[Template:Other uses](/wiki/Template:Other_uses" \o "Template:Other uses) [Template:Pp-semi-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-semi-indef) [Template:Infobox Continent](/wiki/Template:Infobox_Continent) [thumb|upright|Map of Africa](/wiki/File:AfricaCIA-HiRes.jpg)

**Africa** is the world's second-largest and second-most-populous [continent](/wiki/Continent). At about 30.3 million km² (11.7 million square miles) including adjacent islands, it covers six percent of [Earth's](/wiki/Earth) total surface area and 20.4 percent of its total land area.<ref name=Sayre>Sayre, April Pulley (1999), *Africa*, Twenty-First Century Books. ISBN 0-7613-1367-2.</ref> With 1.1 billion people as of 2013, it accounts for about 15% of the world's human population.[[1]](#cite_note-1) The continent is surrounded by the [Mediterranean Sea](/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea) to the north, both the [Suez Canal](/wiki/Suez_Canal) and the [Red Sea](/wiki/Red_Sea) along the [Sinai Peninsula](/wiki/Sinai_Peninsula) to the northeast, the [Indian Ocean](/wiki/Indian_Ocean) to the southeast, and the [Atlantic Ocean](/wiki/Atlantic_Ocean) to the west. The continent includes [Madagascar](/wiki/Madagascar) and various [archipelagos](/wiki/Archipelago). It contains 54 [fully recognized](/wiki/Diplomatic_recognition) [sovereign states](/wiki/Sovereign_state) ([countries](/wiki/Country)), nine [territories](/wiki/Territory_(country_subdivision)) and two *de facto* independent [states with limited or no recognition](/wiki/List_of_states_with_limited_recognition).[[2]](#cite_note-2) Africa's population is the youngest amongst all the continents;[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[4]](#cite_note-4) the [median](/wiki/Median) age in 2012 was 19.7, when the worldwide median age was 30.4.[[5]](#cite_note-5) [Algeria](/wiki/Algeria) is Africa's largest country by area, and [Nigeria](/wiki/Nigeria) by population. Africa, particularly central [Eastern Africa](/wiki/Eastern_Africa), is widely accepted as the place of origin of [humans](/wiki/Human) and the [Hominidae](/wiki/Hominidae) [clade](/wiki/Clade) ([great apes](/wiki/Great_ape)), as [evidenced](/wiki/Evidence) by the discovery of the earliest [hominids](/wiki/Hominids) and their ancestors, as well as later ones that have been dated to around seven million years ago, including [*Sahelanthropus tchadensis*](/wiki/Sahelanthropus_tchadensis), [*Australopithecus africanus*](/wiki/Australopithecus_africanus), [*A. afarensis*](/wiki/Australopithecus_afarensis), [*Homo erectus*](/wiki/Homo_erectus), [*H. habilis*](/wiki/Homo_habilis) and [*H. ergaster*](/wiki/Homo_ergaster) – with the earliest [*Homo sapiens*](/wiki/Homo_sapiens) (modern human) found in [Ethiopia](/wiki/Ethiopia) being dated to circa 200,000 years ago.[[6]](#cite_note-6) Africa straddles the [equator](/wiki/Equator) and encompasses numerous climate areas; it is the only continent to stretch from the northern [temperate](/wiki/Temperate) to southern temperate zones.[[7]](#cite_note-7) Africa hosts a large diversity of ethnicities, cultures and languages. In the late 19th century European countries [colonized most of Africa](/wiki/New_imperialism). Most present states in Africa originate from a process of [decolonization](/wiki/Decolonization) in the 20th century.

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[thumb|Statue representing Africa at](/wiki/File:Palazzo_Ferreria_statue_2.jpeg) [Palazzo Ferreria](/wiki/Palazzo_Ferreria), in [Valletta](/wiki/Valletta), [Malta](/wiki/Malta) [*Afri*](/wiki/Afri) was a [Latin](/wiki/Latin) name used to refer to the inhabitants of Africa, which in its widest sense referred to all lands south of the Mediterranean ([Ancient Libya](/wiki/Ancient_Libya)).[[8]](#cite_note-8)[[9]](#cite_note-9) This name seems to have originally referred to a native [Libyan](/wiki/Ancient_Libya) tribe; see [Terence#Biography](/wiki/Terence#Biography) for discussion. The name is usually connected with [Hebrew](/wiki/Biblical_Hebrew) or [Phoenician](/wiki/Phoenician) *ʿafar* "dust", but a 1981 hypothesis[[10]](#cite_note-10) has asserted that it stems from the [Berber](/wiki/Berber_languages) *ifri* (plural *ifran*) "cave", in reference to cave dwellers.[[11]](#cite_note-11) The same word<ref name=Michell/> may be found in the name of the [Banu Ifran](/wiki/Banu_Ifran) from [Algeria](/wiki/Algeria) and [Tripolitania](/wiki/Tripolitania), a [Berber](/wiki/Berber_people) tribe originally from [Yafran](/wiki/Yafran) (also known as *Ifrane*) in northwestern Libya.[[12]](#cite_note-12) Under [Roman](/wiki/Roman_Empire) rule, Carthage became the capital of the province of [Africa Proconsularis](/wiki/Africa_Proconsularis), which also included the coastal part of modern [Libya](/wiki/Libya).[[13]](#cite_note-13) The Latin suffix "[-ica](/wiki/Wikt:-ica#Latin)" can sometimes be used to denote a land (e.g., in [*Celtica*](/wiki/Celtica) from [*Celtae*](/wiki/Celts), as used by [Julius Caesar](/wiki/Julius_Caesar)). The later Muslim kingdom of [Ifriqiya](/wiki/Ifriqiya), modern-day Tunisia, also preserved a form of the name.

According to the Romans, Africa lay to the west of Egypt, while "Asia" was used to refer to [Anatolia](/wiki/Anatolia) and lands to the east. A definite line was drawn between the two continents by the geographer [Ptolemy](/wiki/Ptolemy) (85–165 AD), indicating [Alexandria](/wiki/Alexandria) along the [Prime Meridian](/wiki/Prime_Meridian) and making the isthmus of Suez and the [Red Sea](/wiki/Red_Sea) the boundary between Asia and Africa. As Europeans came to understand the real extent of the continent, the idea of "Africa" expanded with their knowledge.

Other etymological hypotheses have been postulated for the ancient name "Africa":

* The 1st-century Jewish historian [Flavius Josephus](/wiki/Flavius_Josephus) (*Ant. 1.15*) asserted that it was named for [Epher](/wiki/Epher), grandson of [Abraham](/wiki/Abraham) according to Gen. 25:4, whose descendants, he claimed, had invaded Libya.
* [Isidore of Seville](/wiki/Isidore_of_Seville) in [*Etymologiae*](/wiki/Etymologiae) XIV.5.2. suggests "Africa comes from the [Latin](/wiki/Latin) *aprica*, meaning "sunny".
* Massey, in 1881, stated that Africa is derived from the Egyptian *af-rui-ka*, meaning "to turn toward the opening of the Ka." The [Ka](/wiki/Egyptian_soul#Ka) is the energetic double of every person and the "opening of the Ka" refers to a womb or birthplace. Africa would be, for the Egyptians, "the birthplace."[[14]](#cite_note-14)\* Michèle Fruyt proposed[[15]](#cite_note-15) linking the Latin word with *africus* "south wind", which would be of Umbrian origin and mean originally "rainy wind".
* Robert R. Stieglitz of [Rutgers University](/wiki/Rutgers_University) proposed: "The name Africa, derived from the Latin \*Aphir-ic-a, is cognate to Hebrew [Ophir](/wiki/Ophir)."[[16]](#cite_note-16)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further)

### Prehistory[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Lucy_blackbg.jpg)[Lucy](/wiki/Lucy_(Australopithecus)), an [*Australopithecus afarensis*](/wiki/Australopithecus_afarensis) skeleton discovered 24 November 1974 in the [Awash Valley](/wiki/Awash_Valley) of [Ethiopia's](/wiki/Ethiopia) [Afar Depression](/wiki/Afar_Depression)

Africa is considered by most [paleoanthropologists](/wiki/Paleoanthropology) to be the [oldest inhabited territory](/wiki/Cradle_of_Humankind) on [Earth](/wiki/Earth), with the [human species](/wiki/Human) originating from the continent.[[17]](#cite_note-17)[[18]](#cite_note-18) During the mid-20th century, [anthropologists](/wiki/Anthropology) discovered many [fossils](/wiki/Fossil) and evidence of human occupation perhaps as early as 7 million years ago (BP=before present). Fossil remains of several species of early apelike humans thought to have [evolved](/wiki/Evolution) into modern man, such as [*Australopithecus afarensis*](/wiki/Australopithecus_afarensis) ([radiometrically dated](/wiki/Radiometric_dating) to approximately 3.9–3.0 million years BP,[[19]](#cite_note-19) [*Paranthropus boisei*](/wiki/Paranthropus_boisei) (c. 2.3–1.4 million years BP)[[20]](#cite_note-20) and [*Homo ergaster*](/wiki/Homo_ergaster) (c. 1.9 million–600,000 years BP) have been discovered.<ref name=Sayre/>

After the evolution of [*Homo sapiens sapiens*](/wiki/Homo_sapiens_sapiens) approximately 150,000 to 100,000 years BP in Africa, the continent was mainly populated by groups of [hunter-gatherers](/wiki/Hunter-gatherer).[[21]](#cite_note-21)[[22]](#cite_note-22)[[23]](#cite_note-23) These first modern humans left Africa and populated the rest of the globe during the [Out of Africa II](/wiki/Recent_African_origin_of_modern_humans) migration dated to approximately 50,000 years BP, exiting the continent either across [Bab-el-Mandeb](/wiki/Bab-el-Mandeb) over the [Red Sea](/wiki/Red_Sea),[[24]](#cite_note-24)[[25]](#cite_note-25) the [Strait of Gibraltar](/wiki/Strait_of_Gibraltar) in Morocco,[[26]](#cite_note-26)

### Ninth to eighteenth centuries[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[thumb|upright|African horseman of](/wiki/File:Rytter_fra_Bagirmi.jpg) [Baguirmi](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Baguirmi) in full [padded armour](/wiki/Gambeson) suit [thumb|left|upright|The intricate 9th-century bronzes from](/wiki/File:Bronze_ornamental_staff_head,_9th_century,_Igbo-Ukwu.JPG) [Igbo-Ukwu](/wiki/Archaeology_of_Igbo-Ukwu), in [Nigeria](/wiki/Nigeria) displayed a level of technical accomplishment that was notably more advanced than European bronze casting of the same period.<ref name=Honour-2005>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> Pre-colonial Africa possessed perhaps as many as 10,000 different states and polities[[46]](#cite_note-46) characterized by many different sorts of political organization and rule. These included small family groups of hunter-gatherers such as the [San people](/wiki/San_people) of southern Africa; larger, more structured groups such as the family clan groupings of the [Bantu-speaking](/wiki/Bantu_languages) [peoples](/wiki/Bantu_peoples) of central, southern, and eastern Africa; heavily structured clan groups in the [Horn of Africa](/wiki/Horn_of_Africa); the large [Sahelian kingdoms](/wiki/Sahelian_kingdoms); and autonomous city-states and kingdoms such as those of the [Akan](/wiki/Akan_people); [Edo](/wiki/Benin_Empire), [Yoruba](/wiki/Yoruba_people), and [Igbo people](/wiki/Igbo_people) in [West Africa](/wiki/West_Africa); and the [Swahili](/wiki/Swahili_people) coastal trading towns of [Southeast Africa](/wiki/Southeast_Africa).

By the ninth century AD, a string of dynastic states, including the earliest [Hausa](/wiki/Hausa_Kingdoms) states, stretched across the sub-Saharan savannah from the western regions to central Sudan. The most powerful of these states were [Ghana](/wiki/Ghana_Empire), [Gao](/wiki/Gao), and the [Kanem-Bornu Empire](/wiki/Kanem_Empire). Ghana declined in the eleventh century, but was succeeded by the [Mali Empire](/wiki/Mali_Empire) which consolidated much of western Sudan in the thirteenth century. Kanem accepted Islam in the eleventh century.

In the forested regions of the West African coast, independent kingdoms grew with little influence from the [Muslim](/wiki/Islam) north. The [Kingdom of Nri](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Nri) was established around the ninth century and was one of the first. It is also one of the oldest kingdoms in present-day [Nigeria](/wiki/Nigeria) and was ruled by the [Eze Nri](/wiki/Eze_Nri). The Nri kingdom is famous for its elaborate [bronzes](/wiki/Igbo-Ukwu#Bronzes), found at the town of [Igbo-Ukwu](/wiki/Igbo-Ukwu). The bronzes have been dated from as far back as the ninth century.[[47]](#cite_note-47) [thumb|Ashanti yam ceremony, nineteenth century by](/wiki/File:Ashanti_Yam_Ceremony_1817.jpg) [Thomas E. Bowdich](/wiki/Thomas_Edward_Bowdich) The [Kingdom of Ife](/wiki/Ife), historically the first of these Yoruba city-states or kingdoms, established government under a priestly [oba](/wiki/Oba_(ruler)) ('king' or 'ruler' in the [Yoruba language](/wiki/Yoruba_language)), called the *Ooni of Ife*. Ife was noted as a major religious and cultural center in West Africa, and for its unique naturalistic tradition of bronze sculpture. The Ife model of government was adapted at the [Oyo Empire](/wiki/Oyo_Empire), where its obas or kings, called the *Alaafins of Oyo*, once controlled a large number of other Yoruba and non-Yoruba city-states and kingdoms; the [Fon](/wiki/Fon_people) *Kingdom of* [*Dahomey*](/wiki/Dahomey) was one of the non-Yoruba domains under Oyo control.

The [Almoravids](/wiki/Almoravid_dynasty) were a [Berber](/wiki/Berber_people) dynasty from the [Sahara](/wiki/Sahara) that spread over a wide area of northwestern Africa and the Iberian peninsula during the eleventh century.[[48]](#cite_note-48) The [Banu Hilal](/wiki/Banu_Hilal) and [Banu Ma'qil](/wiki/Maqil) were a collection of [Arab](/wiki/Arab) [Bedouin](/wiki/Bedouin) tribes from the [Arabian Peninsula](/wiki/Arabian_Peninsula) who migrated westwards via Egypt between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. Their [migration](/wiki/Human_migration) resulted in the fusion of the Arabs and Berbers, where the locals were [Arabized](/wiki/Arabization),[[49]](#cite_note-49) and Arab culture absorbed elements of the local culture, under the unifying framework of Islam.[[50]](#cite_note-50) [thumb|left|Ruins of](/wiki/File:Great_Zimbabwe_Closeup.jpg) [Great Zimbabwe](/wiki/Great_Zimbabwe) (eleventh to fifteenth centuries) Following the breakup of Mali, a local leader named [Sonni Ali](/wiki/Sonni_Ali) (1464–1492) founded the [Songhai Empire](/wiki/Songhai_Empire) in the region of middle [Niger](/wiki/Niger) and the western [Sudan](/wiki/Sudan_(region)) and took control of the trans-Saharan trade. Sonni Ali seized [Timbuktu](/wiki/Timbuktu) in 1468 and [Jenne](/wiki/Djenné) in 1473, building his regime on trade revenues and the cooperation of Muslim merchants. His successor [Askia Mohammad I](/wiki/Askia_Mohammad_I) (1493–1528) made Islam the official religion, built mosques, and brought to Gao Muslim scholars, including al-Maghili (d.1504), the founder of an important tradition of Sudanic African Muslim scholarship.[[51]](#cite_note-51) By the eleventh century, some [Hausa](/wiki/Hausa_Kingdoms) states – such as [Kano](/wiki/Kano), [jigawa](/wiki/Jigawa), [Katsina](/wiki/Katsina), and [Gobir](/wiki/Gobir) – had developed into walled towns engaging in trade, servicing [caravans](/wiki/Camel_train), and the manufacture of goods. Until the fifteenth century, these small states were on the periphery of the major Sudanic empires of the era, paying tribute to Songhai to the west and Kanem-Borno to the east. [thumb|left|1803](/wiki/File:Cedid_Atlas_(Africa)_1803.jpg) [Cedid Atlas](/wiki/Cedid_Atlas), showing the Africa from the perspective of the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire). The Ottomans controlled much of Northern Africa between the 14th and 19th centuries, and had [vassal](/wiki/Vassal) arrangements with a number of Saharan states.

### Height of slave trade[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|Arab–Swahili slave traders and their captives along the](/wiki/File:Slaves_ruvuma.jpg) [Ruvuma River](/wiki/Ruvuma_River) (in today's Tanzania and Mozambique) as witnessed by [David Livingstone](/wiki/David_Livingstone)

[Slavery](/wiki/Slavery) had long been practiced in Africa.[[52]](#cite_note-52)[[53]](#cite_note-53) Between the 7th and 20th centuries, Arab slave trade (also known as slavery in the East) took 18 million slaves from Africa via trans-Saharan and Indian Ocean routes. Between the 15th and the 19th centuries (500 years), the Atlantic slave trade took an estimated 7–12 million slaves to the New World.[[54]](#cite_note-54)[[55]](#cite_note-55)[[56]](#cite_note-56) More than 1 million Europeans were captured by [Barbary pirates](/wiki/Barbary_pirates) and sold as slaves in North Africa between the 16th and 19th centuries.[[57]](#cite_note-57) In [West Africa](/wiki/West_Africa), the decline of the Atlantic slave trade in the 1820s caused dramatic economic shifts in local polities. The gradual decline of slave-trading, prompted by a lack of demand for slaves in the [New World](/wiki/New_World), increasing [anti-slavery](/wiki/Abolitionism) legislation in Europe and America, and the [British Royal Navy's](/wiki/Royal_Navy) increasing presence off the West African coast, obliged African states to adopt new economies. Between 1808 and 1860, the British [West Africa Squadron](/wiki/West_Africa_Squadron) seized approximately 1,600 slave ships and freed 150,000 Africans who were aboard.[[58]](#cite_note-58) [thumb|left|210px|A slave being inspected, from *Captain Canot; or, Twenty Years of an African Slaver*](/wiki/File:The_inspection_and_sale_of_a_slave.jpg) Action was also taken against African leaders who refused to agree to British treaties to outlaw the trade, for example against "the usurping King of [Lagos](/wiki/Lagos)", deposed in 1851. Anti-slavery treaties were signed with over 50 African rulers.[[59]](#cite_note-59) The largest powers of West Africa (the [Asante Confederacy](/wiki/Asante_Confederacy), the [Kingdom of Dahomey](/wiki/Dahomey), and the [Oyo Empire](/wiki/Oyo_Empire)) adopted different ways of adapting to the shift. Asante and Dahomey concentrated on the development of "legitimate commerce" in the form of [palm oil](/wiki/Palm_oil), [cocoa](/wiki/Cocoa_bean), [timber](/wiki/Timber) and [gold](/wiki/Gold), forming the bedrock of West Africa's modern export trade. The Oyo Empire, unable to adapt, collapsed into civil wars.[[60]](#cite_note-60)

### Colonialism and the "Scramble for Africa"[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|left|The](/wiki/File:The_war_in_the_Soudan.jpg) [Mahdist War](/wiki/Mahdist_War) was a colonial war fought between the [Mahdist Sudanese](/wiki/Ansar_(Sudan)) and the British forces. [thumb||Areas of Africa under the sovereignty or influence of the](/wiki/File:Colonial_Africa_1913_map.svg) [colonial powers](/wiki/Colonial_power) in 1913, along with modern borders. [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend)

In the late 19th century, the European [imperial](/wiki/Imperialism) powers engaged in a major territorial scramble and occupied most of the continent, creating many [colonial](/wiki/Colony) territories, and leaving only two fully independent states: [Ethiopia](/wiki/Ethiopia) (known to Europeans as "Abyssinia"), and [Liberia](/wiki/Liberia). [Egypt](/wiki/Egypt) and [Sudan](/wiki/Sudan) were never formally incorporated into any European colonial empire; however, after the British occupation of 1882, Egypt was effectively under British administration [until 1922](/wiki/Unilateral_Declaration_of_Egyptian_Independence).

### Berlin Conference[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

The [Berlin Conference](/wiki/Berlin_Conference) held in 1884–85 was an important event in the political future of African ethnic groups. It was convened by King [Leopold II of Belgium](/wiki/Leopold_II_of_Belgium), and attended by the European powers that laid claim to African territories. It sought to end the European powers' Scramble for Africa, by agreeing on political division and spheres of influence. They set up the political divisions of the continent, by spheres of interest, that exist in Africa today.

### Independence struggles[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

Imperial rule by Europeans would continue until after the conclusion of [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II), when almost all remaining colonial territories gradually obtained formal independence. [Independence movements in Africa](/wiki/African_independence_movements) gained momentum following World War II, which left the major European powers weakened. In 1951, [Libya](/wiki/Libya), a former Italian colony, gained independence. In 1956, [Tunisia](/wiki/Tunisia) and [Morocco](/wiki/Morocco) won their independence from France.[[61]](#cite_note-61) [Ghana](/wiki/Ghana) followed suit the next year (March 1957),[[62]](#cite_note-62) becoming the first of the sub-Saharan colonies to be granted independence. Most of the rest of the continent became independent over the next decade.

Portugal's overseas presence in [Sub-Saharan Africa](/wiki/Sub-Saharan_Africa) (most notably in [Angola](/wiki/Portuguese_Angola), Cape Verde, [Mozambique](/wiki/Portuguese_Mozambique), [Guinea-Bissau](/wiki/Portuguese_Guinea) and São Tomé and Príncipe) lasted from the 16th century to 1975, after the [Estado Novo](/wiki/Estado_Novo_(Portugal)) regime was overthrown in [a military coup in Lisbon](/wiki/Carnation_Revolution). [Rhodesia](/wiki/Rhodesia) [unilaterally declared independence](/wiki/Rhodesia's_Unilateral_Declaration_of_Independence) from the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom) in 1965, under the [white minority](/wiki/White_minority_rule) government of [Ian Smith](/wiki/Ian_Smith), but was not internationally recognized as an independent state (as [Zimbabwe](/wiki/Zimbabwe)) until 1980, when black nationalists gained power after a [bitter guerrilla war](/wiki/Rhodesian_Bush_War). Although [South Africa](/wiki/South_Africa) was one of the first African countries to gain independence, the state remained under the control of the country's white minority through a system of racial segregation known as [apartheid](/wiki/South_Africa_under_apartheid) until 1994.

### Post-colonial Africa[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[thumb|upright|left|](/wiki/File:Mobutu_Sese_Seko_1973.jpg)[Mobutu Sese Seko](/wiki/Mobutu_Sese_Seko), [Zaire's](/wiki/Zaire) longtime dictator, [embezzled](/wiki/Embezzlement) over $5 billion from his country. Today, Africa contains 54 sovereign countries, most of which have borders that were drawn during the era of European colonialism. Since colonialism, African states have frequently been hampered by instability, corruption, violence, and [authoritarianism](/wiki/Authoritarianism). The vast majority of African states are [republics](/wiki/Republic) that operate under some form of the [presidential system](/wiki/Presidential_system) of rule. However, few of them have been able to sustain [democratic](/wiki/Democracy) governments on a permanent basis, and many have instead cycled through a series of [coups](/wiki/Coup_d'état), producing [military dictatorships](/wiki/Military_dictatorship).

Great instability was mainly the result of [marginalization of ethnic groups](/wiki/Ethnic_nepotism), and [graft under these leaders](/wiki/Political_corruption). For [political gain](/wiki/Divide_and_rule), many leaders fanned ethnic conflicts, some of which had been exacerbated, or even created, by colonial rule. In many countries, the [military](/wiki/Armed_forces) was perceived as being the only group that could effectively maintain order, and it ruled many nations in Africa during the 1970s and early 1980s. During the period from the early 1960s to the late 1980s, Africa had more than 70 coups and 13 presidential [assassinations](/wiki/Assassination). Border and territorial disputes were also common, with the European-imposed borders of many nations being widely contested through armed conflicts. [thumb|South African paratroops on a raid in Angola during the](/wiki/File:SADF-Operations_4.jpg) [South African Border War](/wiki/South_African_Border_War) [Cold War](/wiki/Cold_War) conflicts between the United States and the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union), as well as the policies of the [International Monetary Fund](/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund),[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) also played a role in instability. When a country became independent for the first time, it was often expected to align with one of the two [superpowers](/wiki/Superpower). Many countries in [Northern Africa](/wiki/Northern_Africa) received Soviet military aid, while others in Central and Southern Africa were supported by the United States, France or both. The 1970s saw an escalation of Cold War intrigues, as newly independent [Angola](/wiki/Angola) and [Mozambique](/wiki/Mozambique) aligned themselves with the Soviet Union, and the West and South Africa sought to contain Soviet influence by supporting friendly regimes or insurgency movements. In [Rhodesia](/wiki/Rhodesia), Soviet and Chinese-backed leftist guerrillas of the [Zimbabwe Patriotic Front](/wiki/Patriotic_Front_(Zimbabwe)) waged a brutal [guerrilla war](/wiki/Rhodesian_Bush_War) against the country's white government. There was a [major famine in Ethiopia](/wiki/1983–85_famine_in_Ethiopia), when hundreds of thousands of people starved. Some claimed that Marxist economic policies made the situation worse.[[63]](#cite_note-63)[[64]](#cite_note-64)[[65]](#cite_note-65) The most devastating military conflict in modern independent Africa has been the [Second Congo War](/wiki/Second_Congo_War); this conflict and its aftermath has killed an estimated 5.5 million people.[[66]](#cite_note-66) Since 2003 there has been an ongoing [conflict in Darfur](/wiki/War_in_Darfur) which has become a humanitarian disaster. Another notable tragic event is the 1994 [Rwandan Genocide](/wiki/Rwandan_Genocide) in which an estimated 800,000 people were murdered. [AIDS in post-colonial Africa](/wiki/HIV/AIDS_in_Africa) has also been a prevalent issue.

In the 21st century, however, the number of armed conflicts in Africa has steadily declined. For instance, the [civil war in Angola](/wiki/Angolan_Civil_War) came to an end in 2002 after nearly 30 years. This has coincided with many countries abandoning communist-style command economies and opening up for market reforms. The improved stability and economic reforms have led to a great increase in foreign investment into many African nations, mainly from [China](/wiki/China),<ref name=Africa/> which has spurred quick economic growth in many countries, seemingly ending decades of stagnation and decline. Several African economies are among the world's fastest growing as of 2016. A significant part of this growth, which is sometimes referred to as [Africa Rising](/wiki/Africa_Rising), can also be attributed to the facilitated diffusion of information technologies and specifically the mobile telephone.[[67]](#cite_note-67)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|Satellite photo of Africa. The](/wiki/File:187_1003703_africa_dxm.png) [Sahara Desert](/wiki/Sahara_Desert) in the north can be clearly seen. [thumb|left|A composite satellite image of Africa (center) with North America (left) and Eurasia (right), to scale](/wiki/File:Africa-asia-america-to-scale.jpg) Africa is the largest of the three great southward projections from the largest landmass of the Earth. Separated from Europe by the [Mediterranean Sea](/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea), it is joined to Asia at its northeast extremity by the [Isthmus of Suez](/wiki/Suez_Canal) (transected by the [Suez Canal](/wiki/Suez_Canal)), [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) wide.[[68]](#cite_note-68) ([Geopolitically](/wiki/Geopolitics), [Egypt's](/wiki/Egypt) [Sinai Peninsula](/wiki/Sinai_Peninsula) east of the Suez Canal is often considered part of Africa, as well.)[[69]](#cite_note-69) From the most northerly point, [Ras ben Sakka](/wiki/Ras_ben_Sakka) in [Tunisia](/wiki/Tunisia) (37°21' N), to the most southerly point, [Cape Agulhas](/wiki/Cape_Agulhas) in South Africa (34°51'15" S), is a distance of approximately [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert);[[70]](#cite_note-70) from [Cape Verde](/wiki/Cap-Vert), 17°33'22" W, the westernmost point, to [Ras Hafun](/wiki/Ras_Hafun) in [Somalia](/wiki/Somalia), 51°27'52" E, the most easterly projection, is a distance of approximately [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).<ref name=MW>(1998) *Merriam-Webster's Geographical Dictionary (Index)*, Merriam-Webster, pp. 10–11. ISBN 0-87779-546-0</ref> The coastline is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) long, and the absence of deep indentations of the shore is illustrated by the fact that Europe, which covers only [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) – about a third of the surface of Africa – has a coastline of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).<ref name=MW/>

Africa's largest country is [Algeria](/wiki/Algeria), and its smallest country is the [Seychelles](/wiki/Seychelles), an [archipelago](/wiki/Archipelago) off the east coast.<ref name=Hoare>Hoare, Ben. (2002) *The Kingfisher A-Z Encyclopedia*, Kingfisher Publications. p. 11. ISBN 0-7534-5569-2</ref> The smallest nation on the continental mainland is [The Gambia](/wiki/The_Gambia).

Geologically, Africa includes the [Arabian Peninsula](/wiki/Arabian_Peninsula); the [Zagros Mountains](/wiki/Zagros_Mountains) of Iran and the [Anatolian Plateau](/wiki/Anatolian_Plateau) of Turkey mark where the [African Plate](/wiki/African_Plate) collided with Eurasia. The [Afrotropic ecozone](/wiki/Afrotropic_ecozone) and the [Saharo-Arabian desert](/wiki/Saharo-Arabian_Region) to its north unite the region biogeographically, and the [Afro-Asiatic](/wiki/Afroasiatic_languages) [language family](/wiki/Language_family) unites the north linguistically.

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|Africa map of Köppen climate classification](/wiki/File:Africa_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) The climate of Africa ranges from [tropical](/wiki/Tropical_climate) to [subarctic](/wiki/Subarctic) on its highest peaks. Its northern half is primarily [desert](/wiki/Desert), or [arid](/wiki/Arid), while its central and southern areas contain both [savanna](/wiki/Savanna) plains and dense [jungle](/wiki/Jungle) ([rainforest](/wiki/Rainforest)) regions. In between, there is a convergence, where vegetation patterns such as [sahel](/wiki/Sahel) and [steppe](/wiki/Steppe) dominate. Africa is the hottest continent on earth and 60% of the entire land surface consists of drylands and deserts.[[71]](#cite_note-71) The record for the highest-ever recorded temperature, in [Libya](/wiki/Libya) in 1922 ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)), was discredited in 2013.<ref name=newRecord>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal) (The 136 °F (57.8 °C), claimed by ['Aziziya](/wiki/'Aziziya), [Libya](/wiki/Libya), on 13 September 1922, has been officially deemed invalid by the [World Meteorological Organization](/wiki/World_Meteorological_Organization).)</ref>[[72]](#cite_note-72)

### Fauna[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [left|thumb|Savanna at](/wiki/File:Zebras,_Serengeti_savana_plains,_Tanzania.jpg) [Ngorongoro Conservation Area](/wiki/Ngorongoro_Conservation_Area), [Tanzania](/wiki/Tanzania) Africa boasts perhaps the world's largest combination of density and "range of freedom" of [wild animal](/wiki/Wild_animal) populations and diversity, with wild populations of large [carnivores](/wiki/Carnivore) (such as [lions](/wiki/Lion), [hyenas](/wiki/Hyena), and [cheetahs](/wiki/Cheetah)) and [herbivores](/wiki/Herbivore) (such as [buffalo](/wiki/African_buffalo), [elephants](/wiki/Elephant), [camels](/wiki/Camel), and [giraffes](/wiki/Giraffe)) ranging freely on primarily open non-private plains. It is also home to a variety of "jungle" animals including [snakes](/wiki/Snake) and [primates](/wiki/Primate) and [aquatic life](/wiki/Aquatic_ecosystem) such as [crocodiles](/wiki/Crocodile) and [amphibians](/wiki/Amphibian). In addition, Africa has the largest number of [megafauna](/wiki/Megafauna) species, as it was least affected by the [extinction of the Pleistocene megafauna](/wiki/Quaternary_extinction_event#The_Pleistocene_or_Ice_Age_extinction_event).

### Ecology and biodiversity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb||Tropical beach in](/wiki/File:Mauritius_beach.png) [Trou-aux-Biches](/wiki/Trou-aux-Biches), [Mauritius](/wiki/Mauritius) [Deforestation](/wiki/Deforestation) is affecting Africa at twice the world rate, according to the United Nations Environment Programme ([UNEP](/wiki/UNEP)).[[73]](#cite_note-73) According to the University of Pennsylvania African Studies Center, 31% of Africa's pasture lands and 19% of its forests and woodlands are classified as degraded, and Africa is losing over four million hectares of forest per year, which is twice the average deforestation rate for the rest of the world.[[71]](#cite_note-71) Some sources claim that approximately 90% of the original, virgin forests in [West Africa](/wiki/West_Africa) have been destroyed.[[74]](#cite_note-74) Over 90% of [Madagascar's](/wiki/Madagascar) original forests have been destroyed since the arrival of humans 2000 years ago.[[75]](#cite_note-75) About 65% of Africa's agricultural land suffers from soil degradation.[[76]](#cite_note-76) Africa has over 3,000 [protected areas](/wiki/Protected_area), with 198 marine protected areas, 50 biosphere reserves, and 80 wetlands reserves. Significant habitat destruction, increases in human population and poaching are reducing Africa's biological diversity. Human encroachment, civil unrest and the introduction of non-native species threaten biodiversity in Africa. This has been exacerbated by administrative problems, inadequate personnel and funding problems.[[71]](#cite_note-71) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) There are clear signs of increased networking among African organizations and states. For example, in the civil war in the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](/wiki/Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo) (former [Zaire](/wiki/Zaire)), rather than rich, non-African countries intervening, neighboring African countries became involved (see also [Second Congo War](/wiki/Second_Congo_War)). Since the conflict began in 1998, the estimated death toll has reached 5 million.

### The African Union[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[thumb|upright|Map of the African Union with suspended states highlighted in light green](/wiki/File:Map_of_the_African_Union_with_Suspended_States.svg) [Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) The [African Union](/wiki/African_Union) (AU) is a 54-member federation consisting of all of Africa's states except [Morocco](/wiki/Morocco). The union was formed, with [Addis Ababa](/wiki/Addis_Ababa), [Ethiopia](/wiki/Ethiopia), as its headquarters, on 26 June 2001. The union was officially established on 9 July 2002[[77]](#cite_note-77) as a successor to the [Organisation of African Unity](/wiki/Organisation_of_African_Unity) (OAU). In July 2004, the African Union's [Pan-African Parliament](/wiki/Pan-African_Parliament) (PAP) was relocated to [Midrand](/wiki/Midrand), in South Africa, but the [African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights](/wiki/African_Commission_on_Human_and_Peoples'_Rights) remained in Addis Ababa. There is a policy in effect to decentralize the African Federation's institutions so that they are shared by all the states.

The African Union, not to be confused with the AU Commission, is formed by the [Constitutive Act of the African Union](/wiki/Constitutive_Act_of_the_African_Union), which aims to transform the [African Economic Community](/wiki/African_Economic_Community), a federated commonwealth, into a state under established international conventions. The African Union has a parliamentary government, known as the [African Union Government](/wiki/Assembly_of_the_African_Union), consisting of legislative, judicial and executive organs. It is led by the African Union President and Head of State, who is also the President of the [Pan-African Parliament](/wiki/Pan-African_Parliament). A person becomes AU President by being elected to the PAP, and subsequently gaining majority support in the PAP. The powers and authority of the President of the African Parliament derive from the Constitutive Act and the [Protocol of the Pan-African Parliament](/wiki/Pan-African_Parliament), as well as the inheritance of presidential authority stipulated by African treaties and by international treaties, including those subordinating the Secretary General of the [OAU](/wiki/OAU) Secretariat (AU Commission) to the PAP. The government of the AU consists of all-union (federal), regional, state, and municipal authorities, as well as hundreds of institutions, that together manage the day-to-day affairs of the institution.

Political associations such as the African Union offer hope for greater co-operation and peace between the continent's many countries. Extensive human rights abuses still occur in several parts of Africa, often under the oversight of the state. Most of such violations occur for political reasons, often as a side effect of civil war. Countries where major human rights violations have been reported in recent times include the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](/wiki/Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo), [Sierra Leone](/wiki/Sierra_Leone), [Liberia](/wiki/Liberia), [Sudan](/wiki/Sudan), [Zimbabwe](/wiki/Zimbabwe), and [Côte d'Ivoire](/wiki/Côte_d'Ivoire).

[Template:Supranational African Bodies](/wiki/Template:Supranational_African_Bodies) [Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[thumb||Map of the](/wiki/File:RECs_of_the_AEC.svg) [African Economic Community](/wiki/African_Economic_Community). [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [thumb|upright|Satellite image of city lights in Africa showing the lack of modern development on the continent (1994-1995)](/wiki/File:Africa_at_night_(Cropped_From_Entire_Earth_Image).jpg) [Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rank** | **Country** | [**GDP**](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_past_and_projected_GDP_(PPP)) **(PPP, 2014) millions of** [**USD**](/wiki/International_dollar) |
| 1 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 1,052,937 |
| 2 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 946,591 |
| 3 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 707,097 |
| 4 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 551,596 |
| 5 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 259,240 |
| 6 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 177,264 |
| 7 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 160,189 |
| 8 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 145,100 |
| 9 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 133,015 |
| 10 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 128,158 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rank** | **Country** | [**GDP**](/wiki/List_of_IMF_ranked_countries_by_past_and_projected_GDP_(nominal)) **(nominal, 2014) millions of** [**USD**](/wiki/International_dollar) |
| 1 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 573,999 |
| 2 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 350,082 |
| 3 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 286,538 |
| 4 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 214,063 |
| 5 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 131,401 |
| 6 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 110,009 |
| 7 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 74,766 |
| 8 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 60,937 |
| 9 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 54,809 |
| 10 | align=left|[Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag) | 49,115 |

Although it has abundant [natural resources](/wiki/Natural_resource), Africa remains the world's poorest and most [underdeveloped](/wiki/Human_Development_Index) continent, the result of a variety of causes that may include [corrupt governments](/wiki/Corruption_Perceptions_Index) that have often committed serious [human rights violations](/wiki/Human_rights_violations), failed [central planning](/wiki/Central_planning), high levels of [illiteracy](/wiki/Illiteracy), lack of access to foreign capital, and frequent tribal and military conflict (ranging from [guerrilla warfare](/wiki/Guerrilla_warfare) to [genocide](/wiki/Genocide)).[[78]](#cite_note-78) According to the [United Nations'](/wiki/United_Nations) Human Development Report in 2003, the bottom 24 ranked nations (151st to 175th) were all African.[[79]](#cite_note-79) [Poverty](/wiki/Poverty_in_Africa), illiteracy, [malnutrition](/wiki/Malnutrition) and inadequate water supply and sanitation, as well as poor health, affect a large proportion of the people who reside in the African continent. In August 2008, the World Bank[[80]](#cite_note-80) announced revised global poverty estimates based on a new international poverty line of $1.25 per day (versus the previous measure of $1.00). 80.5% of the [Sub-Saharan Africa](/wiki/Sub-Saharan_Africa) population was living on less than $2.50 (PPP) per day in 2005, compared with 85.7% for [India](/wiki/India).[[81]](#cite_note-81) Sub-Saharan Africa is the least successful region of the world in reducing poverty ($1.25 per day); some 50% of [the population living in poverty](/wiki/Poverty_in_Africa) in 1981 (200 million people), a figure that rose to 58% in 1996 before dropping to 50% in 2005 (380 million people). The average poor person in sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to live on only 70 cents per day, and was poorer in 2003 than in 1973,[[82]](#cite_note-82) indicating increasing poverty in some areas. Some of it is attributed to unsuccessful economic liberalization programs spearheaded by foreign companies and governments, but other studies have cited bad domestic government policies more than external factors.[[83]](#cite_note-83)[[84]](#cite_note-84)[[85]](#cite_note-85) From 1995 to 2005, Africa's rate of economic growth increased, averaging 5% in 2005. Some countries experienced still higher growth rates, notably [Angola](/wiki/Angola), [Sudan](/wiki/Sudan) and [Equatorial Guinea](/wiki/Equatorial_Guinea), all of which had recently begun extracting their [petroleum](/wiki/Petroleum) reserves or had expanded their [oil extraction](/wiki/Oil_extraction) capacity. The continent is believed to hold 90% of the world's [cobalt](/wiki/Cobalt), 90% of its [platinum](/wiki/Platinum), 50% of its [gold](/wiki/Gold), 98% of its [chromium](/wiki/Chromium), 70% of its [tantalite](/wiki/Tantalite),[[86]](#cite_note-86) 64% of its [manganese](/wiki/Manganese) and one-third of its [uranium](/wiki/Uranium).[[87]](#cite_note-87) The [Democratic Republic of the Congo](/wiki/Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo) (DRC) has 70% of the world's [coltan](/wiki/Coltan), a mineral used in the production of [tantalum capacitors](/wiki/Tantalum_capacitor) for electronic devices such as cell phones. The DRC also has more than 30% of the world's [diamond](/wiki/Diamond) reserves.[[88]](#cite_note-88) [Guinea](/wiki/Guinea) is the world's largest exporter of [bauxite](/wiki/Bauxite).[[89]](#cite_note-89) As the growth in Africa has been driven mainly by services and not manufacturing or agriculture, it has been growth without jobs and without reduction in [poverty](/wiki/Poverty_in_Africa) levels. In fact, the food security crisis of 2008 which took place on the heels of the global financial crisis has pushed back 100 million people into food insecurity.[[90]](#cite_note-90) In recent years, the [People's Republic of China](/wiki/People's_Republic_of_China) has built increasingly stronger ties with African nations and is Africa's largest trading partner. In 2007, Chinese companies invested a total of US$1 billion in Africa.<ref name=Africa>[Malia Politzer, "China and Africa: Stronger Economic Ties Mean More Migration"](http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?id=690), *Migration Information Source*. August 2008</ref>

A Harvard University study led by professor [Calestous Juma](/wiki/Calestous_Juma) showed that Africa could feed itself by making the transition from importer to self-sufficiency. "African agriculture is at the crossroads; we have come to the end of a century of policies that favored Africa's export of raw materials and importation of food. Africa is starting to focus on agricultural innovation as its new engine for regional trade and prosperity."[[91]](#cite_note-91) During US President Barack Obama's visit to Africa in July 2013, he announced a [US$](/wiki/United_States_dollar)7 billion plan to further develop infrastructure and work more intensively with African heads of state. He also announced a new program named Trade Africa, designed to boost trade within the continent as well as between Africa and the US.[[92]](#cite_note-92)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|left|Woman from](/wiki/File:Kobli1.jpg) [Benin](/wiki/Benin) Africa's population has rapidly increased over the last 40 years, and consequently, it is relatively young. In some African states, more than half the population is under 25 years of age.[[93]](#cite_note-93) The total number of people in Africa increased from 229 million in 1950 to 630 million in 1990.[[94]](#cite_note-94) As of 2014, the population of Africa is estimated at 1.2 billion.[[95]](#cite_note-95) Africa's total population surpassing other continents is fairly recent; African population surpassed Europe in the 1990s, while the [Americas](/wiki/Americas) was overtaken sometime around the year 2000; Africa's rapid population growth is expected to overtake the only two nations currently larger than its population, at roughly the same time - India and China's 1.4 billion people each will swap ranking around the year 2022.[[96]](#cite_note-96)[right|upright|thumb|](/wiki/File:San_tribesman.jpg)[San](/wiki/Bushmen) Bushman man from [Botswana](/wiki/Botswana) Speakers of [Bantu languages](/wiki/Bantu_languages) (part of the [Niger–Congo](/wiki/Niger–Congo_languages) family) are the majority in southern, central and southeast Africa. The Bantu-speaking peoples from [The Sahel](/wiki/The_Sahel) progressively expanded over most of Sub-Saharan Africa.[[97]](#cite_note-97) But there are also several [Nilotic](/wiki/Nilotic) groups in [South Sudan](/wiki/South_Sudan) and East Africa, the mixed [Swahili people](/wiki/Swahili_people) on the [Swahili Coast](/wiki/Swahili_Coast), and a few remaining [indigenous](/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_of_Africa) Khoisan ("[San"](/wiki/Bushmen) or "Bushmen") and [Pygmy peoples](/wiki/Pygmy_peoples) in southern and central Africa, respectively. Bantu-speaking Africans also predominate in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, and are found in parts of southern Cameroon. In the [Kalahari Desert](/wiki/Kalahari_Desert) of Southern Africa, the distinct people known as the Bushmen (also "San", closely related to, but distinct from "[Hottentots](/wiki/Khoikhoi)") have long been present. The San are physically distinct from other Africans and are the indigenous people of southern Africa. Pygmies are the pre-Bantu indigenous peoples of central Africa.[[98]](#cite_note-98) The peoples of West Africa primarily speak [Niger–Congo languages](/wiki/Niger–Congo_languages), belonging mostly to its non-Bantu branches, though some [Nilo-Saharan](/wiki/Nilo-Saharan) and Afro-Asiatic speaking groups are also found. The Niger–Congo-speaking [Yoruba](/wiki/Yoruba_language), [Igbo](/wiki/Igbo_language), [Fulani](/wiki/Fulani), [Akan](/wiki/Akan_language) and [Wolof](/wiki/Wolof_people) ethnic groups are the largest and most influential. In the central Sahara, [Mandinka](/wiki/Mandinka_people) or [Mande](/wiki/Mande_languages) groups are most significant. Chadic-speaking groups, including the [Hausa](/wiki/Hausa_language), are found in more northerly parts of the region nearest to the Sahara, and Nilo-Saharan communities, such as the [Songhai](/wiki/Songhai_people), [Kanuri](/wiki/Kanuri_people) and [Zarma](/wiki/Zarma_people), are found in the eastern parts of West Africa bordering [Central Africa](/wiki/Central_Africa).

The peoples of North Africa consist of three main indigenous groups: Berbers in the northwest, Egyptians in the northeast, and Nilo-Saharan-speaking peoples in the east. The [Arabs](/wiki/Arab) who arrived in the 7th century AD introduced the [Arabic language](/wiki/Arabic_language) and Islam to North Africa. The Semitic [Phoenicians](/wiki/Phoenicia) (who founded [Carthage](/wiki/Carthage)) and [Hyksos](/wiki/Hyksos), the Indo-Iranian [Alans](/wiki/Alans), the Indo- European [Greeks](/wiki/Ancient_Greece), [Romans](/wiki/Ancient_Rome), and [Vandals](/wiki/Vandals) settled in North Africa as well. Significant Berber communities remain within [Morocco](/wiki/Morocco) and [Algeria](/wiki/Algeria) in the 21st century, while, to a lesser extent, Berber speakers are also present in some regions of Tunisia and Libya.[[99]](#cite_note-99) The Berber-speaking [Tuareg](/wiki/Tuareg_people) and other often-[nomadic](/wiki/Nomad) peoples are the principal inhabitants of the Saharan interior of North Africa. In Mauritania, there is a small but near-extinct Berber community in the north and Niger–Congo-speaking peoples in the south, though in both regions Arabic and Arab culture predominates. In Sudan, although Arabic and Arab culture predominate, it is mostly inhabited by groups that originally spoke Nilo-Saharan, such as the Nubians, Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa, who, over the centuries, have variously intermixed with migrants from the Arabian peninsula. Small communities of Afro-Asiatic-speaking Beja nomads can also be found in Egypt and Sudan.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Bedscha.jpg)[Beja](/wiki/Beja_people) [bedouins](/wiki/Bedouin) from Northeast Africa In the [Horn of Africa](/wiki/Horn_of_Africa), some Ethiopian and [Eritrean](/wiki/Eritrea) groups (like the [Amhara](/wiki/Amhara_people) and [Tigrayans](/wiki/Tigray-Tigrinya_people), collectively known as [Habesha](/wiki/Habesha_people)) speak languages from the [Semitic](/wiki/Semitic_languages) branch of the [Afro-Asiatic](/wiki/Afroasiatic_languages) language family, while the [Oromo](/wiki/Oromo_people) and [Somali](/wiki/Somali_people) speak languages from the [Cushitic](/wiki/Cushitic) branch of Afro-Asiatic.

Prior to the [decolonization](/wiki/Decolonization) movements of the post-[World War II](/wiki/World_War_II) era, [Europeans](/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Europe) were represented in every part of Africa.[[100]](#cite_note-100) Decolonization during the 1960s and 1970s often resulted in the mass emigration of white settlers – especially from Algeria and Morocco (1.6 million [*pieds-noirs*](/wiki/Pieds-noir) in North Africa),[[101]](#cite_note-101) Kenya, Congo,[[102]](#cite_note-102) Rhodesia, Mozambique and Angola.[[103]](#cite_note-103) Between 1975 and 1977, over a million colonials returned to Portugal alone.[[104]](#cite_note-104) Nevertheless, [white Africans](/wiki/White_Africans_of_European_ancestry) remain an important minority in many African states, particularly [Zimbabwe](/wiki/Zimbabwe), [Namibia](/wiki/Namibia), [Réunion](/wiki/Réunion), and the [Republic of South Africa](/wiki/Republic_of_South_Africa).[[105]](#cite_note-105) The country with the largest white African population is South Africa.[[106]](#cite_note-106) [Dutch](/wiki/Dutch_people) and [British](/wiki/British_diaspora_in_Africa) [diasporas](/wiki/Diaspora) represent the largest communities of European ancestry on the continent today.<ref name=World>[Template:Cite encyclopedia](/wiki/Template:Cite_encyclopedia)</ref>

European colonization also brought sizable groups of [Asians](/wiki/Asian_people), particularly from the [Indian subcontinent](/wiki/Indian_subcontinent), to British colonies. Large [Indian communities](/wiki/Non-resident_Indian_and_person_of_Indian_origin) are found in South Africa, and smaller ones are present in Kenya, Tanzania, and some other southern and southeast African countries. The large [Indian community in Uganda](/wiki/Indians_in_Uganda) was [expelled](/wiki/Expulsion_of_Asians_from_Uganda) by the dictator [Idi Amin](/wiki/Idi_Amin) in 1972, though many have since returned. The islands in the Indian Ocean are also populated primarily by people of Asian origin, often mixed with Africans and Europeans. The [Malagasy people](/wiki/Malagasy_people) of [Madagascar](/wiki/Madagascar) are an [Austronesian people](/wiki/Austronesian_people), but those along the coast are generally mixed with Bantu, Arab, Indian and European origins. Malay and Indian ancestries are also important components in the group of people known in South Africa as [Cape Coloureds](/wiki/Cape_Coloureds) (people with origins in two or more races and continents). During the 20th century, small but economically important communities of [Lebanese](/wiki/Demographics_of_Lebanon#The_Lebanese_Diaspora) and [Chinese](/wiki/Overseas_Chinese)[[107]](#cite_note-107) have also developed in the larger coastal cities of [West](/wiki/West_Africa) and [East Africa](/wiki/East_Africa), respectively.[[108]](#cite_note-108)

## Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [thumb|upright|Map showing the traditional language families represented in Africa:](/wiki/File:Africa_ethnic_groups_1996.jpg) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Niger-Congo](/wiki/Niger-Congo_languages): [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Nilo-Saharan](/wiki/Nilo-Saharan_languages): [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) By most estimates, well over a thousand [languages](/wiki/Language) ([UNESCO](/wiki/UNESCO) has estimated around two thousand) are spoken in Africa.[[109]](#cite_note-109) Most are of African origin, though some are of European or Asian origin. Africa is the most [multilingual](/wiki/Multilingualism) continent in the world, and it is not rare for individuals to fluently speak not only multiple African languages, but one or more European ones as well. There are four major [language families](/wiki/Language_family) indigenous to Africa:

* The [*Afroasiatic*](/wiki/Afroasiatic_languages) languages are a language family of about 240 languages and 285 million people widespread throughout the [Horn of Africa](/wiki/Horn_of_Africa), [North Africa](/wiki/North_Africa), the [Sahel](/wiki/Sahel), and [Southwest Asia](/wiki/Southwest_Asia).
* The [*Nilo-Saharan*](/wiki/Nilo-Saharan_languages) language family consists of more than a hundred languages spoken by 30 million people. Nilo-Saharan languages are spoken by ethnic groups in [Chad](/wiki/Chad), [Ethiopia](/wiki/Ethiopia), [Kenya](/wiki/Kenya), [Nigeria](/wiki/Nigeria), [Sudan](/wiki/Sudan), [South Sudan](/wiki/South_Sudan), [Uganda](/wiki/Uganda), and northern [Tanzania](/wiki/Tanzania).
* The [*Niger–Congo*](/wiki/Niger–Congo_languages) language family covers much of Sub-Saharan Africa and is probably the largest language family in the world in terms of different languages.
* The [*Khoisan*](/wiki/Khoisan_languages) languages number about fifty and are spoken in [Southern Africa](/wiki/Southern_Africa) by approximately 120,000 people. Many of the Khoisan languages are [endangered](/wiki/Endangered_language). The [Khoi](/wiki/Khoikhoi) and [San](/wiki/Bushmen) peoples are considered the original inhabitants of this part of Africa.

Following the end of [colonialism](/wiki/Colonialism), nearly all African countries adopted [official languages](/wiki/Official_language) that originated outside the continent, although several countries also granted legal recognition to indigenous languages (such as [Swahili](/wiki/Swahili_language), [Yoruba](/wiki/Yoruba_language), [Igbo](/wiki/Igbo_language) and [Hausa](/wiki/Hausa_language)). In numerous countries, [English](/wiki/English_language) and [French](/wiki/French_language) (*see* [*African French*](/wiki/African_French)) are used for communication in the public sphere such as government, commerce, education and the media. [Arabic](/wiki/Arabic_language), [Portuguese](/wiki/Portuguese_language), [Afrikaans](/wiki/Afrikaans) and [Spanish](/wiki/Spanish_language) are examples of languages that trace their origin to outside of Africa, and that are used by millions of Africans today, both in the public and private spheres. [Italian](/wiki/Italian_language) is spoken by some in former [Italian colonies](/wiki/Italian_Colonial_Empire) in Africa. [German](/wiki/German_language) is spoken in [Namibia](/wiki/Namibia), as it was a former [German](/wiki/Germany) protectorate.

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[thumb||The rock-hewn](/wiki/File:Bet_Giyorgis_church_Lalibela_01.jpg) [Church of Saint George](/wiki/Church_of_Saint_George,_Lalibela) in [Lalibela](/wiki/Lalibela), [Ethiopia](/wiki/Ethiopia) is a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site). [Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) Some aspects of traditional African cultures have become less practiced in recent years as a result of neglect and suppression by colonial and post-colonial regimes. For example, African customs were discouraged, and African languages were prohibited in mission schools.[[110]](#cite_note-110) Leopold II of Belgium attempted to "civilize" Africans by discouraging polygamy and witchcraft.[[110]](#cite_note-110) Obidoh Freeborn posits that colonialism is one element that has created the character of modern African art.[[111]](#cite_note-111) According to authors Douglas Fraser and Herbert M. Cole, "The precipitous alterations in the power structure wrought by colonialism were quickly followed by drastic iconographic changes in the art." [[112]](#cite_note-112) Fraser and Cole assert that, in Igboland, some art objects "lack the vigor and careful craftsmanship of the earlier art objects that served traditional functions.[[112]](#cite_note-112) Author Chika Okeke-Agulu states that "the racist infrastructure of British imperial enterprise forced upon the political and cultural guardians of empire a denial and suppression of an emergent sovereign Africa and modernist art." [[113]](#cite_note-113) In Soweto, the West Rand Administrative Board established a Cultural Section to collect, read, and review scripts before performances could occur.[[114]](#cite_note-114) Editors F. Abiola Irele and Simon Gikandi comment that the current identity of African literature had its genesis in the "traumatic encounter between Africa and Europe." [[115]](#cite_note-115) On the other hand, Mhoze Chikowero believes that Africans deployed music, dance, spirituality, and other performative cultures to (re)asset themselves as active agents and indigenous intellectuals, to unmake their colonial marginalization and reshape their own destinies." [[116]](#cite_note-116) There is now a resurgence in the attempts to rediscover and revalue African traditional cultures, under such movements as the [African Renaissance](/wiki/African_Renaissance), led by [Thabo Mbeki](/wiki/Thabo_Mbeki), [Afrocentrism](/wiki/Afrocentrism), led by a group of scholars, including [Molefi Asante](/wiki/Molefi_Asante), as well as the increasing recognition of traditional spiritualism through decriminalization of [Vodou](/wiki/West_African_Vodun) and other forms of spirituality.

### Visual art and architecture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[African art](/wiki/African_art) and [architecture](/wiki/Architecture_of_Africa) reflect the diversity of African cultures. The region's oldest known [beads](/wiki/Bead) were made from [*Nassarius*](/wiki/Nassarius) shells and worn as personal ornaments 72,000 years ago.[[117]](#cite_note-117) The [Great Pyramid of Giza](/wiki/Great_Pyramid_of_Giza) in [Egypt](/wiki/Egypt) was the [world's tallest structure](/wiki/World's_tallest_structure) for 4,000 years, until the completion of [Lincoln Cathedral](/wiki/Lincoln_Cathedral) around the year 1300. The stone ruins of [Great Zimbabwe](/wiki/Great_Zimbabwe) are also noteworthy for their architecture, as are the [monolithic churches](/wiki/Monolithic_church) at [Lalibela](/wiki/Lalibela), Ethiopia, such as the [Church of Saint George](/wiki/Church_of_Saint_George,_Lalibela). [thumb|left|upright|A musician from](/wiki/File:Ke-Nako_Music-Performance_Vienna2008c.jpg) [South Africa](/wiki/South_Africa)

### Music and dance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) [right|thumb|upright|The](/wiki/File:Namibia_Rugby_Team.jpg) [Namibia rugby team](/wiki/Namibia_national_rugby_union_team) Egypt has long been a cultural focus of [the Arab world](/wiki/Arab_world), while remembrance of the rhythms of sub-Saharan Africa, in particular West Africa, was transmitted through the [Atlantic slave trade](/wiki/Atlantic_slave_trade) to modern [samba](/wiki/Samba), [blues](/wiki/Blues), [jazz](/wiki/Jazz), [reggae](/wiki/Reggae), [hip hop](/wiki/Hip_hop_music), and [rock](/wiki/Rock_music). The 1950s through the 1970s saw a conglomeration of these various styles with the popularization of [Afrobeat](/wiki/Afrobeat) and [Highlife](/wiki/Highlife) music. Modern music of the continent includes the highly complex choral singing of southern Africa and the dance rhythms of the musical genre of [soukous](/wiki/Soukous), dominated by the [music of the Democratic Republic of Congo](/wiki/Music_of_the_Democratic_Republic_of_Congo). Indigenous musical and dance traditions of Africa are maintained by oral traditions, and they are distinct from the music and dance styles of [North Africa](/wiki/North_Africa) and [Southern Africa](/wiki/Southern_Africa). [Arab](/wiki/Arab) influences are visible in North African music and dance and, in Southern Africa, [Western influences](/wiki/Western_culture#Widespread_influence) are apparent due to [colonization](/wiki/Colonization).

### Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

Fifty-three African countries have [football (soccer)](/wiki/Association_football) teams in the [Confederation of African Football](/wiki/Confederation_of_African_Football). Egypt has won the African Cup seven times, and a record-making three times in a row. Cameroon, Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, and Algeria have advanced to the knockout stage of recent [FIFA World Cups](/wiki/FIFA_World_Cup). [South Africa](/wiki/South_Africa) hosted the [2010 World Cup tournament](/wiki/2010_FIFA_World_Cup), becoming the first African country to do so.

[Cricket](/wiki/Cricket) is popular in some African nations. [South Africa](/wiki/South_Africa_national_cricket_team) and [Zimbabwe](/wiki/Zimbabwe_national_cricket_team) have [Test](/wiki/Test_cricket) status, while [Kenya](/wiki/Kenya_national_cricket_team) is the leading non-test team and previously had [One-Day International cricket](/wiki/One_Day_International) (ODI) status (from [10 October 1997](/wiki/President's_Cup_1997-98), until [30 January 2014](/wiki/2014_Cricket_World_Cup_Qualifier#Super_Six)). The three countries jointly hosted the [2003 Cricket World Cup](/wiki/2003_Cricket_World_Cup). [Namibia](/wiki/Namibia_national_cricket_team) is the other African country to have played in a World Cup. [Morocco](/wiki/Morocco) in northern Africa has also hosted the [2002 Morocco Cup](/wiki/2002_Morocco_Cup), but the national team has never qualified for a major tournament. [Rugby](/wiki/Rugby_union) is a popular sport in South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe.

## Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) Africans profess a wide variety of religious beliefs, and statistics on religious affiliation are difficult to come by since they are often a sensitive a topic for governments with mixed religious populations.<ref name=stanford>["African Religion on the Internet"](http://library.stanford.edu/africa/religion.html), [Stanford University](/wiki/Stanford_University)</ref><ref name=NYT>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> According to the [World Book Encyclopedia](/wiki/World_Book_Encyclopedia), [Islam](/wiki/Islam_in_Africa) is the largest religion in Africa, followed by [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity_in_Africa). According to [Encyclopedia Britannica](/wiki/Encyclopedia_Britannica), 45% of the population are [Christians](/wiki/Christian), 40% are [Muslims](/wiki/Muslim), and 10% follow [traditional religions](/wiki/African_Traditional_Religion). A small number of Africans are [Hindu](/wiki/Hindu), [Buddhist](/wiki/Buddhist), [Confucianist](/wiki/Confucianist), [Baha'i](/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith), or have beliefs from the [Judaic tradition](/wiki/Judaism_in_Africa). There is also a minority of Africans who are [irreligious](/wiki/Irreligion_in_Africa). [Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [thumb|center|The](/wiki/File:Holy_Trinity_Cathedral_Addis_Abeba_2.JPG) [Holy Trinity Cathedral](/wiki/Holy_Trinity_Cathedral_(Addis_Ababa)), in [Addis Ababa](/wiki/Addis_Ababa), [Ethiopia](/wiki/Ethiopia) | [thumb|center|The](/wiki/File:Great_Mosque_of_Kairouan_Stitched_Panorama_-_Grande_Mosquée_de_Kairouan_Panorama.jpg) [Great Mosque of Kairouan](/wiki/Mosque_of_Uqba), founded in 670, is the oldest mosque in North Africa;[[118]](#cite_note-118) it is located in [Kairouan](/wiki/Kairouan), [Tunisia](/wiki/Tunisia) | [thumb|center|Vodun altar in](/wiki/File:Voodo-altar.jpg) [Abomey](/wiki/Abomey), [Benin](/wiki/Benin) | [thumb|upright|center|](/wiki/File:Catedral_Nacional_em_Abuja,_Nigéria.jpg)[Nigeria's](/wiki/Nigeria) National Church, [Abuja](/wiki/Abuja) | [thumb|center|A map showing religious distribution in Africa](/wiki/File:Religion_distribution_Africa_crop.png) |

## Territories and regions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Main article](/wiki/Template:Main_article) The countries in this table are categorized according to the [scheme for geographic subregions](/wiki/United_Nations_geoscheme_for_Africa) used by the United Nations, and data included are per sources in cross-referenced articles. Where they differ, provisos are clearly indicated.

|  |
| --- |
| [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Africa-regions.png)[Regions](/wiki/List_of_regions_of_Africa) of Africa: [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) [Template:Legend](/wiki/Template:Legend) |
|  |
|  |
| [thumb|upright|Physical map of Africa](/wiki/File:topography_of_africa.png) |
| [thumb|Political map of Africa](/wiki/File:African_continent-en.svg) |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [**Arms**](/wiki/Coat_of_arms) | [**Flag**](/wiki/Flag) | **Name of region**[**[119]**](#cite_note-119) | [**Area**](/wiki/List_of_countries_and_dependencies_by_area) **(km²)** | [**Population**](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population)[**[120]**](#cite_note-120) | **Year** | [**Density**](/wiki/List_of_sovereign_states_and_dependent_territories_by_population_density) **(per km²)** | [**Capital**](/wiki/Capital_city) |
| [**Northern Africa**](/wiki/Northern_Africa) | | | | | | | |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Algeria](/wiki/Algeria) | 2,381,740 | 34,178,188 | 2009 | 14 | [Algiers](/wiki/Algiers) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Canary Islands](/wiki/Canary_Islands) (Spain)[[121]](#cite_note-121) | 7,492 | 2,118,519 | 2010 | 226 | [Las Palmas de Gran Canaria](/wiki/Las_Palmas_de_Gran_Canaria), [Santa Cruz de Tenerife](/wiki/Santa_Cruz_de_Tenerife) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Ceuta](/wiki/Ceuta) (Spain)[[122]](#cite_note-122) | 20 | 71,505 | 2001 | 3,575 | — |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Egypt](/wiki/Egypt)[[123]](#cite_note-123) | 1,001,450 | 82,868,000 | 2012 | 83 | [Cairo](/wiki/Cairo) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Libya](/wiki/Libya) | 1,759,540 | 6,310,434 | 2009 | 4 | [Tripoli](/wiki/Tripoli) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Madeira](/wiki/Madeira) (Portugal)[[124]](#cite_note-124) | 797 | 245,000 | 2001 | 307 | [Funchal](/wiki/Funchal) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Melilla](/wiki/Melilla) (Spain)[[125]](#cite_note-125) | 12 | 66,411 | 2001 | 5,534 | — |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Morocco](/wiki/Morocco) | 446,550 | 34,859,364 | 2009 | 78 | [Rabat](/wiki/Rabat) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Sudan](/wiki/Sudan) | 1,861,484 | 30,894,000 | 2008 | 17 | [Khartoum](/wiki/Khartoum) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Tunisia](/wiki/Tunisia) | 163,610 | 10,486,339 | 2009 | 64 | [Tunis](/wiki/Tunis) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Western Sahara](/wiki/Western_Sahara)[[126]](#cite_note-126) | 266,000 | 405,210 | 2009 | 2 | [El Aaiún](/wiki/El_Aaiún) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| [**Eastern Africa**](/wiki/Eastern_Africa) | | | | | | | |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Burundi](/wiki/Burundi) | 27,830 | 8,988,091 | 2009 | 323 | [Bujumbura](/wiki/Bujumbura) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [British Indian Ocean Territory](/wiki/British_Indian_Ocean_Territory) - [Chagos Archipelago](/wiki/Chagos_Archipelago) (United Kingdom) | 56.13 | 3,000 | 2012 | 53.4 | [Diego Garcia](/wiki/Diego_Garcia) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Comoros](/wiki/Comoros) | 2,170 | 752,438 | 2009 | 347 | [Moroni](/wiki/Moroni,_Comoros) |
| [Template:Coat of arms](/wiki/Template:Coat_of_arms) | [Template:Flagicon](/wiki/Template:Flagicon) | [Djibouti](/wiki/Djibouti) | 23,000 | 623,891 | 2012 | 22 | [Djibouti](/wiki/Djibouti_(city)) |
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* [African & Middle Eastern Reading Room](http://www.loc.gov/rr/amed/) from the United States [Library of Congress](/wiki/Library_of_Congress)
* [Africa South of the Sahara](http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/) from [Stanford University](/wiki/Stanford_University)
* [The Index on Africa](http://www.afrika.no/index/) from *The Norwegian Council for Africa*
* [Aluka](http://www.aluka.org/) Digital library of scholarly resources from and about Africa
* [Africa Interactive Map](http://www.usaraf.army.mil/MAP_INTERACTIVE/INTERACTIVE_MAP.swf) from the [United States Army Africa](/wiki/United_States_Army_Africa)

History

* [African Kingdoms](http://www.africankingdoms.com/)
* [The Story of Africa](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index_section10.shtml) from [BBC World Service](/wiki/BBC_World_Service)
* [Africa Policy Information Center (APIC)](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Urgent_Action/menu_APIC.html)

News media

* [allAfrica.com](http://allafrica.com/) current news, events and statistics
* [Focus on Africa](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/focus_magazine/index.shtml) magazine from [BBC World Service](/wiki/BBC_World_Service)

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