanese Nubians foster close cultural, language and family ties with the neighbouring Egyptian Nubians. They mainly speak Arabic and practice Islam.

The **Zaghawa**, also known as Beri, are a semi-nomadic community, living in central African countries such as Chad, Niger, who speak a language called Zaghawa. They engage in herding cattle, sheep and camels. **The Zaghawa of Sudan concentrate in the politically unstable and war-ridden Darfur region. They constitute the bulk of people living in refugee camps.**

The Copts are an ethno-religious community living in North Africa, the Middle East, Egypt, Libya and Sudan. They are the largest ethnic group of Christian faith in Sudan, and speak Arabic. They constitute about 1% of the Sudan population. Other ethnic groups in Sudan include the Masalit, Fulani, and Beja⁵.

BELIEF: **Islam** is the most widely practiced in North Sudan, while Christianity is more diffused in the south. Although the Sunni branch of Islam dominates, Sufi brotherhoods are also common. There is a strong belief in the Evil Eye; and cults of holy men and women or cults linked to brotherhoods, such as the Qadiriyyah, Tijaniyyah, Al-Fasi, Khatmiyyah and Mahdiyyah brotherhoods, are widespread. Moreover, many locals hold traditional animist beliefs. Christians make up 6.3% of the population⁶.

POLITICAL SITUATION: Sudan has witnessed decades of conflict since its independence in 1956, mainly due to the political, economic, religious and cultural marginalisation of certain ethnic groups by the Khartoum government. Disagreements over national identity lie at the basis of the conflict. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 which led to the independence of South Sudan in 2011, has scarcely benefitted Sudan's other regions, where skirmishes and unrest persist.

³ <http://looklex.com/e.o/sudan.languages.htm>

⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2103.html>

⁵ <http://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-ethnic-groups-in-sudan.html>

⁶ <http://looklex.com/e.o/sudan.religions.htm>



SUDAN

Tensions over border and oil issues between Sudan and South Sudan remain unresolved, and have led to grave human rights violations, crimes against humanity and severe humanitarian crises in the country's South, Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile regions⁷.

In late 2015 and early 2016, violence surged in Darfur, displacing tens of thousands of civilians. Arrests, restrictions on public gatherings and limits on freedom of speech are a daily occurrence. President al-Bashir, who was indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes in Darfur, was re-elected in 2015⁸.

CULTURAL TRADITIONS: Alcohol is forbidden across much of Sudan, where Islam is strictly observed. The Islamic religion plays an important role in the life of many Sudanese⁹. The Sudanese culture is an interesting mix of beliefs and practices, due to the presence of numerous ethnic groups and tribes.

Western clothing is worn in the cities; Muslim women in the north cover their heads and entire bodies to the ankles, by wearing the **tobe**, a long semi-transparent fabric over other clothing. Men often wear a long white robe called the **jallabiyah**, and a cap or turban. **Facial scarring** is an ancient Sudanese tradition, which persists today. Although different tribes have different markings, scarring is generally considered as a symbol of bravery for men, and of beauty of women. In the Shilluk tribe, scarring will take the form of a line of bumps along the forehead; in the Nuer tribe of six parallel lines on the forehead, and in the Ja'aliin tribe, of mark lines on cheeks. In the south of the country, women may have their entire bodies scarred in patterns reflecting their marital status and number of children. In the north, women commonly have their lower lips tattooed¹⁰.



Woman wearing the tobe at a wedding
©Flashback Summer

GENDER RELATIONS: Arranged marriages between cousins, second cousins, or other family members are the norm. It is not uncommon for older men to marry young women who have just finished school, at age nineteen or twenty. In rural areas, women are married off at an even younger age¹¹. **Forced early marriage** is reported to be a significant problem in Sudan. Under Islamic family law, men can divorce women by simply stating: 'I divorce you', while women can file for divorce under certain circumstances. **Abortion** is only permitted to save the life of the mother and is banned in the case of rape or incest. Married women cannot

⁷ <https://www.insightonconflict.org/conflicts/sudan/conflict-profile/>

⁸ <https://www.usip.org/publications/2016/05/current-situation-sudan>

⁹ <http://www.our-africa.org/sudan/people-culture>

¹⁰ <http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Sudan.html#ixzz4oQtZ15x4>

¹¹ <http://www.everyculture.com/Sa-Th/Sudan.html#ixzz4oQtZ15x4>



travel unchaperoned by their husbands. Moreover, risks associated with sexual violence restrict women's freedom of movement, particularly in Darfur.

Although women can own assets, it is almost impossible for them to manage such assets freely. Women can vote and stand for election, and 25% of seats in the lower house of parliament are reserved for women. Women are entitled to equal pay by law, but are not allowed to work at night (between 10 pm and 6 am) with the exception of several women employed in administration, health and other. Muslim men can prohibit their spouses from being employed outside the marital home¹².

GBV: In Sudan, **domestic violence and sexual harassment are not criminalised**. Moreover, there is no provision on marital rape within the Criminal Code. Sudan has recently amended section 149 of its Criminal Act (1991) to more clearly define rape¹³. In the past, rape was often confused with adultery, due to discriminatory legal provisions disproportionately affecting women. In fact, women were required to present four male witnesses in order to prove rape allegations.

Death by stoning (for married men and women) and 100 lashes (for unmarried men and women) are the punishments established under the Sudanese Criminal Code for adultery. Hence, until recently, the law put women victims of rape at risk of corporal punishment or death. Despite recent amendments distinguishing rape from adultery, women are still afraid of speaking up and reporting crimes¹⁴.

In the course of the conflict, women, particularly Darfuri women, have been subjected to sexual violence, including rape, attempted rape, abduction for the purposes of sexual exploitation, indecent assault, sexual humiliation and serious injuries or killings by state and non-state actors¹⁵. The Sudanese armed forces were accused of a **mass rape** of some 200 women and girls in Tabit, north-east of El Fasher, North Darfur in 2014. However, in Sudan police and soldiers are granted immunity for crimes committed whilst in service. For this reason, most cases of rape and sexual violence are under-reported, and when they are reported, the authorities often do not take action. Victims usually highlight the absence of police; lack of trust in the authorities; or social stigma/ fear of reprisal as reasons for not reporting.

There is widespread hostility towards LGBTIQ human rights organisations and individuals, who are often the target of discrimination and hate crime. FGM is not criminalised in Sudan and remains an established practice. In 2014 86.6% of women aged 15-49 reported having undergone some form of FGM. In Northern Sudan, it is estimated that 90% of girls are subjected to infibulation¹⁶. Circumcised girls are considered a better match for marriage; and girls are often peer-pressured into undergoing FGM¹⁷.

¹² <http://www.genderindex.org/country/sudan>

¹³ <http://www.genderindex.org/country/sudan>

¹⁴ www.wluml.org/sites/wluml.org/files/Sudans_Revised_Penal_Code_Mixed_Picture_WLUML_2015_0.pdf

¹⁵ www.un.org/sexualviolenceinconflict/countries/sudan-darfur/

¹⁶ FGM involving complete excision of the clitoris, labia minora, and most of the labia majora followed by stitching to close up most of the vagina

¹⁷ http://sudanconsortium.org/darfur_consortium_actions/reports/2015/Waging%20Peace%20Report%20-%20FGM%20in%20Sudan.pdf



SUDAN



This factsheet is intended for informational purposes only. The information provided is not exhaustive and does not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the country in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.



Co-funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union.



These factsheets are intended for informational purposes only. Information provided are not exhaustive and do not cover all cultural, political, social, religious or other aspects of the countries in question.

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship (REC) Programme of the European Union. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the CAPTIVE Project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.