

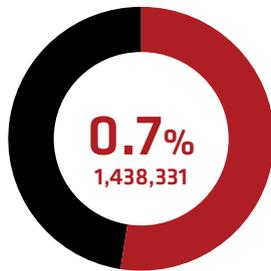


Diaspora engagement mapping NIGERIA

Facts & figures

Emigration

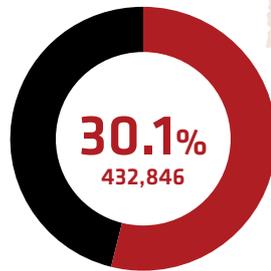
% of emigrants in total population



♂ 52.7%
♀ 47.3%



% of which in the EU



♂ 53.9%
♀ 46.1%



Remittances as a share of GDP: **5.7%**
Remittances inflow (USD million): **25,368**



Top countries of destination

United States	309,699
United Kingdom	205,698
Cameroon	148,076
Niger	130,982
Benin	86,226



Political rights



Dual citizenship¹



Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad²



Terminology: Although definition of the term “diaspora” varies among stakeholders,³ the draft National Diaspora Policy defines the Nigerian diaspora as: i) people of Nigerian descent born in Nigeria or elsewhere, and ii) members of the Historic African Diaspora who choose to identify with Nigeria and to support the achievement of its national goals.⁴ Like Ghana, Nigeria has recognised “the potential agency of members of the Historic African Diaspora that may elect to identify with Nigeria.” However, unlike Ghana, it seems that Nigeria has not yet taken substantive steps towards engaging this specific group.⁵

1 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: Chapter III on Citizenship. 1999. Nigeria. <https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ng/ng014en.pdf>.

2 There are no legal provisions allowing for the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to implement external voting: Ukekwe, Okechukwu G. 2018. *Nigerian Electoral Law and Diaspora Voting Rights, 1999-2017*. South East Journal of Political Science Vol 4. No1. <https://www.journals.aphriapub.com/index.php/SEJPS/article/view/821>

3 For instance, in the past, there has not appeared to be consensus on the inclusion of different generations of migrants and those that give up Nigerian citizenship. Marchand, Katrin, Langley, Sarah & Siegel, Melissa. 2015. *Diaspora Engagement in Development: An Analysis of the Engagement of the Nigerian Diaspora in Germany and the Potentials for Cooperation*. Maastricht University. <https://migration.unu.edu/publications/reports/diaspora-engagement-in-development-an-analysis-of-the-engagement-of-the-nigerian-diaspora-in-germany-and-the-potentials-for-cooperation.html>

4 Federal Republic of Nigeria. 2016. *Draft National Policy on Diaspora Matters*. <https://www.diaspora.gov.ng/final-draft-national-policy-on-diaspora-matters.pdf>.

5 Ibid.

Draft National Diaspora Policy 2019



The draft National Diaspora Policy⁶ recognises the diaspora as a fundamental actor in the national development process. It also outlines the country's diaspora engagement challenges, including the lack of diaspora voting rights, high remittance transfer costs, and lack of a reintegration framework for returnees; the institutional framework for diaspora engagement; and general policy objectives as well as specific engagement strategies. The specific engagement strategies cover a range of diaspora engagement themes, including trade and investment, remittances, tourism and culture, consular and immigration services, health and education, and infrastructure, among others.

Overview of the policy and legislative framework



2014 ● The **National Policy on Labour Migration**⁷ provides guidelines on

- 1) Improving labour migration governance;
- 2) Protection and social welfare of migrants;
- 3) Promoting employment opportunities abroad;
- 4) Ensuring that international migration benefits national development.

The policy lays out the government's aims to increase diaspora investment, networking and return migration; and to leverage diaspora social capital to improve local development outcomes.

2015 ● The **National Migration Policy**⁸ is the government's migration management framework. Key diaspora-related objectives include establishing an enabling environment to attract diaspora contributions to national development; developing a diaspora database; facilitating the transfer of diaspora knowledge; skills and resources; and reintegrating returning migrants. Among other specific measures, the policy signals the government's intention to enable diaspora participation in elections – a key sticking point in diaspora relations.

2017 ● The **Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (Establishment) Act**⁹ establishes the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) under the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It stipulates the functions of NiDCOM in leading the implementation of diaspora engagement projects and policies, as well as advocating on behalf of Nigerian diasporas to the national government.

2017 ● The **Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017-2020)**¹⁰ is Nigeria's mid-term national development plan. The plan identifies diaspora bonds as a means to finance infrastructure improvements. It also outlines the government's intention to attract medical professional volunteers to support domestic health services.

6 The Guardian. 2019. *Nigeria Diaspora policy underway - Dabiri-Erewa*. <https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria-diaspora-policy-underway-dabiri-erewa/>. The draft National Diaspora Policy was sent to the Federal Executive Council for approval at the end of 2019.

7 Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity. 2014. *National Policy on Labour Migration*. IOM. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/national_policy_labour_migration.pdf.

8 Inter-ministerial Committee on the Development of a National Policy on Migration. 2015. *The Migration Policy*. IOM. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/national_migration_policy_2015.pdf.

9 *Nigerians in Diaspora Commission Act 2017*. Nigeria. https://cdn.thenigerianvoice.com/images/content/report_content/8202018110724_diaspora_commission_act_2017__15_pages.pdf.

10 Ministry of Budget and National Planning. 2017. *Economic Recovery and Growth Plan 2017-2020*. The Federal Republic of Nigeria. <http://www.budgetoffice.gov.ng/index.php/economic-recovery-growth-plan-2017-2020?task=document.viewdoc&id=3>.

» Trends & accomplishments:

Diaspora engagement started to gain traction on Nigeria's political agenda after the end of military rule,¹¹ with civilian governments from 1999 progressively making efforts to welcome the contributions of the diaspora.¹² Indeed, the 1999 Constitution's allowance of dual citizenship represented a turning point in the country's diaspora engagement and followed years of lobbying by diaspora groups.¹³

The actions initiated by the first civilian governments included arranging diaspora meetings, dialogues, and conferences; establishing the Nigerian National Volunteer Service (NNVS) to engage the diaspora in development work; and adopting the 25 July as Diaspora Day.¹⁴ The government also launched the Nigerians in the Diaspora Organization (NIDO) in 2000 as a means to strengthen networking within the diaspora.¹⁵

Increasing recognition of diaspora contributions has led to several innovations to the institutional framework. The House of Representatives Committee on Diaspora Affairs was established in 2009 – a rare example of a platform on diaspora engagement housed within a national legislature.¹⁶ Later on, the Buhari administration established an Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora.¹⁷ Then in 2019, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) was established under the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a mandate to coordinate the country's diaspora engagement work.¹⁸

Obstacles



- **Diaspora vote:** The diaspora has so far fought unsuccessfully for the right to vote. While the significance of diaspora remittances has already positioned Nigerians abroad as a key political constituency,¹⁹ allowing the diaspora to vote in elections has proved to be a contentious issue in a context where managing elections and voter count persist as domestic challenges.²⁰

11 Sharkdam, Wapmuk, Akinkuotu, Oluwatooni & Ibonye, Vincent. 2014. *The Nigerian Diaspora and National Development: Contributions, Challenges and Lessons from Other Countries*. Ateneo de Manila University.

12 Ikechukwu, Anthony Kanu et al. 2019. National Policy on Diaspora Matters : A Review. *Nnadiesbube Journal of Social Sciences*. https://www.acjol.org/index.php/NJSS/article/view/njss_v2_n2_1/80.

13 Key informant interview, African Foundation for Development, 7 July 2020.

14 Sharkdam, Wapmuk, Akinkuotu, Oluwatooni & Ibonye, Vincent. 2014. *The Nigerian Diaspora and National Development: Contributions, Challenges and Lessons from Other Countries*. Ateneo de Manila University.

15 Marchand, Katrin, Langley, Sarah & Siegel, Melissa. 2015. *Diaspora Engagement in Development : An Analysis of the Engagement of the Nigerian Diaspora in Germany and the Potentials for Cooperation*. Maastricht University. <https://migration.unu.edu/publications/reports/diaspora-engagement-in-development-an-analysis-of-the-engagement-of-the-nigerian-diaspora-in-germany-and-the-potentials-for-cooperation.html>.

16 Ibid.

17 Nigerian's in Diaspora Commission. 2019. "Deconstructing Nigeria's Evolving Diaspora Engagement Policy". <https://nidcom.gov.ng/news/deconstructing-nigerias-evolving-diaspora-policy/>.

18 Nelson, Omonu. 2019. Deconstructing Nigeria's Evolving Diaspora Policy. *Leadership News*. <https://leadership.ng/2019/08/01/deconstructing-nigerias-evolving-diaspora-policy/>.

19 Key informant interview, African Foundation for Development, 7 July 2020.

20 Marchand, Katrin, Langley, Sarah & Siegel, Melissa. 2015. *Diaspora Engagement in Development : An Analysis of the Engagement of the Nigerian Diaspora in Germany and the Potentials for Cooperation*. Maastricht University. <https://migration.unu.edu/publications/reports/diaspora-engagement-in-development-an-analysis-of-the-engagement-of-the-nigerian-diaspora-in-germany-and-the-potentials-for-cooperation.html>.

- **Confidence in governance and the business environment:** Programmes to support diaspora-run business projects in Nigeria have found weak governance and administrative bureaucracy to be key obstacles to bringing projects to market. While many Nigerians in the diaspora have shown an interest in investing back home, they face issues in registering businesses and in acquiring the appropriate licences and permissions to operate.²¹ Additionally, while the government has taken significant steps towards recognising the potential of Nigerians abroad, many Nigerians in the diaspora continue to harbour long-held feelings of distrust towards the state.²²
- **Political and ethnic division:** Domestic political divisions - which to some degree follow ethnic division - extend to diaspora communities. This means that terms often used to describe a country's diaspora, such as homogeneity, cultural belonging, and a sense of commitment, do not necessarily apply to the Nigerian diaspora.²³
- **Definition of institutional roles:** Despite the establishment of the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) helping elevate diaspora engagement in the national agenda, it remains unclear to some stakeholders the extent to which the new body will coordinate vs implement policies and programmes. Some see the institution as a top-level coordinating body that will support other specialist agencies and stakeholders to implement initiatives. Others, however, see NiDCOM as the body that will lead all the government's diaspora engagement work. The institution is relatively new and may take time to define its role.

SPOTLIGHT: effective practices



Diaspora bond

INVESTMENT

Through diaspora bonds, the government has specifically targeted Nigerians abroad to contribute to the country's earmarked infrastructure development projects. The bond, offered through private banks and wealth managers in 2017, helped the government secure \$300 million USD.²⁴

Nigerian National Volunteer Service (NNVS)

HUMAN CAPITAL

Since 2003, the NNVS has been mandated to provide information on volunteering opportunities that enable the diaspora to support development initiatives in Nigeria. The NNVS also arranges educational and scientific conferences, as well as developing partnerships with medical diaspora associations, with the aim of harnessing diaspora expertise for national development.

²¹ Key informant interview, African Foundation for Development, 7 July 2020.

²² Marchand, Katrin, Langley, Sarah & Siegel, Melissa. 2015. *Diaspora Engagement in Development : An Analysis of the Engagement of the Nigerian Diaspora in Germany and the Potentials for Cooperation*. Maastricht University. <https://migration.unu.edu/publications/reports/diaspora-engagement-in-development-an-analysis-of-the-engagement-of-the-nigerian-diaspora-in-germany-and-the-potentials-for-cooperation.html>.

²³ Sharkdam, Wapmuk, Akinkuotu, Oluwatooni & Ibonye, Vincent. 2014. *The Nigerian Diaspora and National Development: Contributions, Challenges and Lessons from Other Countries*. Ateneo de Manila University.

²⁴ Benson, Jay. 2019. "How Bonds Aimed At The Diaspora Can Raise Crucial Funds For Africa". *African Arguments*, 2019. <https://africanarguments.org/2019/07/10/how-bonds-aimed-at-the-diaspora-can-raise-crucial-funds-for-africa/>.



Nigeria Diaspora Investment Summit and Spotlight Nigeria

Nigeria has several regular events that bring together diaspora investors, including the Nigeria Diaspora Investment Summit and Spotlight Nigeria. Beginning in 2018, the annual Nigeria Diaspora Investment Summit, organised by the government (through NiDCOM), aims to connect investors with networking and investment opportunities in Nigeria's core industries.²⁵ Spotlight Nigeria,²⁶ meanwhile, has arranged four editions since 2014 – each focused on a different investment theme.²⁷

INVESTMENT

Global Database of Nigerians in Diaspora (GDND)

Launched in 2009, the GDND gives the Nigerian government access to information provided voluntarily to the Nigerians in the Diaspora Organisation (NIDO) by the diaspora. The database allows the government to communicate directly with those who register, to better understand the characteristics of its diaspora, and to identify ways to harness the diaspora for the purposes of national development.

HUMAN CAPITAL
+
DIGITALISATION

²⁵ Including the agribusiness, aviation, healthcare, and infrastructure sectors.

²⁶ Spotlight Nigeria is organised by Friends of Nigeria (FON), a non-profit organisation in France which aims to promote Nigeria's investment potential to French and European companies.

²⁷ For example, the theme of the 2018 edition was "partnership that works", highlighting opportunities for partnership between French and Nigerian companies.

Annex:

List of actors

Diaspora related institutions

- **At regional level**

African Union Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (AU CIDO)

Nigeria is a member of the African Union and nominates a diaspora focal point to represent Nigerians as part of the AU CIDO Continental Meetings.

- **At national level**

Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCOM) 2019

NiDCOM is the government's central body managing policies, projects and relationships related to diaspora engagement, with the aim of mobilising diaspora resources and expertise to support the development of Nigeria. NiDCOM sits under the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, although the chair and members of NiDCOM are appointed by the President.

Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora (OSSAPFAD)

The OSSAPFAD holds a supervisory and consultative role in the implementation of the government's diaspora engagement policy. OSSAPFAD is also mandated to develop programmes to map the skills and characteristics of the diaspora.²⁸

Standing Committee on Diaspora Matters

The Standing Committee on Diaspora Matters is one of five sectoral groups working on various thematic areas of migration. It serves as the principal inter-departmental platform on diaspora engagement. The sectoral groups work under the Technical Working Group on migration, which in turn responds to the Sector Policy Review Committee (SPRC)/National Consultative Committee (NCC), the highest level of coordination and consultation in all migration-related matters.²⁹

National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) 1989

The NCFRMI coordinates Nigeria's migration management through data management, research and planning for the return, resettlement, rehabilitation and reintegration of migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons.

28 Federal Republic of Nigeria. 2016. *Draft National Policy on Diaspora Matters*. <https://www.diaspora.gov.ng/final-draft-national-policy-on-diaspora-matters.pdf>.

29 Inter-ministerial Committee on the Development of a National Policy on Migration. 2015. *The Migration Policy*. IOM. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/national_migration_policy_2015.pdf.

House Committee on Diaspora Affairs 2009

The House Committee, composed of 29 members of the House of Representatives, serves as a platform that enables the National Assembly's lower house to engage in diaspora relations. Its core function is to initiate policies related to diaspora engagement.³⁰

Debt Management Office (DMO) 2000

The DMO was established to centrally coordinate the management of Nigeria's debt. DMO was responsible for issuing the country's diaspora bond in 2017.³¹

Diaspora organisations in Europe



Nigerians in the Diaspora Organisation (NIDO) UK

Development activities

Since 2000, NIDO has been the central umbrella body for Nigerian diaspora organisations. It has branches across the world, which work closely with Nigerian embassies and consulates to provide networking opportunities and support, while identifying opportunities for Nigerians abroad to contribute to development in Nigeria. For example, in recent years, NIDO has worked with the government to register Nigerians abroad in a diaspora database and the National Identity Database,³² organised a Housing Investment Summit attended by high-level government ministers and officials,³³ raised diaspora funds to support Nigerians in the diaspora affected by the COVID-19 pandemic,³⁴ and advocated the position of the diaspora towards the Nigerian government.³⁵

Association of Nigerians in Switzerland (NIS) Switzerland

Integration activities

Representing Nigerians in Switzerland, the association promotes activities and forums to support intercultural learning. NIS also raises awareness of the integration needs of the Nigerian community and mobilises assistance.

30 Marchand, Katrin, Langley, Sarah & Siegel, Melissa. 2015. *Diaspora Engagement in Development : An Analysis of the Engagement of the Nigerian Diaspora in Germany and the Potentials for Cooperation*. Maastricht University. <https://migration.unu.edu/publications/reports/diaspora-engagement-in-development-an-analysis-of-the-engagement-of-the-nigerian-diaspora-in-germany-and-the-potentials-for-cooperation.html>.

31 Debt Management Office. 2019. "Request For Proposal For Bookrunners For A Diaspora Bond To Be Issued In The International Capital Market By The Federal Republic Of Nigeria". Abuja: Debt Management Office. <https://www.bpp.gov.ng/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/DMO-RFP-FOR-DIASPORA-BOND.pdf>.

32 Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation Europe. 2018. "Registration Of Nigerians In Europe For National Identification Number(NIN) Takes-Off". <https://www.nidoeurope.org/press-release-pre-enrollment-of-nigerians-in-europe-diaspora-in-the-national-identity-database-commences/>.

33 Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation Europe. 2017. "Nigerians In Diaspora Housing Investment Summit". Lisbon: Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation Europe. <http://www.nidoeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/NIDO-Brochure-latest-3.0.pdf>.

34 "Donation: Covid-19 Safe Initiative (NIDSAFE)". 2020. Nidoeurope.Org. <https://www.nidoeurope.org/donation/>.

35 Nigerians in Diaspora Organisation Worldwide. 2018. "Fulani Herdsmen Killings In Nigeria". <https://www.nidoeurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/NIDO-WW-Communique-Fulani-Herdsmen-Killings-in-Nigeria.pdf>.

British Nigeria Law Forum (BNLF) UK 2001

☑ Integration activities

The Forum consists of practicing lawyers and students in the United Kingdom and Nigeria. It promotes cross-border business and networking opportunities.

Central Association of Nigerians in the UK (CANUK) UK 2005

☑ Integration activities

CANUK was formed by the Nigerian High Commission in the UK to unite the Nigerian associations and bodies present in the country. Today CANUK represents approximately 200 different Nigerian diaspora associations.

Engineering Forum of Nigerians (EFN) UK 2004

☑ Development activities

☑ Integration activities

EFN seeks to support engineering development projects in Nigeria and provides networking opportunities to Nigerian engineers in the UK.

Friends of Nigeria France (FON) France

☑ Development activities

The network of business professionals in France promotes economic relations between France and Nigeria. The organisation facilitates training and professional development activities for its members and provides services to those interested in investing in Nigeria.

Medical Association of Nigerians Across Great Britain (MANSAG) UK 1997

☑ Development activities

The MANSAG represents Nigerian medical doctors and other health professionals in the UK. It partners with Nigerian organisations to support healthcare initiatives, including through educational and resource development projects for university medical programmes.

Muslim Association of Nigeria UK (MAN UK) UK 1986

☑ Integration activities

MAN UK organises religious and social activities for the Nigerian Muslim community in London. It provides support to its members by addressing challenges faced by the Nigerian Muslim community in the UK.





National Association of Nigerian Communities (NANC) UK

☑ Integration activities

Starting life as a student union in the 1970s, NANC develops social, cultural and educational programmes designed to support the social welfare of Nigerians in the UK.

National Association of Nigerian Community Austria (NANCA) Austria 1999

☑ Integration activities

NANCA promotes the integration of Nigerians living in Austria. The association has several regional offices across the country.

Ndi-Igbo Germany e.V (NIG) Germany

☑ Integration activities

NIG is a socio-cultural umbrella body that represents Igbo communities and associations in Germany. It seeks to promote the cultural heritage of the Ndi Igbo and to strengthen collaboration amongst Nigerian associations in the country.

Nigeria-Britain Association (N-BA) UK 1969

☑ Development activities

☑ Integration activities

N-BA organises social, cultural and business activities that promote intercultural exchange. The association has also initiated development projects in Nigeria to help schools incorporate technology.

Nigerian Community Germany e.V Germany 1989

☑ Integration activities

The community supports Nigerians living in Germany. It organises social and cultural events and promotes intercultural exchange between Nigerians and Germans.

Nigerian Family Kulturforening (NFKF) Sweden 1987

☑ Integration activities

NFKF, based in Gothenburg, supports the Nigerian community in Sweden. It coordinates development, cultural, charitable and educational activities.

Nigerian National Association-The Netherlands (NNA-NL) The Netherlands

Integration activities

The umbrella body represents Nigerian associations across the Netherlands who provide integration services to diaspora members.

Nigerian Union Italy (NUI) Italy

Integration activities

NUI provides opportunities for Nigerians based in Italy to discuss integration issues, Italian political affairs and assistance programmes. The NUI also lobbies the Nigerian government to open additional consulate offices to respond to the needs of the growing Nigerian community dispersed across Italy.

Nigerian-British Business Forum (NBBF) UK

Development activities

Integration activities

The NBBF aims to connect Nigerian entrepreneurs in the UK, to deploy expertise and resources to support development activities in Nigeria, and to promote bilateral relations between the UK and Nigeria.

Nigerians in Diaspora Organization Europe (NIDOE) 2000 Europe

Development activities

NIDOE is an umbrella organisation which brings together 19 regional chapters across 18 European countries. The organisation seeks to promote Nigerian solidarity in Europe and to identify skills and resources that can be vital for Nigeria's development. NIDOE works closely with the Nigerian government and NIDO sister chapters in Asia, Africa and the Americas to encourage investment in Nigeria and to improve Nigeria's image globally. There are NIDOE chapters in Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium and Luxembourg, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

Nurses Charitable Association UK (NNAUK) UK 1998

Development activities

Integration activities

The NNAUK represents approximately 3,000 Nigerian nurses. It supports the delivery of healthcare and promotes health education in Nigeria and the UK.

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