Nigeria

KEY FACTS

Joined Commonwealth: 1960 (suspended 1995–99)

Population: 173,615,000 (2013)

GDP p.c. growth: 2.6% p.a. 1990–2013

UN HDI 2014: World ranking 152

Official language: English

Time: GMT plus 1 hr

Currency: Naira (N)

Geography

Area: 923,768 sq km

Coastline: 853 km

Capital: Abuja

The Federal Republic of Nigeria lies on the Gulf of Guinea and has borders with Benin (west), Niger (north), Chad (north-east across Lake Chad) and Cameroon (east). It comprises the Abuja Federal Capital Territory and 36 states.

Topography: Nigeria is a large country, 1,045 km long and 1,126 km wide. It has several important rivers, notably the Niger and its main tributary, the Benue, both of which are navigable. The Niger forms a delta some 100 km wide, running into the sea west of Port Harcourt. In the north-east rivers drain into Lake Chad. The coastal region is low-lying, with lagoons, sandy beaches and mangrove swamps. Inland the country rises to the central Jos Plateau at 1,800 metres. The Adamawa Massif, bordering Cameroon, rises to 2,042 metres at Dimlang (Vogel Peak).

Climate: Tropical; hot and humid on the coast, with greater extremes of temperature inland and cold nights in the north during December and January. The rainy season is generally March–November in the south and May–September in the north. In the dry season the harmattan wind blows from the Sahara.

Environment: The most significant environmental issues are rapid deforestation, soil degradation, desertification and significant damage from oil spills.

Vegetation: Mangrove and freshwater swamps in coastal areas, merging into an area of rainforest, containing hardwoods and oil palms. Moving north, the savannah and plateau regions have grasslands and hardy trees such as the baobab and tamarind. There is semi-desert vegetation in the north-east. In the north, forest depletion has been caused by overgrazing, bush fires and the use of wood as fuel, but there has been government-sponsored planting in an attempt to arrest the southward advance of the Sahara. Oil palms occur naturally and, being valuable, are often spared when forests are cleared. Forest covers nine per cent of the land area, having declined at 3.2 per cent p.a. 1990–2010. Some 76 per cent of forest is savannah woodland, 20 per cent tropical rainforest and four per cent swamp forest. Arable land comprises 38 per cent and permanent cropland seven per cent of the total land area.

Wildlife: The Yankari National Park is an important stopover for migrating birds (some 600 species call there), and also has an elephant population. The Okomo Sanctuary is home to the endangered white-throated monkey. On the grasslands of the savannah are camels, antelopes, hyenas and giraffes. An area of 30,100 sq km is protected (2003), or 3.3 per cent of the land area. In the country as a whole 26 mammal species and 15 bird species are thought to be endangered (2014).

Main towns: Abuja (federal capital since 1991, pop. 2.71m in 2011), Lagos (commercial centre and former capital, Lagos State, 13.34m), Kano (Kano, 4.03m), Ibadan (Oyo, 3.06m), Port Harcourt (Rivers, 2.01m), Kaduna (Kaduna, 1.64m), Benin City (Edo, 1.45m), Ilorin (Kwara, 1.08m), Maiduguri (Borno, 1.03m), Aba (Abia, 1.01m), Warri (Edo, 933,800), Onitsha (Anambra, 910,800), Jos (Plateau, 900,000), Enugu (Enugu, 870,000), Zaria (Kaduna, 870,000), Akure (Ondo, 847,900), Abeokuta (Ogun, 801,300), Oshogbo (Osun, 795,000), Ife (Osun, 490,000), Ogbomosho (Oyo, 433,030), Oyo (Oyo, 369,894), Sokoto (Sokoto, 329,369), Okene (Kogi, 312,755), Calabar (Cross River, 310,389), Katsina (Katsina, 259,315), Bauchi (Bauchi, 206,537), Minna (Niger, 189,191), Gombe (Gombe, 163,604), Ado (Ekiti, 156,122), Makurdi (Benue, 151,515), Ondo (Ondo, 146,051), Owerri (Imo, 119,711), Gboko (Benue, 101,281), Nsukka (Enugu, 69,210), Jalingo (Taraba, 67,226), Birnin Kebbi (Kebbi, 63,147), Uyo (Akwa Ibom, 58,369), Yola (Adamawa, 54,810) and Asaba (Delta, 49,725).

Transport: 193,200 km of roads, 15 per cent paved, link all main centres. Some secondary roads are impassable during the rains.

There are around 3,530 km of railway, the main routes running from Lagos to Kano, and from Port Harcourt to Maiduguri, with a branch line from Zaria to Gusau and Kaura Namoda. Much of the network is single-track, and the narrow gauge restricts speed and load-carrying capacity.

Main ports are at Apapa, Tin Can Island, Warri, Sapele, Port Harcourt and Calabar. Ferry services operate along the Niger and Benue rivers and along the coast.

Lagos International Airport is 13 km north of Lagos; other main international airports are at Abuja (40 km from the city), Kano and Port Harcourt, and main domestic airports at Benin City, Calabar, Enugu, Jos, Kaduna, Lagos, Maiduguri, Sokoto and Yola.

Society

KEY FACTS 2013

Population per sq km: 188

Life expectancy: 53 years

Net primary enrolment: 64% (2010)

Population: 173,615,000 (2013); 46 per cent of people live in urban areas and 15 per cent in urban agglomerations of more than one million people; growth 2.6 per cent p.a. 1990–2013; birth rate 41 per 1,000 people (47 in 1970); life expectancy 53 years (40 in 1970).

Nigeria is one of the most ethnically diverse countries. There are some 250 ethnic groups, with the Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo making up 70 per cent.

Language: English (official language), Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and more than 200 other languages and dialects.

Religion: Muslims (mainly in the north and west) 50 per cent, Christians (mainly in the south) 40 per cent, and the rest holding traditional beliefs.

Health: Public spending on health was two per cent of GDP in 2012. Some 64 per cent of the population uses an improved drinking water source and 28 per cent have access to adequate sanitation facilities (2012). There are 18 university teaching hospitals in Nigeria (2014). Infant mortality was 74 per 1,000 live births in 2013 (123 in 1960). In 2013, 3.2 per cent of people aged 15–49 were HIV positive.

Education: There are nine years of compulsory education starting at the age of six. Primary school comprises six years and secondary six, with two cycles each of three years. Some 80 per cent of pupils complete primary school (2009). The school year starts in September.

By October 2013, the National Universities Commission had accredited 40 federal universities, 38 state universities and 51 private universities, including four federal universities of technology, three federal universities of agriculture and the National Open University of Nigeria. The longest-established universities are the University of Ibadan (1948); University of Nigeria (Nsukka,1960); Ahmadu Bello University (Zaria,1962); University of Lagos (1962); and Obafemi Awolowo University (Ile-Ife, 1962). The first state university, Rivers State University of Science and Technology, was founded in 1979 and the first private universities, in 1999. Literacy among people aged 15–24 is 72 per cent (2010).

In 1968 Nigeria hosted the Fourth Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers in Lagos. Commonwealth Education Ministers meet every three years to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest.

Media: There are more than 100 national and regional newspapers, some state-owned, as well as Sunday papers, business weeklies and news magazines. Established titles with national distribution include *Champion* (Lagos), *Daily Independent* (Lagos), *The Sun* (Lagos), *The Daily Times* (Lagos), *Daily Trust* (Abuja), *The Guardian* (Lagos), *Leadership* (Abuja), *New Nigerian* (government-owned with Lagos and Kaduna editions), *Newswatch* (weekly), *The Punch*, *Tell* (weekly), *This Day* (Lagos) and *Vanguard* (Lagos).

The Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria and Nigerian Television Authority provide national and regional public radio and TV services respectively. The state governments in all 36 states provide radio and TV services. A number of private radio and TV stations are operating; TV is mainly available in the urban areas.

Some 40 per cent of households have TV sets (2010). There are nine personal computers per 1,000 people (2005).

Communications: Country code 234; internet domain '.ng'. Mobile phone coverage is expanding. There are internet cafes in Lagos.

For every 1,000 people there are two landlines, 733 mobile phone subscriptions and 380 internet users (2013).

Public holidays: New Year's Day, Workers' Day (1 May), National Day (1 October), Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Religious festivals whose dates vary from year to year include Mouloud (Prophet's Birthday), Good Friday, Easter Monday, Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan, three days) and Eid al-Kabir (Feast of the Sacrifice).

Economy

KEY FACTS 2013

GNI: US$499bn

GNI p.c.: US$2,710

GDP growth: 5.9% p.a. 2009–13

Inflation: 11.3% p.a. 2009–13

Nigeria is very vulnerable to fluctuations in international prices and demand for oil and gas, which accounts for more than 90 per cent of export earnings and the greater part of federal revenue. During many years of military rule, economic management was generally weak. When oil prices were high, the revenues flowed into increased public spending and conspicuous consumption, and imports soared. GDP grew by 1.6 per cent p.a. 1980–90.

Some public investment went into prestige industrial projects which were generally a burden on the economy, failing to generate profits, depending on imported components or materials and increasing external debt. But the development of non-oil industries that relied on local raw materials and would generate employment and exports was not encouraged and the consistently overvalued currency deterred exports.

By 1997–98 the economy was in a critical

Nigeria on the international stage

Chief Emeka Anyaoku, born in 1933 in Obosi, was Commonwealth Secretary-General 1990–2000.

Wole Soyinka, born in Abeokuta in 1934, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1986; and Nigerians have won 14 Commonwealth Writers' Prizes. British–Nigerian writer Ben Okri won the Man Booker Prize in 1991.

On the sports front, a number of Nigerian footballers play the sport professionally in the UK, including John Obi Mikel (Chelsea), Brown Ideye (West Bromwich Albion), Victor Moses (Chelsea, Liverpool, Stoke City) and Sone Aluko (Hull City). Sone Aluko's sister Eniola Aluko plays for the England women's football team, while he plays for the Nigerian national team. Ironically, Sone was born in London, but Eniola was born in Lagos.

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with a population of more than 170 million.

condition. Once self-sufficient in food, the country had become a major food importer. Development aid and foreign loans and investment had decreased dramatically. From May 1999, with the support of the IMF, the World Bank and the international community, the civilian government committed itself to reforming policies, including privatisation of state enterprises and modernisation of agriculture, with the public sector concentrating on infrastructure and education and the private sector leading economic growth.

However, reversing the many years of weak and corrupt economic management was a daunting challenge and progress was slow. Nevertheless, in a climate of stronger international oil prices GDP growth picked up in 2000 and from 2003 was generally more than six per cent p.a. for the rest of the decade, despite the world economic downturn of 2008–09. It was then at least four per cent p.a. throughout 2010–15 and even in 2014 when oil prices fell it was estimated to be seven per cent.

Oil and gas

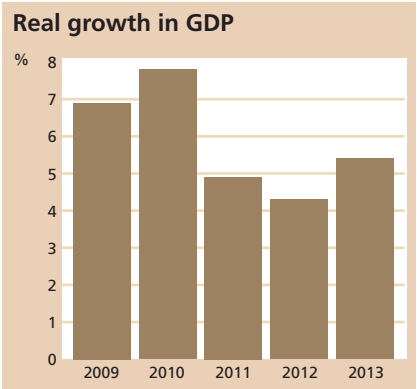
Nigerian oil has a low sulphur content and reserves of oil were estimated in January 2014 to be 37 billion barrels. Production during 2013 was at the rate of about 2.3 million barrels a day.

Reserves of gas were estimated in January 2014 to be 5.1 trillion cubic metres. Exports of liquefied natural gas began in 1999 and grew rapidly. The West African Gas Pipeline began in 2008 to pump natural gas from Lagos along the coast to Benin, Togo and Ghana.

History

Nigeria has a long history, with its roots in early civilisations of distinguished artistry. The plateau area around Jos was a meeting point for cultural influences from the Upper Niger Valley (where agriculture developed independently as early as 5000 BCE) and from Egypt. By 3000 BCE, the plateau people – probably the Bantu people who later dominated Sub-Saharan Africa – were developing more complex societies and beginning to advance to the south. By 500 BCE, the Nok culture was flourishing. Nok society produced elegant and technically accomplished terracotta heads and figures; they were agriculturalists making tools and weapons of iron.

In due course, in the north, strong state systems evolved, several based on divine kingship. The people kept cattle and horses, grew cotton and cereals, and worked in fabrics, leather and iron. They were in contact

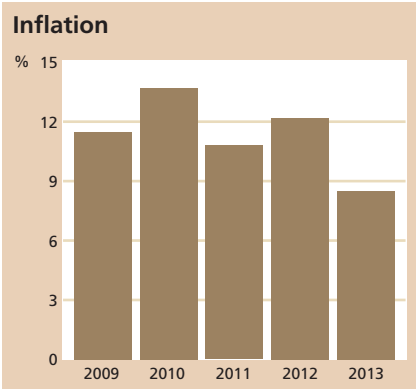


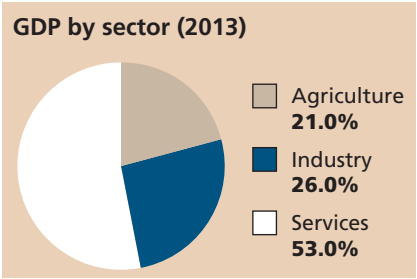
with Egypt and other north African societies. Two powerful empires arose – Hausa–Bokwoi (beginning as separate states from 100–1000 CE) and Kanem–Bornu (from the 11th century). They converted to Islam, traded in gold, slaves, leather, salt and cloth across the Sahara, and by and large successfully kept their enemies at bay.

In the south-west, the Yoruba had, before 1000 CE, founded Ife, still the spiritual centre of Yorubaland. The origins of Benin are connected with Ife; Benin culture produced bronze sculpture by the 'lost wax' technique. These are naturalistic but slightly idealised heads of great elegance, delicacy and beauty, regarded as a major contribution to the world's artistic heritage. Ife itself, however, fell victim to conquest by Oyo in the 14th century and later Ibadan and Abeokuta. The people of the south-east were heavily preyed upon by slave traders from the north and along the coast. Forced to abandon their settlements and move into the forests to evade their captors, the struggles of the Igbo peoples were preserved in long epics, memorised and passed down the generations.

Colonial period

In the 15th century, Benin began to trade with the Portuguese, selling slaves and acquiring spices, firearms, the art of writing and the Christian religion. By the 18th century, the British had displaced the Portuguese as leaders of the slave trade. A century later, in 1807, the missionaries' campaign against slavery had gained support, leading the British parliament to ban the slave trade. The navy began to patrol the coast, arresting slavers and settling captured slaves (most of them Nigerians) in the resettlement colony of Sierra Leone. Several missionaries in Nigeria were themselves freed Nigerian slaves who had converted to Christianity in Sierra Leone. The missionaries introduced quinine to control malaria, a new trade in palm oil also began, and the economies of southern Nigeria became increasingly powerful. Steamboats took this new culture up-river and into the forests.





In the early 19th century, there was upheaval in the north, as Fulani emirs declared a *jihad* (holy war) against the Hausa state of Gobir and created a new empire with city states, a common religious and judicial system and Qur'anic schools. The Muslim empire spread rapidly.

The Yoruba, under pressure, drew closer to Britain, which annexed Lagos in 1861. In 1884, British control expanded with the creation of the Oil Rivers Protectorate, set up under treaties with Yoruba rulers, and then the north, while the Igbo were conquered. By 1900, Britain had control of Nigeria.

The Colonial Office adopted the system of indirect rule, with traditional leaders continuing in power while owing allegiance to the colonial authority.

Many educated Nigerians objected to the system, since it entrenched traditional practices which, in a freer society, would have evolved into possibly more progressive forms. Nonetheless, the system prevented British settlers from dominating the economy, and Nigerian enterprise built a substantial export trade in cocoa, groundnuts, leather, cotton and vegetable oils.

Constitutional development

In 1914, six Africans were brought into the Governor's advisory council. In 1922, a legislative council (ten Africans, four of them elected, and 36 Europeans) was empowered to legislate for the south. In 1947, the council's authority was extended to the whole country. It now had 28 African (four elected) and 17 European members. The 1947 constitution also set up regional houses of

assembly in the east, west and north, with a House of Chiefs in the north. The 1951 constitution gave the balance of power to Nigerians. In 1954, Nigeria became a federation; in 1957 Eastern and Western regions gained internal self-government and Northern Nigeria two years later. Elections to the Federal House of Representatives in December 1959 brought in a new government. At its first meeting, the new House requested full sovereignty and Nigeria proceeded to independence on 1 October 1960.

Independence

Nigeria's independence government was led by the Northern People's Congress in alliance with the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (a largely Igbo party), with Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister. In 1963, the country became a republic and Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe its first (non-executive) President.

The first of several coups occurred in January 1966 and Tafawa Balewa was among those killed. Army commander Major-General Aguiyi-Ironsi headed a new administration, which abolished the federation and instituted a unitary state. In July 1966, troops from the north retaliated with another coup in which Aguiyi-Ironsi was killed and Lt-Col Yakubu Gowon assumed the leadership. He restored the federal state and replaced the four regions with 12 states. He included civilians in government and promised to restore democratic rule as soon as possible.

In May 1967, Lt-Col Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu declared eastern Nigeria an independent state named the Republic of Biafra. This led to civil war. Hostilities lasted until Biafra was defeated in January 1970 and Ojukwu went into exile; the war cost some one million lives.

In 1975, Gowon was deposed in a coup and replaced by Brigadier Murtala Muhammed, who introduced radical economic reforms, a new structure of 19 states and a programme for a return to civilian rule in four years. He was assassinated in an abortive coup in 1976. Lt-Gen Olusegun Obasanjo succeeded and continued Muhammed's policies: the ban on political activities was lifted (1978), multiparty elections were held (1979) and Shehu Shagari of the National Party of Nigeria became (executive) President, re-elected in 1983.

However, in 1983 a military coup put an end to this brief period of democracy. New head of state Major-General Muhammadu Buhari initiated a severe austerity programme with campaigns against idleness and self-enrichment. This provoked a further coup in 1985 bringing Major-General Ibrahim Babangida to power. He repealed the most unpopular decrees and, in 1987, promised a return to civilian rule by 1992. In 1989 two parties were formed (only two parties were permitted).

The transition to civilian rule went as far as elections to state assemblies in 1991 and presidential primary elections in 1992 (re-run 1993) before the whole process was halted. The newly created Social Democratic Party won the majority in both Houses, and its leader, Chief Moshood Abiola, was believed to be leading in the presidential elections. But before all the results had been announced, the elections were annulled by Babangida, who shortly after resigned. For a few months civilian Chief Ernest Shonekan was head of an interim government, and charged with holding yet further elections.

However, in November 1993, in Nigeria's seventh coup, General Sani Abacha assumed power and cancelled the scheduled return to civilian rule. He dissolved the interim national government, national and state assemblies, the state executive councils and the two political parties, and banned all political activity.

In June 1994 a constitutional conference was held to devise a programme for a return to civilian rule. The conference failed to reach consensus. Shortly before it opened, Chief Abiola, on the basis of the 1993 elections, proclaimed himself President. He was arrested and charged with treason; he was held in solitary confinement and was never brought to trial.

In March 1995, during a clamp-down after an alleged counter-coup, the military arrested prominent opponents of the regime and campaigners for a rapid return to democracy, including retired generals Olusegun Obasanjo and Shehu Musa Yar'Adua – whose political influence stemmed from the fact that they headed the military government which handed power to a civilian government in 1979. Obasanjo and Yar'Adua were tried for treason and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Shortly afterwards, in October, Abacha further postponed plans for a return to democracy, and announced a new three-year timetable for completing the transition by late 1998.

Amid the many political detentions of this period, one of Nigeria's most popular writers, Ken Saro-Wiwa, leader of the campaign against pollution of Ogoni lands and waters by the oil industry, and eight others were arrested and charged with the murder of local chiefs. They were tried by a military court and executed on 10 November 1995, hours after the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting had opened in New Zealand. In response, on 11 November, Commonwealth Heads of Government suspended Nigeria from membership of the Commonwealth for contravening the principles of the Harare Commonwealth Declaration, and called for the release of Abiola and 43 other political prisoners.

In 1996 five parties were registered and local elections took place in March 1997, when the United Nigeria Congress Party (UNCP) and Democratic Party of Nigeria (DPN) won most seats. At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Edinburgh, United Kingdom, in October 1997 Nigeria's suspension from Commonwealth membership was extended until 1 October 1998 by which time the Abacha government had said it would restore democracy and civilian government. If the transition programme failed, or was not credible, Nigeria would be expelled. In December 1997, UNCP gained a majority in 29 of the 36 state assemblies.

By April 1998 all five registered political parties had adopted Abacha as their candidate for the August presidential election, although he had not publicly agreed to stand. In the general election in the same month, a very low poll, UNCP took a majority of seats in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Abacha died suddenly in June 1998 and was replaced as head of state by Chief of Defence Staff General Abdulsalami Abubakar, who promised to return the country to civilian rule and released nine political prisoners including Olusegun Obasanjo. Chief Abiola also died suddenly, in July 1998 while his release from detention was still being negotiated. He was 60 and, though some initially suspected foul play, an international team of pathologists who were called in to conduct an autopsy confirmed he died of natural causes. His health had however been adversely affected by the harsh detention conditions.

Abubakar dissolved the principal bodies associated with the Abacha regime's democracy programme, released detainees, allowed unfettered political activity and published a new election timetable. A new Independent National Electoral Commission was set up in August 1998. As a result of the local government elections in December 1998, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), All People's Party (APP) and Alliance for Democracy (AD) went forward to contest the state and federal elections. The PDP took 23 state governorships, APP eight and AD six. In the National Assembly elections, PDP won nearly 60 per cent of the seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate. The presidential election gave PDP candidate Obasanjo a convincing victory with 62 per

cent of the votes against 38 per cent for joint APP/AD candidate Chief Oluyemi Falae. These federal elections were closely monitored by international, including Commonwealth, observers. Although cases of serious irregularities were noted, especially in the presidential poll, when the turnout figures were often inflated, they were not deemed to have brought the overall result into question.

In the wake of the elections, the departing military rulers published a new constitution. When Obasanjo became President in May 1999, Nigeria's suspension from the Commonwealth was lifted. The 1999 constitution, which permitted the practice of Sharia law for consenting Muslims, opened the way for some northern states – led by Zamfara State in October 1999 – to seek to implement it. This plunged the country into a heated controversy and some violence as Christians in these states were not convinced by assurances that it would not adversely affect them. This continued as the northern states successively adopted Sharia law. Zamfara was first to carry out an amputation in March 2000 and Sokoto first to sentence a woman to death by stoning for adultery in October 2001 (later revoked).

Constitution

Status: Republic with executive President

Legislature: Nigeria National Assembly

Independence: 1 October 1960

The May 1999 constitution, like those of 1979 and 1989, and the draft constitution of 1995, provided for a federal republic with an executive President on the US model. Six new states were created in October 1996, bringing the total to 36. The President is elected every four years by universal adult suffrage and is required to include at least one representative of each of the 36 states in the cabinet. There is a bicameral National Assembly made up of a House of Representatives (with 360 seats) and a Senate (with 109 seats), each elected for four-year terms. The State Governors and assemblies are also elected every four years.

The constitution also guarantees personal freedom and permits the exercise of Sharia law for consenting Muslims.

Politics

Last elections: 28 March 2015 (presidential and legislative)

Next elections: 2019 (presidential and legislative)

Head of state: President Muhammadu Buhari

Head of government: The President

Ruling party: All Progressives Congress

Women MPs: 4%

In the first elections to be held under a civilian government in 20 years, in April 2003 President Olusegun Obasanjo and the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) comfortably won presidential and National Assembly elections and did well in the governorship elections. Obasanjo was emphatically returned as President with 61.9 per cent of the votes, his main rival, another former military leader, Muhammadu Buhari of the All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), polling 32.2 per cent. Commonwealth observers concluded that in most states most electors were able to vote freely and the results of the elections reflected the wishes of the people. However, in certain places 'proper electoral processes appear to have broken down' and, in Rivers State in particular, 'there were widespread and serious irregularities and vote-rigging'.

The ruling PDP's candidate, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, won the April 2007 presidential election with 70 per cent of the votes, defeating Muhammadu Buhari of the ANPP (18 per cent) and Atiku Abubakar of Action Congress (seven per cent). Turnout was low and the many national and international observers reported serious and widespread deficiencies in the election process, including late opening of polls. Commonwealth observers concluded there were impediments to the full, free and fair expression of the will of voters and that an opportunity to build on the elections of 1999 and 2003 had been missed.

After a period of illness, three months of which he spent receiving medical treatment in Saudi Arabia, Yar'Adua died on 5 May 2010. Vice-President Goodluck Jonathan, who had been empowered by the National Assembly to act as President since February 2010, was sworn in as President on 6 May.

In April 2011 PDP candidate Jonathan won the presidential election in the first round, taking 59 per cent of the votes cast and securing more than 25 per cent of votes in at least 24 states. His main challenger, Buhari (now of the Congress for Progressive Change – CPC), took 32 per cent of the votes cast. Voting was widely reported as peaceful and the Commonwealth observer group present, led by former President of Botswana, Festus Mogae, declared that the presidential and National Assembly elections were both credible and creditable, and reflected the will of the Nigerian people. However, as it became apparent that Jonathan had won the presidential contest, violent demonstrations erupted in northern Nigeria. In the National Assembly elections, held in the same month, PDP secured 202 seats in the house of representatives, Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) 66, CPC 35, ANPP 25 and the Labour Party eight; and in the Senate, PDP 71 seats, ACN 18, CPC seven, ANPP seven and the Labour Party four.

In the presidential election on 28 March 2015 Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress (APC, with 54 per cent of valid votes cast) defeated President Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP (45 per cent). It was the first time an incumbent President had been ousted in an election. In the concurrent National Assembly elections, APC secured

Further information

Federal Government of Nigeria:	**www.nigeria.gov.ng**
Independent National Electoral Commission:	**www.inecnigeria.org**
Nigeria National Assembly:	**www.nassnig.org**
National Bureau of Statistics:	**www.nigerianstat.gov.ng**
Central Bank of Nigeria:	**www.cenbank.org**
Guide to Nigeria:	**www.cometonigeria.com**
ECOWAS:	**www.ecowas.int**
Commonwealth Secretariat:	**www.thecommonwealth.org**
Commonwealth of Nations:	**www.commonwealthofnations.org/country/Nigeria**
Media	
Daily Independent:	**dailyindependentnig.com**
Leadership:	**leadership.ng**
The Guardian:	**www.ngrguardiannews.com**
The Sun:	**sunnewsonline.com**
This Day:	**www.thisdaylive.com**
Vanguard:	**www.vanguardngr.com**
Tell:	**www.tellng.com**
The Punch:	**www.punchng.com**
Nigerian Television Authority:	**ntanews24.tv**
Radio Nigeria:	**ww2.radionigeria.gov.ng**
Voice of Nigeria:	**www.voiceofnigeria.org**

196 seats in the House of Representatives, PDP 133 and All Progressives Grand Alliance five; and in the Senate APC took 60 seats and PDP 48. Turnout was 47 per cent. The Commonwealth observer group led by the former President of Malawi, Dr Bakili Muluzi, described the conduct of presidential and National Assembly elections as 'generally peaceful and transparent'. President Buhari was sworn in on 29 May 2015.

International relations

Nigeria is a member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, African Union, Economic Community of West African States, Non-Aligned Movement, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, United Nations and World Trade Organization.

Nigeria hosts the headquarters of the Economic Community of West African States in Abuja.

The country is also a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Traveller information

Immigration and customs: Passports must be valid for at least six months from the date of departure. Visas are required by all Commonwealth nationals. If you are travelling on from Nigeria, many countries will require you to have a yellow fever vaccination certificate (see *Travel health* below). Prohibited imports include fruit, vegetables, cereals and eggs; beer, mineral water, soft drinks and sparkling wine; and jewellery and textiles, including mosquito netting.

Travel within the country: Traffic drives on the right. To hire a car an international driving permit is required, together with two passport-size photos.

Scheduled flights link the main towns. Trains are generally slow. Daily services run on the two main lines, between Lagos and Kano and Port Harcourt and Maiduguri. Sleeping cars are available but must be booked in advance.

Travel health: Prevalent diseases where appropriate precautionary measures are recommended include cholera, dengue fever, diphtheria, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, malaria, meningococcal meningitis, polio, rabies, schistosomiasis (bilharzia), typhoid and yellow fever. The World Health Organization has recommended vaccination against yellow fever.

There were 715,000 tourist arrivals in 2011.

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