

Country Factsheet Sudan

November 2024, update from 2022



Country – capital	Republic of the Sudan - Khartoum ¹		
Population	Sudanese Arab (approx. 70%), non-Arab such as Fur, Beja, Nuba, Fallata. Total population 50.4 million (estimation 2024) ²		
Geography	South of Egypt, north of Ethiopia, bordering the Red Sea ³		
Languages	Arabic (official), English (official), Nubian, Ta Bedawie, Fur ⁴		
Writing system	Arabic ⁵		
Education and literacy	60.7% of adults are literate (read and write), women less (56% in 2018). ⁶ No recent information on education system, due to the security situation. As of 2011, education in Sudan is free and compulsory for children aged 6 to 13 years. Primary education consists of 8 years, followed by 3 years of secondary education. Teaching language is Arabic. ⁷ As of 2018, 66% of children were enrolled in primary school. ⁸ Around 6.9 million children, many of them girls, did not attend school (2019) ⁹ .		
Religions	Large majority Sunni Muslim, small Christian minority. ¹⁰		
Conflict history and overview	Sudan had long, bloody civil wars (1955-1972 and 1983-2005), rooted in northern domination of the largely non-Muslim, non-Arab southern regions. Between 2003-2008, Darfur suffered from large-scale massacres/ethnic cleansing of Fur, Masalit, and Zaghawa peoples by Arab militias (<i>Janjaweed</i>). ¹¹ On 25-10-2021 a new military coup dissolved the joint military and civilian council that had governed the country since president Bashir 's removal in August 2019. Mass protests, heavy violence and serious social distress followed. ¹² In April 2023, intense armed clashes, fuelled by disagreements over security force reforms, erupted between the Sudan Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitaries, in the capital Khartoum. Clashes quickly spread to other areas, including Darfur and North Kordofan. ¹³ As of October 2024, the 18-month conflict has killed tens of thousands of people and displaced more than 11 million. ¹⁴		
Humanitarian situation	Life expectancy at birth: 67.8 yrs (2024). ¹⁵ In October 2023, about 15 million people were acutely food insecure. ¹⁶ In 2024, 24.8 million people were in need of aid. ¹⁷		
Human rights situation	The fighting since April 2023 led to widespread abuses, serious war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing in Sudan. ¹⁸ Fighters, mostly RSF, engaged in widespread looting of homes, businesses and public institutions, including hospitals, humanitarian organizations' warehouses, and banks. Meanwhile, the 20-year-old Darfur conflict continued to cause immense suffering in the region. ¹⁹ RSF commits large-scale violence, including gang-rapes and sexual slavery, torture, mass killings and mistreatment. ²⁰ In el Geneina, Darfur, ethnic cleansing and mass killing of the Massalit is reported. ²¹		
Situation of women FGM – early marriages	Maternal mortality rate: 270 deaths/100,000 live births (2020 est.) ²² 34% of girls marry before the age of 18, and 12% even before their 15th age. ²³ FGM prevalence: 86.6 %. FGM was criminalised in 2020 but still widespread. ²⁴		
Situation of LGBTI	Same-sex activities illegal: max 7 yrs prison, and imprisoned for life if found 'guilty' 3x. Acts of 'gross indecency' punishable with 1 yr prison. Law enforcement occurs. ²⁵		
Asylum / migration / internally displaced persons (IDPs)	As of 4-11-2024, 11.5 million Sudanese are forcibly displaced, of whom 8.3 million within Sudan and 3 million fled abroad (Egypt, South Sudan, Chad, Libya, Uganda). ²⁶ Sudanese sea arrivals in Malta: 0 in 2022, 7 in 2023, 1 in 2024 ²⁷ Malta refugees (under UNHCR mandate) and asylum seekers: ²⁸		
	year	Refugees (UNHCR mandate)	Asylum seekers
	2020	218	1119
	2021	224	733
	2022	226	155
	2023	226	103
	2024 (jan-jun)	116	62

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- ¹ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ² <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ³ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ⁴ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ⁶ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ⁷ <https://www.scholaro.com/db/Countries/sudan/Education-System> ;
- ⁸ <http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?quervid=3813>
- ⁹ <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/education>
- ¹⁰ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ¹¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Janjaweed>
- ¹² <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ¹³ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/sudan/report-sudan/>
- ¹⁴ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/10/sudan-urgent-need-for-civilian-protection-in-wake-of-escalating-violence/> ; <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8r1l0xv8gko>
- ¹⁵ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ¹⁶ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/sudan/report-sudan/>
- ¹⁷ <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/sudan>
- ¹⁸ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/sudan>
- ¹⁹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/east-africa-the-horn-and-great-lakes/sudan/report-sudan/>
- ²⁰ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/sudan-un-fact-finding-mission-documents-large-scale-sexual-violence-and>
- ²¹ <https://www.hrw.org/report/2024/05/09/massalit-will-not-come-home/ethnic-cleansing-and-crimes-against-humanity-el>
- ²² <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/sudan/>
- ²³ <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/sudan/>
- ²⁴ <https://www.fgmcri.org/country/sudan/>
- ²⁵ <https://database.ilga.org/sudan-lgbti>
- ²⁶ <https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/sudan> ; <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/sudansituation>
- ²⁷ <https://www.unhcr.org/mt/figures-at-a-glance>
- ²⁸ https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download?data_finder%5BdataGroup%5D=displacement&data_finder%5Bdataset%5D=population&data_finder%5BdisplayType%5D=totals&data_finder%5BpopulationType%5D%5B%5D=REF&data_finder%5BpopulationType%5D%5B%5D=ASY&data_finder%5BpopulationType%5D%5B%5D=IDP&data_finder%5BpopulationType%5D%5B%5D=OIP&data_finder%5BpopulationType%5D%5B%5D=STA&data_finder%5BpopulationType%5D%5B%5D=HST&data_finder%5BpopulationType%5D%5B%5D=OOC&data_finder%5Byear_filterType%5D=range&data_finder%5Byear_rangeFrom%5D=2018&data_finder%5Byear_rangeTo%5D=2024&data_finder=on&data_finder%5Bcoo_displayType%5D=custom&data_finder%5Bcoo_country%5D%5B%5D=177&data_finder%5Bcoo_country%5D%5B%5D=177&data_finder%5Bcoa_displayType%5D=custom&data_finder%5Bcoa_country%5D%5B%5D=132&data_finder%5Bcoa_country%5D%5B%5D=132&data_finder%5Byear_%5D=&data_finder%5Bcoo_%5D=&data_finder%5Bcoa_%5D=&data_finder%5Badvanced_%5D=&data_finder%5Bsubmit%5D=

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This factsheet was compiled by Adri van den Berg for BDE. Adri worked for many years as a Country of Origin Information (COI) researcher, her final post before retiring being with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in Malta.