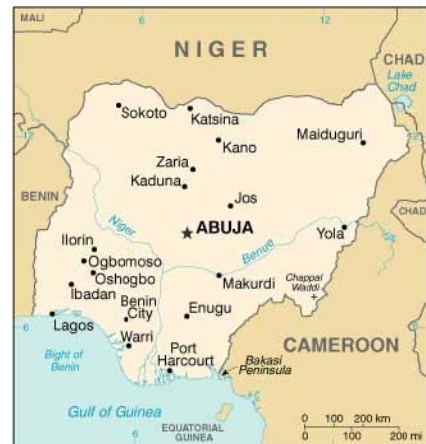


Nigeria



General statistics

Population: 152,217,341 (2010)
Area: 923,768 km²
Independence: 1 October 1960 (UK)
Capital: Abuja
Government: Presidential Federal republic
Administrative language: English
Currency: Naira (₦) (NGN)
GDP: 374.323 billion USD
GDP per capita: 2,459[4] USD
Calling code: + 234
Motto: Travail Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress
Anthem: Arise, O Compatriots



Minerals: Tantalite, Gold, Tarsands & Bitumen, Coal, Lead-Zinc, Magnesite, manganese, Rutile, Gypsum, Silver, Fluorite, Lithium, Phosphate

The country is located in West Africa and shares land borders with the Republic of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north. Its coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean.

History:

The first inhabitants of what is now Nigeria were thought to have been the Nok people (500 BC –c. AD 200). The Kanuri, Hausa, and Fulani peoples subsequently migrated there. Islam was introduced in the 13th century, and the empire of Kanem controlled the area from the end of the 11th century to the 14th. The Fulani empire ruled the region from the beginning of the 19th century until the British annexed Lagos in 1851 and seized control of the rest of the region by 1886. It formally became the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria in 1914. During World War I, native troops of the West African frontier force joined with French forces to defeat the German garrison in Cameroon

On Oct. 1, 1960, Nigeria gained independence, becoming a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and joining the United Nations. Organized as a loose federation of self-governing states, the independent nation faced the overwhelming task of unifying a country with 250 ethnic and linguistic groups. Rioting broke out in 1966, and military leaders, primarily of Ibo ethnicity, seized control. In July, a second military coup put Col. Yakubu Gowon in power, a choice unacceptable to the Ibos. Also in that year, the Muslim Hausas in the north massacred the predominantly Christian Ibos in the east, many of whom had been driven from the north. Thousands of Ibos took refuge in the eastern region, which

declared its independence as the Republic of Biafra on May 30, 1967. Civil war broke out. In Jan. 1970, after 31 months of civil war, Biafra surrendered to the federal government.

Gowon's nine-year rule was ended in 1975 in a bloodless coup that made Army Brig. Muritala Rufai Mohammed the new chief of state. The return of civilian leadership was established with the election of Alhaji Shehu Shagari as president in 1979. An oil boom in the 1970s buoyed the economy and by the 1980s, Nigeria was considered an exemplar of African democracy and economic well-being. The military again seized power in 1984, only to be followed by another military coup the following year. Maj. Gen. Ibrahim Babangida announced that the country would be returned to civilian rule, but after the presidential election of June 12, 1993, he voided the results. Nevertheless, Babangida did resign as president in August. In November the military, headed by defense minister Sani Abacha, seized power again.

Corruption and notorious governmental inefficiency as well as a harshly repressive military regime characterized Abacha's reign over this oil-rich country, turning it into an international pariah. A UN fact-finding mission in 1996 reported that Nigeria's "problems of human rights are terrible and the political problems are terrifying." During the 1970s, Nigeria had the 33rd highest per capita income in the world, but by 1997 it had dropped to the 13th poorest. The hanging of writer Ken Saro-Wiwa in 1995 because he protested against the government was condemned around the world. As leader of the multinational peacekeeping force ECOMOG, Nigeria established itself as West Africa's superpower, intervening militarily in the civil wars of Liberia and Sierra Leone. But Nigeria's costly war efforts were unpopular with its own people, who felt Nigeria's limited economic resources were being unnecessarily drained.

Abacha died of a heart attack in 1998 and was succeeded by another military ruler, Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar, who pledged to step aside for an elected leader by May 1999. The suspicious death of opposition leader Mashood Abiola, who had been imprisoned by the military ever since he legally won the 1993 presidential election, was a crushing blow to democratic proponents. In Feb. 1999, free presidential elections led to an overwhelming victory for Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, a former member of the military elite who was imprisoned for three years for criticizing the military rule. Obasanjo's commitment to democracy, his anticorruption drives, and his desire to recover billions allegedly stolen by the family and cronies of Abacha initially gained him high praise from the populace as well as the international community. But within two years, the hope of reform seemed doomed as economic mismanagement and rampant corruption persisted. Obasanjo's priorities in 2001 were epitomized by his plans to build a \$330 million national soccer stadium, an extravagance that exceeded the combined budget for both health and education. In April 2003, he was reelected.

Nigeria's stability has been repeatedly threatened by fighting between fundamentalist Muslims and Christians over the spread of Islamic law (sharia) across the heavily Muslim north. One-third of Nigeria's 36 states is ruled by sharia law. More than 10,000 people have died in religious clashes since military rule ended in 1999. In 2003, after religious and political leaders in the Kano region banned polio immunization—contending that it sterilized girls and spread HIV—an outbreak of polio spread through Nigeria, entering neighboring countries the following year. The Kano region lifted its ten-month ban against vaccination in July 2004. On Aug. 24, there were 602 polio cases worldwide, 79% of which were in Nigeria. Since 2004, insurgency has wreaked havoc in the Niger delta, Nigeria's oil-producing region. The desperately impoverished local residents of the delta have seen little benefit from Nigeria's vast oil riches, and rebel groups are fighting for a more equal distribution of the wealth as well as greater regional autonomy. Violence by rebel groups has disrupted oil production and reduced output by about 20%. Nigeria is one of the world's largest oil producers and supplies the U.S. with one-fifth of its oil.

In Aug. 2006 Nigeria handed over the oil-rich Bakassi peninsula to Cameroon, in compliance with a 2002 World Court ruling. April 2007 national elections—the country's first transition from one democratically elected president to another—were marred by widespread allegations of fraud, ballot stuffing, violence, and chaos. Just days before the election, the Supreme Court ruled that the election commission's decision to remove from the ballot Vice President Atiku Abubakar, a leading candidate and a bitter rival of President Olusegun Obasanjo, was illegal. Ballots were reprinted, but they only showed party symbols rather than the names of candidates. Umaru Yar'Adua, the candidate of the governing party, won the election in a landslide, taking more than 24.6 million votes. Second-place candidate Muhammadu Buhari tallied only about 6 million votes. International observers called the vote flawed and illegitimate. The chief observer for the European Union said the results "cannot be considered to have been credible." An election tribunal ruled in Feb. 2008 that although the election was indeed flawed, the evidence of rigging was not substantial enough to overturn the election results.

The rebel group in Nigeria's oil-producing region, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, declared a cease-fire in September. Since the insurgency broke out in 2004, Nigeria's oil production has been significantly reduced, from about 2.5 million barrels a day to 1.5 million.

Deadly violence broke out in July 2009 in northeastern Nigeria between government troops and an obscure fundamentalist sect, Boko Haram, which is opposed to Western education and seeks to have Sharia law implemented throughout the country. As many as 1,000 civilians died in the battles. The fighting began after militants attacked police stations and seemed to be preparing for a pitched religious war against the government. The police, followed by the army, retaliated and unleashed a five-day assault against the sect. The group's leader, Mohammed Yusuf, was killed in the campaign.

President Umaru Yar'Adua took ill in November 2009 and traveled to Saudi Arabia for medical treatment. Vice President Goodluck Jonathan took over as acting president in Feb. 2010. He dissolved his cabinet in March. The move was widely considered an attempt to establish authority over the country. President Yar'Adua died in May, and Jonathan assumed the presidency.

Sectarian violence broke out in the city of Jos, which is located in Plateau state between the country's Muslim north and Christian south, in Jan. 2010. At least 325 people, mostly Muslims, were killed in the fighting. Another round of violence occurred in Jos in March. The victims were mostly Christians who were hacked to death in their sleep. Local officials suspected the attackers were seeking revenge for the murders in January. The number of fatalities ranged from 200 to 500.

Climate:

Nigeria has a varied climate. Four climate zones can be distinguished as one moves from the southern part of the country to the northern part of the country.

The southern part of the country has an equatorial monsoon climate influenced by the south west monsoonal winds (maritime tropical) MT air mass coming from the South Atlantic ocean. Temperature ranges are small and constant throughout the year, Warri for example has its hottest month with 28 °C (82.4 °F) and its coolest month with 26 °C (78.8 °F) with the temperature range of not more than 2 °C (5 °F). Precipitation is heavy, between 1824 millimeters to over 4000 millimeters along the coast. Rain falls

throughout the year with a short break in August and a longer break from December to January. The central region of Nigeria has a tropical humid climate, this region has a well marked rainy season which lasts from March to October and a pronounced dry season which lasts from November to March. Temperatures are high during the dry season, but the onset of the rains lowers the temperatures. The northern part of the country exhibits the Tropical dry climate where rainfall is recorded for only three to four months (June–September). The rest of the year is dry and hot with temperature going up to 40 °C (104.0 °F) . The montane or highland climate can be found on different highland regions in the country (Nigeria). Most highlands in Nigeria are over 1000 meters high which forces temperatures to remain cold on them throughout the year.

The main influence on weather in Nigeria are the trade winds, the south west trade winds from the southern part of the country originating from the atlantic ocean and is responsible for Nigeria's rainy season, and the north east trade winds from the northern part of the country originating from the Sahara desert is responsible for the Harmattan, a dry dusty wind that blows across the country from November to March.