

World Watch Research

Niger:

# Background Information

September 2024



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Open Doors International / World Watch Research

September 2024

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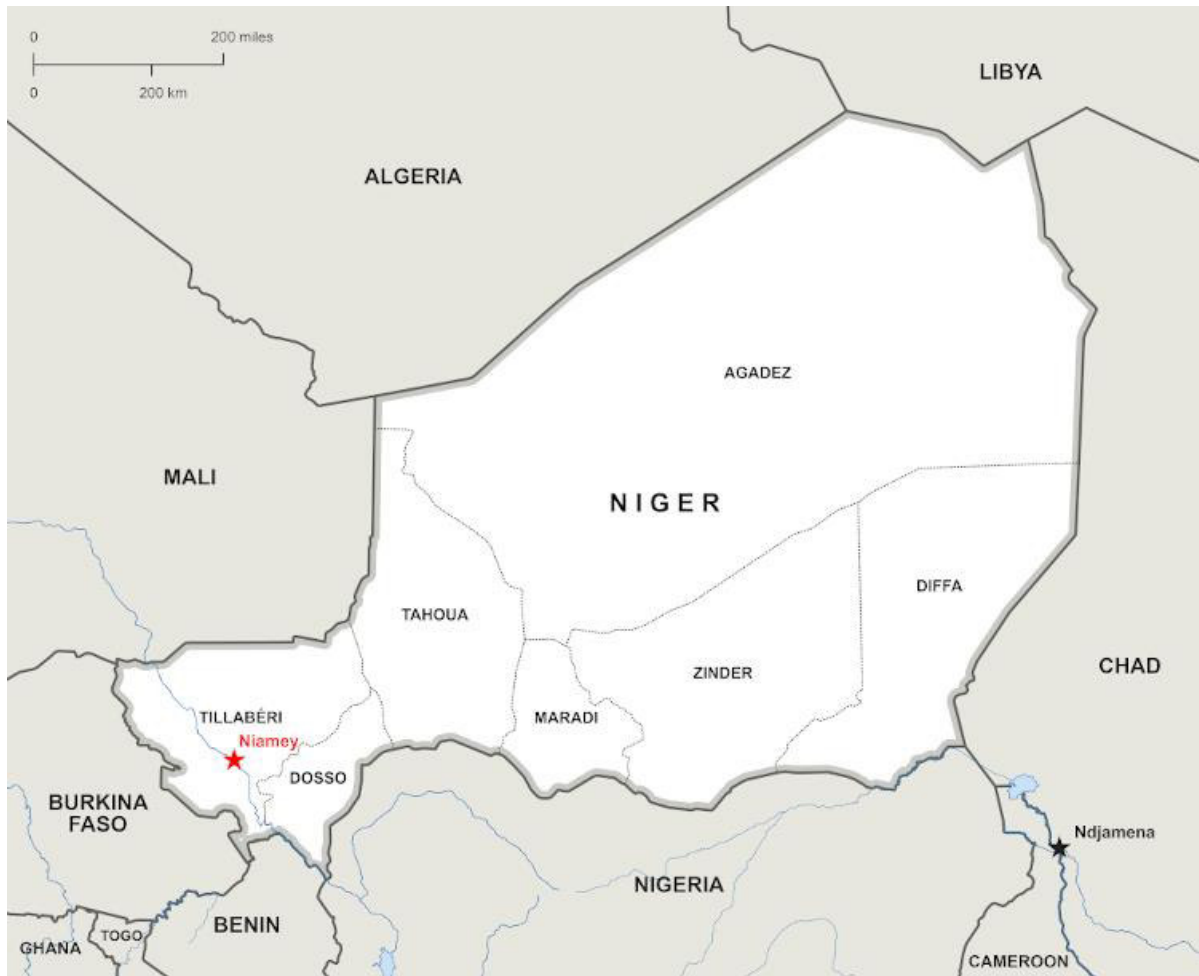
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World Watch Research has divided up the previously named Full Country Dossier into two separate documents:

- Background country information (published annually in summer)
- Persecution dynamics (published annually in January).

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## Map of country



Niger: Population (UN estimate for 2024)	Christians	Chr%
28,239,000	69,200	0.2

Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., *World Christian Database*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024

## Recent history

Niger declared independence from France in 1960. Since then, the country has seen at least four military coups. Despite the improvements since Mahamadou Issoufou came to power in 2011, there have been concerns about the 'securitization' of Niger's foreign policy and domestic politics. The country is battling against various Islamic militant groups: Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA) on its northern western border with Mali, and ISWAP and Boko Haram on its southern border with Nigeria.

Islamists are by their very ideology opposed to the secular nature of the government. Many imams give *khoutbas* (sermons) opposing Boko Haram and other militant groups, especially the Shiite imams who are in the minority. These imams do not want to see what has been happening in Nigeria taking place in Niger, and they support the US-led operations against Islamic militancy. However, in recent years there has been an increasing adherence to stricter Islamic practice in Niger's cities, especially in

places like Zinder, Maradi and Diffa, which have long been connected to the Islamic communities in northern Nigeria. There is therefore concern about the spread of more violent Islamic groups like ISWAP and Boko Haram. Because of the close proximity of the cities (just mentioned) to Boko Haram's chief area of operations in northern Nigeria, some religious leaders in Niger have taken a public stance against the group, while other religious leaders fear the potential backlash from doing so. While no radical Islamic movement within Niger has yet emerged to challenge the government, the possibility of this happening in the near future cannot be discounted, especially given the external pressure on imams and vulnerable local leaders exerted by Boko Haram and other groups like MUJWA.

There were major domestic political incidents in 2018 that pitted the government against human rights defenders and activists, largely involving the government's use of repressive measures. Arbitrarily detaining a group of human rights defenders for nearly four months after their arrest in March 2018, Nigerien authorities opened the [prosecution](#) proceedings against them in an attempt to silence dissenting voices and ban peaceful demonstrations (Business and Human Rights Resource Center, 24 July 2018). A similar case occurred again when activists were [arrested](#) while protesting in March 2020 (Amnesty International - AI, 30 September 2020).

Since 2018, there has been a rise in the levels of violence (see below: *Security situation*). Since the beginning of 2021, Niger witnessed an uptick in jihadist violence especially in the 'tri-border' region between Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, with an estimated 300 people being killed in attacks in the first three months of 2021. Attacks continued throughout 2022, although there also appears to be great [rivalry between ISWAP and Boko Haram](#) (Naija News, 12 January 2023). The government seems to have no effective way of bringing the situation under control.

[In February 2021](#), Niger's political landscape experienced a pivotal moment when the former interior minister, Mohamed Bazoum, secured a victory in the presidential election. Heralded as a crucial democratic transition for a West African nation known for its history of coups, this change ushered in a new era of governance (BBC News, 23 February 2021).

Niger's democratic institutions, compared to its neighbors Burkina Faso and Mali, have shown some level of resilience and efficiency. However, given the unstable regional context, this status quo might not be immune to rapid changes. The ongoing fight against terrorism in the country, along with potential unrest within the armed forces - reminiscent of the situations in Mali and Burkina Faso - have threatened the nation's relative stability.

Despite receiving specialized training from the US Special Forces to enhance its counter-terrorism tactics, Niger still grapples with the overwhelming impact of rampant Islamic militancy within the region. This struggle was starkly highlighted in [February 2023](#), when one of the deadliest attacks in Niger's history occurred. Gunmen with suspected affiliations to extremist groups launched a brutal ambush on a military convoy in the Tillabéri region's Banibangou community. The onslaught claimed the lives of seventeen soldiers and injured thirteen others, bringing an end to months of relative calm in the area (ISS, 5 April 2023).

Amidst these security challenges, the country marked a significant economic milestone in June 2023. [The World Bank](#) approved a financial package of approximately 230 million dollars to help the country improve its education system overall (World Bank, Press Release, 23 June 2023).

## The July 2023 coup

However, the nation's political fabric faced a significant stress test on 26 July 2023. In an apparent coup, presidential guards detained the president, sparking international outrage. The United Nations, the USA, the African Union, and the Economic Community of West African States unequivocally [condemned](#) this action (Al-Jazeera, 27 July 2023). Underscoring the importance of political stability in Niger, the [EIU Niger profile](#) (accessed 8 August 2024) states:

- "Political instability and protracted military rule will prevail beyond our 2024-25 forecast period after Niger's president, Mohamed Bazoum, was deposed by his presidential guard on July 27th 2023. As EIU expected, the stringent economic, financial, trade and political sanctions imposed on Niger by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) following the coup have failed to restore Mr Bazoum to power, notably owing to strong popular support for the military. We expect an agreement between the junta and ECOWAS to be struck in 2024 on a political transition towards civilian rule, allowing the removal of sanctions. ... Relations between Niger and France collapsed following the coup, and the last French forces left the country in December 2023. Niger, along with Mali and Burkina Faso, will further pivot towards Russia to tackle the growing militant Islamist threat."

The coup has deepened Niger's alignment with Russia, particularly through increased military cooperation, including the deployment of Russian military instructors and air defense systems in early 2024. This shift risks undermining Niger's longstanding alliances with Western countries, especially with the USA and France, which have provided significant military and economic aid to combat terrorism in the region. The instability has also fueled the rise of jihadist groups, exacerbating violence and insecurity. The insurgency, notably by groups like the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), continues to pose a severe threat, further complicating efforts to stabilize the country and protect its citizens

## Political and legal landscape

Prior to the July 2023 coup, politics in Niger took place within the framework of a semi-presidential representative democratic republic, with the President of Niger as head of state and the Prime Minister as head of government, which was established as a multi-party system. Legislative power was vested in both the government and the National Assembly.

Politics, tribe and militancy have always been intertwined in Niger's political landscape. From 2011 to 2023 there had been an improvement in civil liberties and political rights. The turning-point occurred in 2009-2010 when the president in office, Tandja, announced his intention to alter the Constitution of Niger's Fifth Republic via a referendum, which included extending his presidential term by three years. The main opposition groups opposed and boycotted the referendum. Then, in February 2010, amid pressure from the international community, the army overthrew the government in a coup. In the autumn of 2010, a new Constitution was passed through a national referendum and on 31 January 2011 Mahamadou Issoufou of the Party for Democracy and Socialism (PNDS) won the presidential election against former Prime Minister Seyni Oumarou (National Movement for a Developing Society-MNSD - Nassara). President Issoufou's new government assumed power in April 2011. Since then (up until July 2023), political and civil groups were able to assemble peacefully, the situation for journalists and the freedom of the press improved, and Niger was on the way to forming a multi-party democracy.

This political development was also of major importance to Christians in the country, especially since the region was otherwise very much influenced by Boko Haram and AQIM activity. However, the 2016 elections did not advance the consolidation of democratic rule and corruption remains endemic. Despite these setbacks, the electoral outcome was accepted by all political parties. General elections were held again in Niger on 27 December 2020 to elect the President and National Assembly. As no presidential candidate received a majority of the vote, a second round was held on 21 February 2021. [Mohamed Bazoum was declared the winner](#) in the second round with 55.67% of the vote. He was the former Interior Minister and the preferred successor and right-hand man of outgoing President Mahamadou Issoufou (Al-Jazeera, 22 March 2021). He assumed office on 2 April 2021, marking the the country's first peaceful transition of power between two democratically elected heads of state. However, protests were staged by opposition groups following the election and more than 400 people were arrested.

As mentioned above (in: *Recent history*), on 26 July 2023, Niger's political stability was put to the test when presidential guards detained the nation's president. This action prompted a broad spectrum of condemnation from the international community, with key organizations such as the United Nations, the African Union, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) speaking out against the action disrupting the country's governance. Such military interventions have become [an increasingly familiar phenomenon](#) in West Africa (WWR, September 2023), and Niger's history is no stranger to the occurrence of [coups over the decades](#) (Al-Jazeera, 27 July 2023).

### **Gender perspective**

The legal landscape in Niger remains discriminatory towards women and girls, particularly in respect to marriage ([CEDAW, 2015](#)). Niger has the highest rate of child marriage in the world, with 76% of girls married before 18 ([Girls Not Brides Niger](#), accessed 8 August 2024). Whilst the legal age for marriage is 15 for girls and 18 for boys, underage marriage can occur with parental consent. The government has introduced campaigns to end child marriage, although progress remains slow. Legislation is further insufficient in regards to protecting against domestic violence and marital rape; many victims choose not to report crimes for fear of stigma and retaliation. Making it challenging for women to escape abusive marriages, divorce and custody laws also favor men.

## Religious landscape

<b>Niger: Religious context</b>	<b>Number of adherents</b>	<b>%</b>
Christians	69,200	0.2
Muslim	27,011,000	95.7
Hindu	0	0.0
Buddhist	0	0.0
Ethnic religionist	1,126,000	4.0
Jewish	0	0.0
Bahai	10,200	0.0
Atheist	140	0.0
Agnostic	16,100	0.1
Other	6,900	0.0
<i>OTHER includes Chinese folk, New religionist, Sikh, Spiritist, Taoist, Confucianist, Jain, Shintoist, Zoroastrian.</i>		

*Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., World Christian Database, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024*

Niger is a Muslim majority nation. As can be seen from the WCD 2024 figures in the table above, an estimated 95.7% of the country's population follows Islam. Most Muslims in Niger are members of either the Tijaniya or Qadiriya Sufi orders, although radical Islamic elements seek to disassociate the population from Sufism and encourage Salafism. Additionally, there are smaller Islamic groups in Niger, including the Kalikato, who have a belief system like Boko Haram in rejecting all influences from the West. Indeed, the influence of Boko Haram seems to be spreading from northern Nigeria into Niger.

The propagation of more radical Islamic ideologies in Niger is advancing in tandem with the rise of aggressive jihadism, signifying a deeply concerning trend. Not only are these ideologies driving violent actions, but they are also being spread through non-violent means. Such methods include the use of religious institutions like madrassas and other platforms for indoctrination, thereby amplifying their reach and impact across various levels of society.

Despite the government's attempts to control what is taught in the many madrassas in the country, there is concern that these could be playing a role in the radicalization of the youth. Any such radicalization is likely to make life more difficult for Christians in the country, especially as the whole Sahel region is already under serious jihadist threat.

According to the US State Department ([IRFR 2023 Niger](#)):

- There are several hundred followers of the Baha'i Faith, primarily residing in Niamey and in communities west of the Niger River.
- A small percentage of the population adheres primarily to Indigenous religious beliefs.
- Some Muslims intermingle Animist practices with their practice of Islam. This has become less common over the past decade due to influences from countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey and Kuwait.

## Economic landscape

Niger is one of the poorest countries in Africa. As a landlocked and mostly desert country that is plagued by drought and famine, Niger consistently ranks near the bottom of the UN's Human Development Index. The country's only major exports are crude oil and unrefined uranium. With the exception of an oil refinery in Zinder that opened in November 2011, Niger is otherwise an entirely resource-dependent country. Power lines for electricity and the Internet come from Niger's southern neighbors, Nigeria (electricity), and Benin (Internet cable), along with the majority of oil, agricultural produce, and other commercial products. The agricultural sector contributes about 40% of GDP and provides the livelihood for approximately 80% of the population. There are plans in the international development community to move Niger towards solar power and other innovative energy sources that rely on indigenous solutions.

60% of Niger's economy comes from international aid and for the foreseeable future, this is likely to continue, especially because the international community fears that if Niger's economy fails, it will allow Islamic militants to exploit the situation and become more powerful. The influx of refugees from Mali and Nigeria - as well as a growing number of IDPs - are another challenge to the nation.

According to Africa Development Bank Outlook Niger (accessed 8 August 2024):

- **Economic growth:** "Economic activity slowed to 2.5% in 2023, as the political regime changed in July, economic and financial sanctions were imposed by the economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), and external funding was frozen by the country's main technical and financial partners. The limited economic growth was due mainly to higher oil production and agriculture on the supply side and to increased final consumption on the demand side. ... Economic growth is projected to reach 10.4% in 2024 then to slow to 7.4% in 2025."
- **Inflation:** "Inflation fell from 4.2% in 2022 to 3.7% in 2023, due to a good agricultural season."
- **Current account deficit:** "The current account deficit narrowed from 16.1% of GDP in 2022 to 12.8% in 2023, due mainly to a large sanction-linked drop in imports from 27.2% of GDP in 2022 to 23.5%."

According to the [World Bank Niger overview](#) (last updated 19 March 2024):



- **Economic and social challenges:** Niger's economy is heavily reliant on agriculture, contributing 40% to GDP. The extreme poverty rate is expected to hit 52.0% in 2023, increasing the extremely poor population to 14.1 million. In 2023, 4.3 million people required humanitarian assistance, a rise from 3.7 million in 2022, with 690,000 refugees and IDPs hosted primarily in Tillaberi, Tahoua, and Diffa regions.
- **Political instability:** ECOWAS imposed severe sanctions when elected President Mohamed Bazoum was ousted in a coup on 26 July 2023. These sanctions included border closures and financial restrictions, worsening living conditions and causing electricity shortages. Sanctions were lifted on 24 February 2024, following Niger's withdrawal from ECOWAS.
- **Economic outlook:** GDP growth is projected to rebound to 6.9% in 2024, assuming stability in oil production and international financing. Inflation is expected to moderate to 3.5% in 2024. The extreme poverty rate is anticipated to decrease to 50%.

According to Heritage Foundation's [2024 Index of Economic Freedom](#):

- Niger's economic freedom score for 2024 stands at 52.3, ranking it 128th out of 184 countries, and categorizing its economy as "mostly unfree." This score reflects a decline of 1.4 points from the previous year, highlighting ongoing institutional weaknesses that hinder macroeconomic stability and poverty reduction.
- The rule of law in Niger remains fragile, with pervasive corruption and a judicial system subject to political influence.
- Regulatory inefficiencies further constrain private-sector development, with substantial costs imposed on business operations and a poorly developed labor market.
- Despite a robust GDP growth of 11.9% in 2022 and a five-year average growth rate of 6.0%, the country faces significant challenges, including high inflation at 4.2%, a public debt level of 50.3% of GDP, and low financial inclusion.

These issues underscore the need for comprehensive reforms to achieve sustainable economic growth and improve the overall economic freedom in Niger.

### Gender perspective

Women and girls are among the most economically disadvantaged, in part due to reduced access to education and employment ([UNDP Human Development Report Niger](#), data updates as of 13 March 2024). Niger is one of just three countries worldwide where married women require permission from their husband to open a bank account (Georgetown [Women Peace and Security Index 2019/20](#), p.34). Making it additionally challenging for women to gain economic independence, women cannot inherit land under customary law, and under Islamic law women inherit less than men.

### Social and cultural landscape

According to [UNDP Human Development Report Niger](#) (data updates as of 13 March 2024) and [World Factbook Niger](#) (accessed 8 August 2024):

- **Main ethnic groups:** Hausa 53.1%, Zarma/Songhai 21.2 %, Tuareg 11%, Fulani (Peuhl) 6.5%, Kanuri 5.9%, Gurma 0.8%, Arab 0.4%, Tubu 0.4%, Other/unavailable 0.9% (2006 est.)
- **Main languages:** French (official), Hausa, Djerma

- **Median age:** 15.2 years
- **Urban population:** 16.5%
- **Expected years of schooling:** 6.5 years
- **Literacy rate, adult (15 years and older):** 30.6%
- **Employment to population ratio (15 years and older):** 71.7%
- **Unemployment, total (% of labor force):** 0.5%
- **Unemployment, youth (15-24 years of age):** 0.6%

According to [UNHCR](#) (accessed 8 August 2024):

- **Refugees/IDPs:** "Niger is the main country of asylum in West Africa, hosting an estimated 700,000 forcibly displaced people populations in search of international protection. They comprise 64% internally displaced persons (IDPs), 36% refugees, 7% asylum seekers and 5% returnees. Most refugees come from Nigeria (67%) and Mali (22%), but there are also some from Burkina Faso (9%), Sudan and Chad (2%)."

According to [UNDP Human Development Report Niger](#) (data updates as of 13 March 2024):

- **Human Development Index:** Niger is ranked 189th out of 191 countries with a value of 0.4, only above South Sudan and Chad from Africa.
- **Life expectancy at birth:** 63.62 years
- **Gender Development Index (GDI):** 0.724
- **Gender Inequality Index (GII):** 0.642 (this indicates a high level of gender inequality. The GII is a composite measure reflecting inequality in achievement between women and men in three dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment and the labor market).

Although the country's official language is French, each tribe and ethnic group has its own language and culture. Eight of the nine presidents since independence in 1960 have been of Hausa or Zarma descent. These two tribes dominate the country and therefore it should not be surprising that Tuaregs have engaged in two major rebellions since the 1990s and early 2000s and that the Songhai tribes were the main targets for recruiting by the radical Islamic group MUJWA. MUJWA, for example, used Songhai traditional symbolism in its recruiting videos. Niger's most fertile areas are also in the Zarma region south of Niamey, and therefore the Zarmas are the wealthiest tribe in the country. The Hausas are descended from the Hausa states that formerly occupied the region in the jihads of the 19th century, so they have a tradition of being in power. The Tuaregs of northern Niger live in the most arid region of the country and are the poorest of the major tribes.

### Gender perspective

While education is not guaranteed in any part of the country, the levels are particularly low in the Tuareg region, especially for women. These low education levels reflect social norms and gender stereotypes that restrict women to the roles of wives and mothers ([CEDAW, 2015](#)). The COVID-19 crisis exacerbated gender-based vulnerabilities, hampering campaigns against child marriage ([UNICEF, 30 April 2021](#)) and providing the context for domestic violence levels to soar ([USDG, 27 May 2021](#)). Child marriage remains a widespread issue, with parents viewing it as a protective mechanism for daughters against potential predators in a context of poverty, conflict and widespread sexual violence against girls ([Girls Not Brides Niger](#), accessed 8 August 2024).

## Technological landscape

Niger is one of the poorest nations in the world. Its technological infrastructure is poor. Road, schools, and hospitals lack facilities. Christians are concentrated in the main cities and as a result, they are better served with technology compared to those living in rural areas.

The technology landscape in Niger is characterized by a complex interplay of progress and challenges. The country is gradually increasing its digital adoption, driven primarily by mobile technology due to the limited reach of fixed-line infrastructure. Mobile phones have become crucial in connecting people, providing access to information, financial services, and educational resources. Despite these advances, Niger faces significant hurdles such as low Internet penetration, limited access to social media, and widespread digital illiteracy. These challenges are compounded by economic constraints and insufficient infrastructure, which hinder widespread and equitable access to technology.

According to [DataReportal Digital 2024: Niger](#) (23 February 2024) / survey date - January 2024:

- **Internet usage:** 16.9% penetration
- **Social media usage:** 2.2% of the total population. Recent statistics on social media usage indicate that the gender gap is wide: 79.7% of Facebook users were men and only 20.3% women, according to [Napoleon Cat, July 2024](#).
- **Active cellular mobile connections:** 59.4% of the total population

According to [BuddeComm Research](#) (publication date: July 2024):

- Niger, one of West Africa's largest and poorest countries, has been gradually expanding connectivity to underserved areas primarily through mobile services due to limited fixed telecom infrastructure. The recent completion of the Trans-Saharan Dorsal optical fiber network has significantly extended the country's fiber infrastructure and international capacity, linking Niger with Chad and Burkina Faso. The state-owned operator Sonitel, merged with SahelCom to form Niger Telecom, has aimed for greater efficiency through resource sharing. Despite economic challenges and regulatory issues, the telecom sector has seen positive developments such as Orange Niger's rebranding to Zamani Telecom and significant investments from Airtel in fiber deployment. Key initiatives include a \$100 million World Bank project to advance digital progress and the adoption of free mobile roaming with other G5 Sahel countries, highlighting the ongoing efforts to improve connectivity and digital infrastructure in Niger.

## Security situation

Security conditions have deteriorated in recent years, particularly in the areas bordering Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Mali, where armed groups have established bases and carry out repeated attacks against the security forces and civilians. In 2017, the government declared a [state of emergency](#) in the Diffa, Tahoua, and Tillabéri regions (UNHCR Factsheet, June-July 2021).

The attacks by Boko Haram, ISWAP and other radical Islamic groups continue to cause fear among the Christian community. There is a likelihood that the violence of militant Islamic groups from northern Nigeria (as well as from Mali) could in the long run seriously affect society throughout Niger. A major challenge remains the fight against Islamic militancy in the Diffa region. Military confrontation between government troops and Boko Haram has caused a large number of IDPs and a humanitarian disaster.

Many Christians who have escaped the conflict are living in IDP camps in Bosso, Yebbi, Maiduguri and Yola. There is also ongoing community violence. Since 2018, there has been an overall rise in the level of violence.

According to the [European Commission's Niger profile](#) (accessed 8 August 2024):

- Niger faces significant humanitarian challenges due to conflicts, displacement, food insecurity, child malnutrition, and climatic hazards. Violence in regions bordering Nigeria, Chad, Burkina Faso, and Mali has led to widespread displacement, with over 4.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. The country's high poverty rate, rapid population growth, and inadequate access to basic services exacerbate its vulnerability. The July 2023 military coup worsened the situation, prompting ECOWAS to impose sanctions that disrupted essential supplies and heightened the humanitarian crisis, despite these sanctions being lifted in February 2024.
- Humanitarian aid delivery remains a challenge amidst ongoing violence and insecurity, forcing over 335,000 people to flee their homes and hosting around 270,000 refugees from neighboring countries. The acute malnutrition rate among children under five is alarmingly high, and nearly 48% of children live below the poverty line, with 75% deprived of essential social services. The EU has provided substantial humanitarian funding to address these crises, focusing on food, shelter, health, nutrition, water access, and education, while also advocating for a safe operational environment for aid workers.

### Gender perspective

The lack of security in the country has affected the Christian community significantly. Since Islamic militants target Christians as well as the state authorities, Christians have to be careful to keep a low profile. Male and female Christians face different risks against this backdrop of instability and violence. Women and girls are vulnerable to abduction and sexual violence from radical Islamic groups, whereas boys are more prone to being recruited into the ranks of militant groups.

### Christian origins

Although there were [missionary expeditions](#) along the Niger River in the 19th century, Christianity did not become established in the country until the 20th century. The Sudan Interior Mission started working in Niger in 1923 and the Evangelical Baptist Mission in 1929. The Roman Catholic Church came to Niger in 1931 from its main mission base in Dahomey (now Benin) and has since set up two dioceses.

(Source: *Dike K O: Origins of the Niger Mission 1841-1891, Anglican History, 1962*)

## Church spectrum today

Niger: Church networks	Christians	%
Orthodox	0	0.0
Catholic	21,200	30.6
Protestant	24,400	35.3
Independent	23,200	33.5
Unaffiliated	320	0.5
Doubly-affiliated Christians	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,120</b>	<b>99.9</b>
<i>(Any deviation from the total number of Christians stated above is due to the rounding of decimals)</i>		
Evangelical movement	21,900	31.6
Pentecostal-Charismatic	24,100	34.8

Zurlo G A and Johnson T M, eds., *World Christian Database*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, accessed May 2024

**Orthodox:** Eastern (Chalcedonian), Oriental (Pre-Chalcedonian, Non-Chalcedonian, Monophysite), Nestorian (Assyrian), and non-historical Orthodox. **Roman Catholics:** All Christians in communion with the Church of Rome. **Protestants:** Christians in churches originating in or in communion with the Western world’s 16th-century Protestant Reformation. Includes Anglicans, Lutherans and Baptists (any of whom may be Charismatic) and denominational Pentecostals, but not Independent traditions such as Independent Baptists nor independent Charismatics. **Independents:** Christians who do not identify with the major Christian traditions (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant). **Unaffiliated Christians:** Persons professing publicly to be Christians but who are not affiliated to churches. **Doubly-affiliated Christians:** Persons affiliated to or claimed by 2 denominations at once. **Evangelical movement:** Churches, denominations, and individuals who identify themselves as evangelicals by membership in denominations linked to evangelical alliances (e.g., World Evangelical Alliance) or by self-identification in polls. **Pentecostal-Charismatic:** Church members involved in renewal in the Holy Spirit, sometimes known collectively as "Renewalists".

Many of the older Protestant and Catholic churches were established by American mission groups. They can be found in all seven departments of Niger: Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Tahoua, Tillaberi, Zinder and Niamey (the capital). Several independent, non-denominational churches originating from Nigeria exist - especially in the capital Niamey and in the departments of Maradi and Zinder. Outside of the bigger cities and in areas closer to the southern border of the country, Christians with a Muslim background are treated as outcasts by the local communities and at times face violent attacks.

## Further useful reports

A selection of in-depth reports and smaller articles are available on the Research & Reports pages of the Open Doors website:

- <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/>.

These are also available on the Open Doors Analytical website (password: freedom):

- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/?s=Niger>
- <https://opendoorsanalytical.org/reports/>.
- [Africa - Recent upsurge in military coups - September 2023](#)

## External Links

- Recent history: prosecution - <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/niger-release-of-activists-must-signal-end-to-repression-of-dissenting-voices/>
- Recent history: arrested - <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2020/09/niger-charges-must-be-dropped-following-release-of-three-activists/>
- Recent history: rivalry between ISWAP and Boko Haram - <https://www.naijanews.com/2023/01/12/10-iswap-fighters-surrender-after-boko-haram-attacks-in-niger-republic/>
- Recent history: In February 2021 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-56175439>
- Recent history: February 2023, - <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/is-nigers-counter-terrorism-approach-an-exception-in-the-sahel>
- Recent history: The World Bank - <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2023/06/23/the-world-bank-approves-funding-to-help-niger-improve-its-education-system>
- Recent history: condemned - <https://www.france24.com/en/africa/20230726-african-union-ecowas-condemn-attempted-coup-in-niger>
- Recent history: EIU Niger profile - <https://country.eiu.com/niger>
- Political and legal landscape: Mohamed Bazoum was declared the winner - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/22/nigers-top-court-confirms-mohamed-bazoums-election-win>
- Political and legal landscape: an increasingly familiar phenomenon - <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/research-reports/reports/africa-recent-uptake-in-military-coups>
- Political and legal landscape: coups over the decades - <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/7/27/timeline-a-history-of-coups-in-niger>
- Political and legal landscape: CEDAW, 2015 - [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CEDAW%2fC%2fNER%2f3-4&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CEDAW%2fC%2fNER%2f3-4&Lang=en)
- Political and legal landscape: Girls Not Brides Niger - <https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/niger/>
- Religious landscape description: IRFR 2023 Niger - <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/niger/>
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