DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Capital

Kinshasa

Ethnic Groups

more than 200 African ethnic groups of which the majority are Bantu; the four largest tribes - Mongo, Luba, Kongo (all Bantu), and the Mangbetu-Azande (Hamitic) - make up about 45% of the population

Languages

French (official), Lingala (a lingua franca trade language), Kingwana (a dialect of Kiswahili or Swahili), Kikongo, Tshiluba

Religions

Roman Catholic 29.9%, Protestant 26.7%, other Christian 36.5%, Kimbanguist 2.8%, Muslim 1.3%, other (includes syncretic sects and indigenous beliefs) 1.2%, none 1.3%, unspecified 0.2%

Population

Total: 111.9 million
Median age: 16.7 years
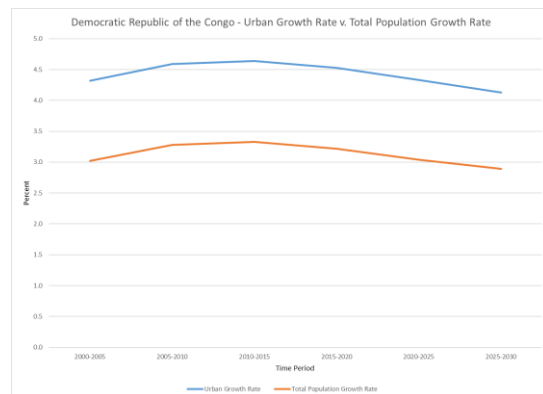Population growth rate: 3.13%
Urban: 47.4%
Rural 52.3%

Fertility

Birth rate: 39.64 births/1,000 population
Total fertility rate: 5.56 children born/woman
Sex ratio of population: 1 male(s)/female

Mortality

Death rate: 7.74 deaths/1,000 population
Life expectancy at birth: 62.23 years
Maternal mortality rate: 473 deaths/100,000 live births
Infant mortality rate: 59.12 deaths/1,000 live births

Democratic Republic of the Congo - Urban Growth Rate v. Total Population Growth Rate

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Migration

Net migration rate: -0.63 migrants/1,000 population

Health

Current health expenditure: 4.1% of GDP
Physician density: 0.38 physicians/1,000 population
Adult obesity: 6.7%
Alcohol consumption per capita: 0.56 liters of pure alcohol

Education

Education expenditures: 2.7% of GDP
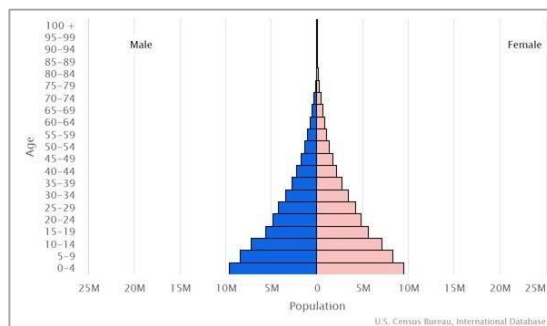Literacy: 77%

Population Distribution

urban clusters are spread throughout the country, particularly in the northeast along the border with Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi; the largest city is the capital, Kinshasha, located in the west along the Congo River; the south is least densely populated

Age Structure

U.S. Census Bureau, International Database

Population Distribution

Population per square kilometer

0 1 5 25 50 100 500 2.5K 5K 185K

Demographic Profile

Despite a wealth of fertile soil, hydroelectric power potential, and mineral resources, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) struggles with many socioeconomic problems, including high infant and maternal mortality rates, malnutrition, poor vaccination coverage, lack of access to improved water sources and sanitation, and frequent and early fertility. Ongoing conflict, mismanagement of resources, and a lack of investment have resulted in food insecurity; almost 25% of children under the age of 5 were malnourished as of 2018. The overall coverage of basic public services – education, health, sanitation, and potable water – is very limited and piecemeal, with substantial regional and rural/urban disparities. Fertility remains high at more than 5 children per woman and is likely to remain high because of the low use of contraception and the cultural preference for larger families.

The DRC is a source and host country for refugees. Between 2012 and 2014, more than 119,000 Congolese refugees returned from the Republic of Congo to the relative stability of northwest DRC, but more than 1 million Congolese refugees and asylum seekers were hosted by neighboring countries as of December 2022. In addition, an estimated 5.5 million Congolese were internally displaced as of October 2022, the vast majority fleeing violence between rebel group and Congolese armed forces. Thousands of refugees have come to the DRC from neighboring countries, including Rwanda, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, and Burundi.