

3.6. Education

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Literacy rates vary according to the source, the age range, and the year. The 2020 Human Capital Index, updated in October 2024, indicated that the literacy rate among young Nigerians aged 15 to 24 is 75 %.1134 The World Bank's most recent statistics on adult literacy indicated that, in 2021, 53.3 % of females was literate in comparison to 73.7 % of males, and that in the lower-middle income class, the rates were 71.4 % for females and 83.7 % for males.1135 Other sources indicated that illiteracy rate stands at around 40 %.1136 Latest UNICEF available data from 2021 indicated that around 73 % of children between the ages of 15 and 24 are literate, although rates also vary according to gender, geographical area, wealth, and ethnicity:

- gender: Male (79 %), female (71 %);
- area: Urban (92 %), rural (59 %);
- wealth: Wealthiest (97 %), poorest (32 %);
- ethnicity: Igbo (97 %), Edo (95 %), Ibibio (94 %), Yoruba (92 %), and Ijaw (90 %).1137

Nigeria's NBS household survey provided the following regarding literacy rates for 2024:

- national rate: 60.9 %, females (56 %), males (65.8 %);
- urban, total (78.5 %), females (76.2 %), males (81 %);
- rural, total (54 %), females (48 %), males (60 %).1138

Primary education is free and compulsory.1139 Nigeria's annual per capita spending in education increased from 4 739 Naira [2.66 Euros] in 2023 to 6 447 Naira [3.62 Euros] in 2024, or 0.6 % of the GDP.1140 Despite an increased spending in education, Nigeria's expenditure overall is far below the global benchmark of 4-6 % of GDP.1141 According to PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), the 'current spending levels remain grossly inadequate to address the challenges of access and quality in education'.1142

The number of out-of-school children varies according to the source. The UNICEF website indicated that 10.5 million children aged 5-14 were not in school, 61 % of children aged 6-11 attended primary school regularly, and 35.6 % of children aged 36-59 months received early childhood education.1143 UNICEF noted that in the north the situation is ‘bleaker’, with a net attendance rate of 53%.1144 PwC indicated that over 18 million children were out-of-school in 2024, which was considered the ‘highest number globally’.1145 The survey by the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum and NOIPolls Limited indicated that, according to those surveyed by August 2024 and who had children aged 15 years old or younger, 88 % indicated that all their children were able to attend school, 10 % that ‘some’ of their children were able to attend school, and 1 % that they were not able to send their children to school. 1146

The UNICEF website indicated that gender, geography, and poverty contributed to educational marginalisation, particularly affecting girls in the North-East and North-West, where female primary net attendance rates were around 47 %.1147 In north-eastern and north-western states, 29 % and 35 % of Muslim children, respectively, received Qur’anic education, ‘which does not include basic skills such as literacy and numeracy’; the government considered children attending such schools ‘to be officially out-of-school’.1148 In north-eastern Nigeria, at least 802 schools were closed, 497 classrooms destroyed, and another 1 392 damaged but repairable. 1149

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