

Introduction Niger

Background:  

Niger became independent from France in 1960 and experienced single-party and military rule until 1991, when Gen. Ali SAIBOU was forced by public pressure to allow multiparty elections, which resulted in a democratic government in 1993. Political infighting brought the government to a standstill and in 1996 led to a coup by Col. Ibrahim BARE. In 1999 BARE was killed in a coup by military officers who promptly restored democratic rule and held elections that brought Mamadou TANDJA to power in December of that year. TANDJA was reelected in 2004. Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world with minimal government services and insufficient funds to develop its resource base. The largely agrarian and subsistence-based economy is frequently disrupted by extended droughts common to the Sahel region of Africa. A predominately Tuareg ethnic group emerged in February 2007, the Nigerien Movement for Justice (MNJ), and attacked several military targets in Niger's northern region throughout 2007. Events have since evolved into a budding insurrection.

Geography Niger

Location:  

Western Africa, southeast of Algeria

Geographic coordinates:  

16 00 N, 8 00 E

Map references:  

[Africa](#)

Area:   

total: 1.267 million sq km

land: 1,266,700 sq km

water: 300 sq km

Area - comparative:  

slightly less than twice the size of Texas

Land boundaries:  

total: 5,697 km

border countries: Algeria 956 km, Benin 266 km, Burkina Faso 628 km, Chad 1,175 km, Libya 354 km, Mali 821 km, Nigeria 1,497 km

Coastline:  

0 km (landlocked)

Maritime claims:  

none (landlocked)

Climate:  
desert; mostly hot, dry, dusty; tropical in extreme south

Terrain:  
predominately desert plains and sand dunes; flat to rolling plains in south; hills in north

Elevation extremes:  
lowest point: Niger River 200 m
highest point: Mont Bagzane 2,022 m

Natural resources:  
uranium, coal, iron ore, tin, phosphates, gold, molybdenum, gypsum, salt, petroleum

Land use:  
arable land: 11.43%
permanent crops: 0.01%
other: 88.56% (2005)

Irrigated land:  
730 sq km (2003)

Total renewable water resources:  
33.7 cu km (2003)

Freshwater withdrawal (domestic/industrial/agricultural):  
total: 2.18 cu km/yr (4%/0%/95%)
per capita: 156 cu m/yr (2000)

Natural hazards:  
recurring droughts

Environment - current issues:  
overgrazing; soil erosion; deforestation; desertification; wildlife populations (such as elephant, hippopotamus, giraffe, and lion) threatened because of poaching and habitat destruction

Environment - international agreements:  
party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Ozone Layer Protection, Wetlands
signed, but not ratified: Law of the Sea

Geography - note:  
landlocked; one of the hottest countries in the world; northern

four-fifths is desert, southern one-fifth is savanna, suitable for livestock and limited agriculture

People Niger

Population:   
13,272,679 (July 2008 est.)

Age structure:  
0-14 years: 47% (male 3,174,834/female 3,057,003)
15-64 years: 50.6% (male 3,450,393/female 3,267,496)
65 years and over: 2.4% (male 159,945/female 163,008) (2008 est.)

Median age:  
total: 16.4 years
male: 16.5 years
female: 16.4 years (2008 est.)

Population growth  
rate: 2.878% (2008 est.)

Birth rate:   
49.62 births/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Death rate:   
20.26 deaths/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Net migration rate:  
-0.57 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Sex ratio:  
at birth: 1.03 male(s)/female
under 15 years: 1.04 male(s)/female
15-64 years: 1.06 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.98 male(s)/female
total population: 1.05 male(s)/female (2008 est.)

Infant mortality   
rate: *total*: 115.42 deaths/1,000 live births
male: 119.3 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 111.42 deaths/1,000 live births (2008 est.)

Life expectancy at   
birth: *total population*: 44.28 years
male: 44.3 years
female: 44.26 years (2008 est.)

Total fertility rate:   
7.29 children born/woman (2008 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult
prevalence rate:   
1.2% (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS -   
people living with 70,000 (2003 est.)
HIV/AIDS:

HIV/AIDS -   
deaths: 4,800 (2003 est.)

Major infectious  
diseases: *degree of risk:* very high
food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever
vectorborne disease: malaria
respiratory disease: meningococcal meningitis
note: highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has been identified in this country; it poses a negligible risk with extremely rare cases possible among US citizens who have close contact with birds (2008)

Nationality:  
noun: Nigerien(s)
adjective: Nigerien

Ethnic groups:  
Haoussa 55.4%, Djerma Sonrai 21%, Touareg 9.3%, Peuhl 8.5%, Kanouri Manga 4.7%, other 1.2% (2001 census)

Religions:  
Muslim 80%, other (includes indigenous beliefs and Christian) 20%

Languages:  
French (official), Hausa, Djerma

Literacy:  
definition: age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 28.7%
male: 42.9%
female: 15.1% (2005 est.)

Government Niger

Country name:  

conventional long form: Republic of Niger

conventional short form: Niger

local long form: République du Niger

local short form: Niger

Government type:  

republic

Capital:  

name: Niamey

geographic coordinates: 13 31 N, 2 07 E

time difference: UTC+1 (6 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative  

divisions: 8 regions (regions, singular - region) includes 1 capital district* (commune urbaine); Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey*, Tahoua, Tillabéri, Zinder

Independence:  

3 August 1960 (from France)

National holiday:  

Republic Day, 18 December (1958)

Constitution:  

new constitution adopted 18 July 1999

Legal system:  

based on French civil law system and customary law; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Suffrage:  

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:  

chief of state: President Mamadou TANDJA (since 22 December 1999)

head of government: Prime Minister Seyni OUMAROU (since 3 June 2007); appointed by the president and shares some executive responsibilities with the president

cabinet: 26-member Cabinet appointed by the president

elections: president elected by popular vote for a five-year term (eligible for a second term); second round of election last held 4 December 2004 (next to be held December 2009)

election results: Mamadou TANDJA reelected president; percent of vote - Mamadou TANDJA 65.5%, Mahamadou ISSOUFOU 34.5%

Legislative branch:  

unicameral National Assembly (113 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms)

elections: last held 4 December 2004 (next to be held in December 2009)

election results: percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - MNSD 47, PNDS 25, CDS 22, RSD 7, RDP 6, ANDP 5, PSDN 1

Judicial branch:  

State Court or Cour d'Etat; Court of Appeals or Cour d'Appel

Political parties  

and leaders: Democratic and Social Convention-Rahama or CDS-Rahama [Mahamane OUSMANE]; National Movement for a Developing Society-Nassara or MNSD-Nassara [Hama AMADOU]; Niger Social Democratic Party or PSDN; Nigerien Alliance for Democracy and Social Progress-Zaman Lahiya or ANDP-Zaman Lahiya [Moumouni DJERMAKOYE]; Nigerien Party for Autonomy or PNA-Alouma'a [Sanousi JACKOU]; Nigerien Party for Democracy and Socialism or PNDS-Tarrayya [Issifou MAHAMADOU]; Nigerien Progressive Party or PPN-RDA [Abdoulaye DIORI]; Rally for Democracy and Progress or RDP-jama'a [Hamid ALGABID]; Social and Democratic Rally or RSD-Gaskiyya [Cheiffou AMADOU]

Political pressure  

groups and leaders: The Nigerien Movement for Justice or MNJ, a predominantly Tuareg rebel group demanding concessions including a greater share of the country's uranium revenues from the government

International  

organization participation: ACCT, ACP, AfDB, AU, ECOWAS, Entente, FAO, FZ, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICCT, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, ILO, IMF, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ITSO, ITU, ITUC, NAM, OIC, OIF, OPCW, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNMIL, UNOCI, UNWTO, UPU, WADB (regional), WAEMU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Flag description:  

three equal horizontal bands of orange (top), white, and green with a small orange disk (representing the sun) centered in the white band; similar to the flag of India, which has a blue spoked wheel centered in the white band

Economy

Niger

Economy -  

overview: Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking near last on the United Nations Development Fund index of human development. It is a landlocked, Sub-Saharan nation, whose economy centers on subsistence crops, livestock, and some of the world's largest uranium deposits. Drought cycles, desertification, and a 2.9% population growth rate, have undercut the

economy. Niger shares a common currency, the CFA franc, and a common central bank, the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), with seven other members of the West African Monetary Union. In December 2000, Niger qualified for enhanced debt relief under the International Monetary Fund program for Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and concluded an agreement with the Fund on a Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF). Debt relief provided under the enhanced HIPC initiative significantly reduces Niger's annual debt service obligations, freeing funds for expenditures on basic health care, primary education, HIV/AIDS prevention, rural infrastructure, and other programs geared at poverty reduction. In December 2005, Niger received 100% multilateral debt relief from the IMF, which translates into the forgiveness of approximately US \$86 million in debts to the IMF, excluding the remaining assistance under HIPC. Nearly half of the government's budget is derived from foreign donor resources. Future growth may be sustained by exploitation of oil, gold, coal, and other mineral resources. Uranium prices have increased sharply in the last few years. A drought and locust infestation in 2005 led to food shortages for as many as 2.5 million Nigeriens.

GDP (purchasing   
power parity): \$8.998 billion (2007 est.)

GDP (official  
exchange rate): \$4.219 billion (2007 est.)

GDP - real growth   
rate: 4.5% (2007 est.)

GDP - per capita   
(PPP): \$700 (2007 est.)

GDP - composition  
by sector: *agriculture*: 39%
industry: 17%
services: 44% (2001)

Labor force:   
70,000 salaried workers, 60% of whom are employed in the public sector
(1995)

Labor force - by  
occupation: *agriculture*: 90%
industry: 6%
services: 4% (1995)

Unemployment   
rate: NA%

Population below  
poverty line: 63% (1993 est.)

Household income  
or consumption by *lowest 10%*: 0.8%
percentage share: *highest 10%*: 35.4% (1995)

Distribution of  
family income - 50.5 (1995)
Gini index:

Inflation rate   
(consumer prices): 0.2% (2004 est.)

Budget:  
revenues: \$320 million (includes \$134 million from foreign sources)
expenditures: \$320 million (2002 est.)

Agriculture -  
products: cowpeas, cotton, peanuts, millet, sorghum, cassava (tapioca), rice; cattle,
sheep, goats, camels, donkeys, horses, poultry

Industries:  
uranium mining, cement, brick, soap, textiles, food processing, chemicals,
slaughterhouses

Industrial   
production growth 5.1% (2003 est.)
rate:

Electricity -   
production: 234.1 million kWh (2005)

Electricity -   
consumption: 437.7 million kWh (2005)

Electricity -  
exports: 0 kWh (2005)

Electricity -  
imports: 220 million kWh (2005)

Oil - production:   
0 bbl/day (2005 est.)

Oil - consumption:   
5,450 bbl/day (2005 est.)

Oil - exports:   
0 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - imports:   
5,412 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - proved reserves:   
NA bbl

Natural gas - production:   
0 cu m (2005 est.)

Natural gas - consumption:   
0 cu m (2005 est.)

Natural gas - exports:   
0 cu m (2005 est.)

Natural gas - imports:   
0 cu m (2005)

Natural gas - proved reserves:   
0 cu m (1 January 2006 est.)

Exports:   
\$428 million f.o.b. (2006)

Exports - commodities:  
uranium ore, livestock, cowpeas, onions

Exports - partners:  
France 34.8%, US 26.6%, Nigeria 18.3%, Russia 11.3% (2006)

Imports:   
\$800 million f.o.b. (2006)

Imports - commodities:  
foodstuffs, machinery, vehicles and parts, petroleum, cereals

Imports - partners:  
US 14.1%, France 12.1%, China 7.8%, Nigeria 7.7%, French Polynesia 7.7%,
Cote d'Ivoire 4.9% (2006)

Economic aid -  
recipient: \$515.4 million (2005)

Debt - external:   
\$2.1 billion (2003 est.)

Market value of   
publicly traded \$NA
shares:

Currency (code):  
Communaute Financiere Africaine franc (XOF); note - responsible authority is the Central Bank of the West African States

Exchange rates:  
Communaute Financiere Africaine francs (XOF) per US dollar - 493.51 (2007), 522.59 (2006), 527.47 (2005), 528.29 (2004), 581.2 (2003)
note: since 1 January 1999, the XOF franc has been pegged to the euro at a rate of 655.957 XOF francs per euro

Fiscal year:  
calendar year

Communications Niger

Telephones - main   
lines in use: 24,000 (2005)

Telephones -   
mobile cellular: 323,900 (2005)

Telephone system:  
general assessment: inadequate; small system of wire, radio telephone communications, and microwave radio relay links concentrated in the southwestern area of Niger
domestic: combined fixed-line and mobile-cellular teledensity is less than 3 per 100 persons; domestic satellite system with 3 earth stations and 1 planned
international: country code - 227; satellite earth stations - 2 Intelsat (1 Atlantic Ocean and 1 Indian Ocean)

Radio broadcast  
stations: AM 5, FM 6, shortwave 4 (2001)

Television  
broadcast stations: 5 (2007)

Internet country  
code: .ne

Internet hosts:   
200 (2007)

Internet users:   
40,000 (2006)

Transportation Niger

Airports:   
28 (2007)

Airports - with  
paved runways: *total: 9*
2,438 to 3,047 m: 3
1,524 to 2,437 m: 5
under 914 m: 1 (2007)

Airports - with  
unpaved runways: *total: 19*
1,524 to 2,437 m: 2
914 to 1,523 m: 14
under 914 m: 3 (2007)

Roadways:   
total: 14,565 km
paved: 3,641 km
unpaved: 10,924 km (2004)

Waterways:   
300 km (the Niger, the only major river, is navigable to Gaya between September and March) (2005)

Military Niger

Military branches:  
Nigerien Armed Forces (Forces Armees Nigeriennes, FAN): Army, Niger Air Force (2008)

Military service  
age and obligation: 18 years of age for compulsory military service; 2-year conscript service obligation (2006)

Manpower  
available for *males age 18-49*: 2,367,828
military service: *females age 18-49*: 2,217,568 (2005 est.)

Manpower fit for  
military service: *males age 18-49*: 1,349,863
females age 18-49: 1,256,569 (2005 est.)

Manpower  
reaching military *males age 18-49*: 129,045
service age *females age 18-49*: 121,230 (2005 est.)
annually:

Military   
expenditures - 1.3% (2006)
percent of GDP:

Transnational Issues

Niger

Disputes -  
international: Libya claims about 25,000 sq km in a currently dormant dispute in the Tommo region; much of Benin-Niger boundary, including tripoint with Nigeria, remains undemarcated; only Nigeria and Cameroon have heeded the Lake Chad Commission's admonition to ratify the delimitation treaty which also includes the Chad-Niger and Niger-Nigeria boundaries