

# Uganda – The pearl of Africa

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## A Country Overview

“The kingdom of Uganda is a fairy-tale. You climb up... and at the end there is a wonderful new world. The scenery is different, the vegetation is different, the climate is different, and, most of all, the people are different from anything elsewhere to be seen in the whole range of Africa ... I say: ‘Concentrate on Uganda’. For magnificence, for variety of form and colour, for profusion of brilliant life - bird, insect, reptile, beast - for vast scale -- Uganda is truly the pearl of Africa.” (Winston Churchill)

## 1 Uganda in key points

Capital City	Kampala
National language	English and Kiswahili
Geographical borders	Kenya, Tanzania, Ruanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, (South-) Sudan
Population	45.7 million (as of 2019) <sup>1</sup>
Average annual rate of population growth	3.3% (2010 – 2019) <sup>2</sup>
Ethnic groups	17,3% Baganda <sup>3</sup> 9,8% Banyankore 8,6% Basoga 7.0% Bakiga 6.1% Iteso 3.2% Langi 4.8% Acholi 4.1% Bagisu 4.14% Lugbara 33.3% others
Religion	39.3% Roman Catholic 32.0% Anglican 13.7% Muslim 11.1% Pentecostal (including born again and Evangelical) 1.7% Seventh-day Adventist

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Population Fund, “World Population Dashboard”, UNFPA, Uganda, <https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population/UG>, accessed July 2019.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Population Fund, “World Population Dashboard”.

<sup>3</sup> Uganda Bureau of Statistics, “2002 Uganda Population and Housing Census – Main Report”, UBOS, <http://www.ubos.org/onlinefiles/uploads/ubos/pdf%20documents/2002%20Census%20Final%20Report%20doc.pdf>, accessed July 2019.

	2.2% other (as of 2017) <sup>4</sup>
Form of government	Presidential republic
President	Yoweri Kaguta Museveni
Gross domestic product (GDP)	25.995 Billion USD (as of 2017) <sup>5</sup>
GDP per capita	606.468 USD (as of 2017) <sup>6</sup>
Human Development Index (HDI)	0.516 (Index), place 162 out of 188 ranked countries (as of 2017) <sup>7</sup>

## 2 Historical background

As a landlocked country without access to the sea, Uganda was for a long time relatively isolated from the outside world. Its first trading partners were Sudanese and Arabs, who were mainly interested in slaves and ivory. Close trade relations developed with the kingdoms Bunyoro, Buganda, Busoga, Ankole and Toro in the South and West of the country. Until now many of the social and political structures of the kingdoms continue to exist. Especially the kingdom of Buganda is still very much present in the public eye.

### Colonialization

In contrast to the other kingdoms, the kingdom of Buganda was very open to Europeans, who sent missionaries, African researchers and politicians to East Africa from the 19th century onwards. In 1888, the king (Kabaka) of Buganda signed a treaty with the Imperial British East African Company. Great Britain wanted to improve access to Ugandan goods and develop the infrastructure necessary for exporting them. The Kabaka hoped for arms supplies and better trade relations with the Europeans. After warlike conflicts between French Catholics and British Protestants, Great Britain established a protectorate in Buganda in 1894, which was soon extended to other kingdoms of the country. The close relations with the kingdom of Buganda led to its administrative structures being extended to the entire protectorate.

The establishment of a Legislative and Executive Council in the 1920s, created institutions which made the political participation of the Ugandan population possible. By 1955, half the members of the Legislative Council were Ugandans. A party system was slowly developing. In 1961, the first elections were held in Uganda, which the Democratic Party (DP) under Benedicto Kiwanuka won. A year later,

#### National hero Kiwanuka

Benedicto Kiwanuka 08<sup>th</sup> May 1922 – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1972 is regarded as the key figure in leading Uganda to independence. He stood up for a united Uganda and openly criticized the British protectorate. Kiwanuka fought for Uganda's self-governing status and was their first prime minister. Under Obote, Kiwanuka led the opposition and criticised his leadership style until he was imprisoned in 1969. After Amin seized power, Kiwanuka was released and appointed chief judge. There were quick disputes between Amin and Kiwanuka because Amin did not accept their jurisdiction. He was murdered by Amin's security forces on 22 September 1972.

<sup>4</sup> Omari H. Kokole, Kenneth Ingham, M. Semakula, M. Kiwanuka, Maryinez Lyons, "Uganda", *ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA*, July 2019,

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Uganda/media/1/612597/224491>.

<sup>5</sup> The World Bank, "GDP (current US\$)", *Data.Worldbank*,

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=UG>, accessed July 2019.

<sup>6</sup> The World Bank, "GDP per capita (current US\$)", *Data.Worldbank*,

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=UG>, accessed July 2019.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "Human Development Reports - Uganda", *hdr.undp*, 2018, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/UGA>.

Uganda reached autonomy and Kiwanuka was the first indigenous head of government in Uganda. After Kiwanuka failed in the independence talks with Great Britain, elections were held again in 1962. A coalition of the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) and the Kabaka Yekka (KY, the party of the Kingdom of Buganda) won the elections. Milton Obote became head of government and Uganda gained its independence from Great Britain in the same year.

### The rule of Obote and Amin

Obote transformed Uganda into a unitary republic, abolished the kingdoms and elevated the president to head of government. In fact, Obote now ruled as an autocrat and became increasingly unpopular among the population. Before the 1971 elections, Obote's opponents and military chief Idi Amin undertook a coup d'état. In the beginning, Amin was very popular among the population, who had long been dissatisfied with Obote's leadership. However, Amin immediately began to eliminate his political opponents and established a brutal military dictatorship. Jewish communities, Indian immigrants and intellectuals suffered particularly from Amin's repressive policies. Public order collapsed and raids, destruction and murder threatened the country's internal security. In 1976, Amin appointed himself president for life. Two years later he occupied a part of Tanzania and committed numerous massacres of Tanzanian civilians. Tanzania reacted immediately and marched into Southern Uganda with the help of the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF). Shortly after, Kampala was occupied and Amin fled into exile.

After several transitional governments, elections were finally held in 1980, which the UPC won under Obote. But Obote did not manage to restore the internal order of the country, to rebuild the destroyed infrastructure and to revive economic life. Instead, he introduced a similarly rigid dictatorial power structure, which was in no way inferior to Amin's style of reigning the country.

### Liberalisation under Museveni

Shortly thereafter, fighting broke out between the military and the National Resistance Army (NRA) under Yoweri Museveni. Finally, Obote was overthrown by his own Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) in 1985. The NRA disliked General Tito Lutwa Okello taking over the presidency and occupied Kampala in 1986. Museveni became president and set up a cabinet of civilians.

Museveni took over the leadership of a country that was totally destroyed. During the dictatorship, one million people lost their lives, two million fled and 500,000 were injured. The fighting continued, especially in the North of the country, and internal order and security were extremely fragile. Parliamentary elections were held in 1989. Museveni, however, was not officially confirmed in office until 1996, 10 years after he seized power. In order to avoid flare-up ethnic conflicts - at least according to the government discourse - Museveni established democratic structures that did without a party system and attempted to bring political decision processes to a local and regional level. While the so-called "movement system" which the NRA officially established was officially a non-party system, it ended up being a one-party system in which the ruling party, the National Resistance Movement, was the only legally permitted party. This had far-reaching effects on the other parties in Uganda, which had great problems rebuilding their structures even after they were legally allowed to exist again.

Under Museveni, the domestic political situation calmed down again, the economy grew and democratic structures solidified. He was re-elected in 2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016.

### 3 Form of government

Uganda is a presidential republic with a president as head of state, head of government and commander-in-chief. The president is directly elected by the people every five years and is responsible for implementing the laws. He appoints the Cabinet with the approval of Parliament, as well. The Cabinet consists of the President, the Vice-President and an indefinite number of Ministers. Currently, Edward Kiwanuka Ssekandi is Vice-President and Ruhakana Rugunda Prime Minister.<sup>8</sup>

The parliament consists of representatives of the people who are directly elected every five years and representatives of the government who, however, have no right to vote. A certain number of seats in parliament are reserved for women, members of the military, youth, workers, people with disabilities and other groups considered important by parliament. This is to ensure that all major social groups are adequately represented in parliament. The Parliament's main function is to legislate. Since the NRM has the necessary two-thirds majority, laws are usually passed in the spirit of the government.<sup>9</sup>

Seat Allocation by Groups

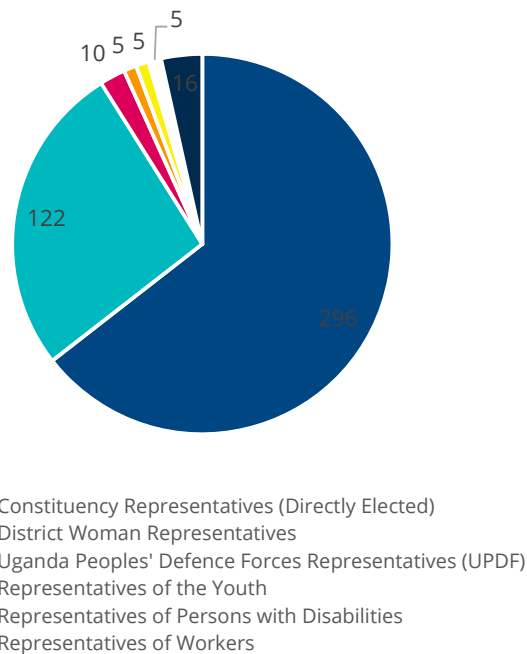


Figure 1: Seat Allocation by Representation<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The Statehouse of Uganda, "The Government", statehouse.go, <http://www.statehouse.go.ug/government/executive>, accessed July 2019.

<sup>9</sup> The Statehouse of Uganda, "The Government"

<sup>10</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, "COMPOSITION OF THE TENTH PARLIAMENT OF UGANDA AS AT 1st November, 2018", parliament.go, November 2018, <https://www.parliament.go.ug/page/composition-parliament>.

### Seat Allocation by Party

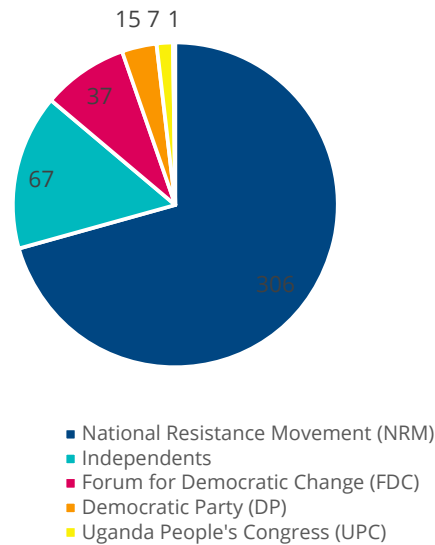


Table 1: Allocation of seats by party<sup>11</sup>

The jurisprudence in Uganda is pyramid-shaped. The magistrate courts act on the lowest level. In the second instance the higher courts are responsible. In third instance and in constitutional matters, the Court of Appeal is called upon. The High Court is at the head of the jurisdiction and can either be appealed to by the Court of Appeal or decide directly on disputes in the presidential election.

Judges are considered independent and are appointed by the President on a proposal from the Legal Affairs Commission and with the consent of Parliament.<sup>12</sup>

## 4 Politics

The most important constitutional change took place in 2005 after a referendum in which the majority of the population opted for a multi-party system. The "Movement System," which Museveni had established, was intended to strengthen local structures and focus more on the individual representative than a far too general political party programme. Such a system has prevented ethnic conflicts in the past. However, the dissatisfaction of the population grew as the NRM under Museveni was able to establish one-party rule. The introduction of a multiparty system was hoped to strengthen opposition to the NRM or even bring about a change of government. Since 2006, Museveni has won three presidential elections under the multiparty system by a large margin (all three elections were marked by irregularities and electoral fraud). The hoped-for change has not yet taken place.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, in 2005 the presidential term limit was lifted, opening the way for Museveni to stand for re-election. Another barrier to Museveni's re-election was overcome in 2017 by removing the age limits for presidential candidates. In the meantime, Museveni has been in power for almost 30 years and there is no change in sight. In the past, Museveni was accused of election fraud by his political opponents. His long-time opponent Kizza Besigye

<sup>11</sup> Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, "COMPOSITION OF THE TENTH..."

<sup>12</sup> The Judiciary – The Republic of Uganda, "About The Judiciary", judiciary.go, <http://www.judicature.go.ug/data/smnu/7//Supreme%20Court.html>, accessed July 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Yasin Olum, Reality Check. Multiparty Politics in Uganda. (Kampala: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011), pp. 26-29.

(FDC) challenged the 2006 election results in court. Although the court found massive inconsistencies, it ruled the election to be legitimate. The 2011 and 2016 elections were challenged, as well, however unsuccessfully.

### Elections 2016

Parliamentary and presidential elections were held in February 2016. Acting president Yoweri Museveni of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) won the multiparty contest for a third consecutive time.<sup>14</sup> However, these were the most competitive elections in the history of Uganda. The elections were peaceful. Nevertheless, a number of EU and Commonwealth election observation missions have sharply criticised the 2016 elections on key issues: lack of independence of the Election Commission; intimidation and excessive violence by security forces against opposition, media and the public; violation of freedom of expression, press and assembly; financial superiority of Museveni and the NRM.<sup>15</sup> In Kampala, the stronghold of the opposition, ballot papers were delivered late, polling stations opened only in the evening hours, ballot box stuffing was recorded and early announcement of results occurred.

### Internal security and order

After the end of the two military dictatorships, internal order and security were restored in most parts of Uganda. The situation in the North of the country remained problematic. The rebel group "Lord's Resistance Army" (LRA) under the leadership of Joseph Kony controlled the Acholi region and fought against Museveni and for a Christian theocracy. The LRA committed serious war crimes, raids, murdered and enslaved women and children. It kidnapped children and forced them to fight as child soldiers for the LRA. The rebel group was not defeated for a long time until the Ugandan army and the US military launched a major offensive against the LRA in 2008 and expelled it from the region. It is still not clear to what extent the Ugandan army has committed war crimes, as there has never been an official truth trial.<sup>16</sup> After long fighting between the army and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the situation has been peaceful since 2006. The leader of the LRA, Joseph Kony, has allegedly retreated with the remains of his supporters to inaccessible areas in Uganda's North Western neighbours (between the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and Southern Sudan). The vast majority of internally displaced persons were able to return to their regions of origin. A reconstruction programme for this long neglected region, drawn up by the government and donors, was implemented. The Karamoja region in North-Eastern Uganda was also supported.<sup>17</sup>

The conflicts in neighbouring Congo and Southern Sudan have had a direct impact on Uganda. The refugee flows in particular pose a major challenge to the government. If the situation in Southern Sudan calms down in the near future, many refugees will probably be able to return to their homeland.

In general, the crime rate is relatively low, especially in rural areas. However, many cases are not reported to the police and are often subject to vigilante justice. The police often do not investigate the reported cases thoroughly enough and document incidents insufficiently. In addition, corruption permeates the entire administrative and political system, which is why offenders often get away with it.

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<sup>14</sup> Ryan Gibb, "The Elections in Uganda", *Africa Spectrum*, 51, no. 2 (2016): p.93 – 101.

<sup>15</sup> Auswärtiges Amt, „Uganda: Innenpolitik“, *auswaertiges-amt*, October 2017, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/ausserpolitik/laender/uganda-node/innenpolitik/208814>.

<sup>16</sup> Auswärtiges Amt, „Uganda: Innenpolitik“.

<sup>17</sup> Auswärtiges Amt, „Uganda: Innenpolitik“.

## Foreign policy<sup>18</sup>

Uganda is a member of numerous regional and international institutions. Among the most important are the African Union (AU), the East African Community (EAC) and the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). Furthermore, Uganda strongly supports African integration projects such as the expansion of the East African Community (EAC) into a confederation of states.<sup>19</sup> Within these networks, Uganda plays an important role since the Museveni's government has been able to establish the country as an anchor of stability in the region. Uganda is militarily represented in numerous conflicts in the region. It employs soldiers to the Democratic Republic of Congo and to the Central African Republic and has sent troops to support the government under President Salva Kiir at an early stage in the newly erupted civil war in Southern Sudan. As a result, Uganda was perceived as partisan within the peace negotiations. Numerous international and regional actors harshly criticised the deployment of soldiers without a regional mandate.

As the largest military power in the region, Uganda is also participating in a peace mission of the African Union in Somalia (AMISOM). However, this has a direct impact on the country's internal security. With the fight against Al-Shabaab in Somalia, Uganda has already become a target for terrorist attacks. The most devastating attack, with over 70 casualties and numerous injured, occurred in 2010 during a football World Cup match. In 2014, a planned terrorist attack was thwarted by Ugandan security forces. In recent years, there have been regular terrorist warnings for Kampala and other major cities, for example after the attack on Garissa University in neighbouring Kenya in April 2015. In April 2019, an American tourist was kidnapped in the Southern part of the Queen Elizabeth National Park (Ishasha), which borders the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>20</sup>

Uganda maintains very good relations, especially economic ones, with the neighbouring states of the EAC. The USA and numerous European states as well as the EU are among the most important donor countries. Uganda depends on international donor institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the African Development Bank (ADB), the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). China is becoming an increasingly important trading partner and investor for Uganda. In contrast to Western donor countries, China usually does not link investment projects to domestic democratisation processes, but in particular supports the implementation of major projects such as road construction. Other non-Western states, such as Russia and Iran, are also becoming more important international partners with the discovery and possibly soon to begin production of crude oil.

## Social policy<sup>21</sup>

Over the past two decades, the government has been able to reduce the poverty rate with the help of numerous development, infrastructure and education programmes. While 56% of the population still lived in poverty in 1992/93, the figure fell to 19.7% in 2013.<sup>22</sup> However, a recent slowdown of economic growth, together with Uganda's rapid population growth has resulted in an increase in the poverty levels to 21.4% of the population living in poverty in

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<sup>18</sup> Auswärtiges Amt, „Uganda: Außenpolitik“, auswaertiges-amt, October 2017, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/uganda-node/aussenpolitik/208812>.

<sup>19</sup> Auswärtiges Amt, „Uganda: Außenpolitik“

<sup>20</sup> Auswärtiges Amt, „Uganda: Reise- und Sicherheitshinweise“, auswaertiges-amt, July 2019, <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/de/aussenpolitik/laender/uganda-node/ugandasicherheit/208752>.

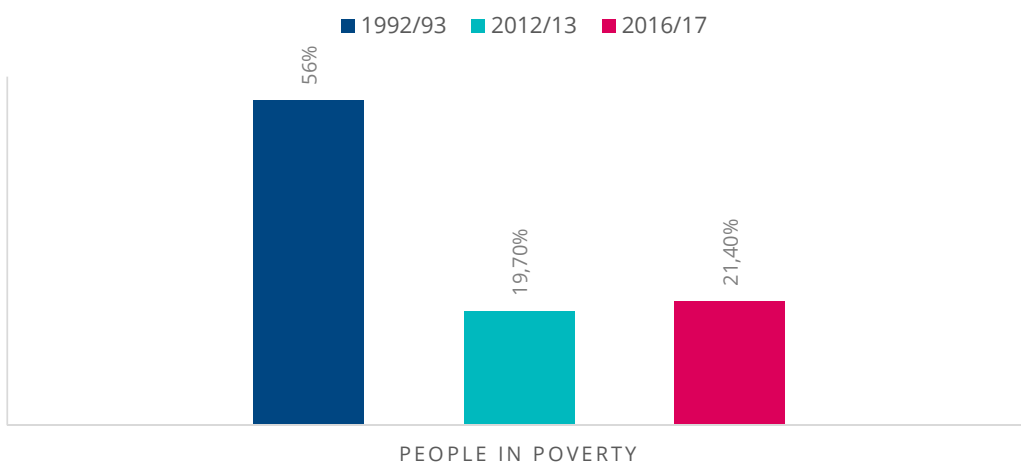
<sup>21</sup> Paul Bukuluki, John-Bosco Mubiru, Reality Check. The Status of Social Security Systems in Uganda. Challenges and Opportunities (Kampala: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2014), p. 2-12.

<sup>22</sup> The World Bank, „Uganda Poverty Assessment 2016: Fact Sheet, worldbank, September 2016, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/uganda/brief/uganda-poverty-assessment-2016-fact-sheet>.

2018.<sup>23</sup> However, there are large regional differences. The incidence of poverty was highest in the Eastern region (36%). In the North of the country - especially in Karamoja - 32%<sup>24</sup> of the population live in poverty. To find a solution to the poverty situation in this region, Museveni created a minister position for the Karamoja Region in 2011.

Despite the successful development programmes to combat absolute poverty, the situation of the population living above the poverty line has steadily deteriorated since 1992/93. In 1992/93 only 34% of the population were at risk of poverty, while by 2012/13 this figure had risen to 63%.<sup>25</sup>

## POVERTY DEVELOPMENT IN UGANDA



*Table 2: poverty development in Uganda (Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics<sup>26</sup>)*

The introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997 increased the number of people with primary education. A study has shown that the likelihood of a household being affected by poverty decreases when at least one family member has obtained primary education or a higher degree.

Particularly orphans, people with disabilities and the elderly are affected by poverty. If they are not taken care of by family structures, these people are usually helpless and on their own. Although social security systems such as pension and health insurance exist, many security programmes are aimed at contracted employees, who are the absolute minority in the largely informal economic setting. In rural areas, the majority of people work as self-employed small farmers or in the informal sector.

The health care system has also developed significantly over the past 20 years. The government increased its spending in the health sector, began educational work on diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS, and launched vaccination campaigns for new-borns and children.

<sup>23</sup> PwC, "Uganda Economic Outlook 2018, pwc, April 2018, <https://www.pwc.com/ug/en/assets/pdf/ug-economic-outlook-2018.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2018 Statistical Abstract, ubos, January 2019, [https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/.../05\\_2019STATISTICAL\\_ABSTRACT\\_2018.pdf](https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/.../05_2019STATISTICAL_ABSTRACT_2018.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> People at risk of poverty are those with an income between the poverty line and twice the poverty line.

<sup>26</sup> Uganda Bureau of Statistics, "2018 Statistical Abstract", ubos, [https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/.../05\\_2019STATISTICAL\\_ABSTRACT\\_2018.pdf](https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/.../05_2019STATISTICAL_ABSTRACT_2018.pdf), accessed July 2018.



Although an extensive campaign to combat HIV/AIDS was initially very successful and led to a low AIDS rate of 6.4% in 2004/05, there have been signs of an increase since then. Access to medicine for people with HIV has become more difficult and the government is increasingly neglecting prevention work.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the AIDS rate declined again from 7.3% in 2011 to 6% in 2016.<sup>28</sup>

## 5 Economy<sup>29</sup>

Since the 1990s, Uganda has recorded strong economic growth rates averaging at 7%. Compared to other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Uganda's economic growth is well above the average. After the economy was completely devastated in the 1980s, the NRM began a successful liberalisation process to revive economic activities. In a second step, the government has been implementing structural changes since 2000. While Museveni's liberalisation efforts in the 1990s turned Uganda into a model pupil of international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, these efforts did not lead to inclusive growth and the gap between rich and poor - with the absolute majority of people on the latter - is widening all the time.

Agriculture is becoming less important, accounting for only 28.2% of GDP in 2017<sup>30</sup>, compared to 50% in 1992. However, almost 69% of the population still works in agriculture. The majority of agricultural holdings are small-scale farmers, who market only a small part of their harvest and mainly operate subsistence farming.

The service sector now accounts for a large share of the GDP at 50.7% in 2017. This is followed by industry, which accounts for 21.1% of the GDP.<sup>31</sup> Uganda is heavily dependent on imports and had a trade deficit of 7.21% in 2017. Most of the imported goods come from China, India and the EU. Uganda's main exports are coffee, fish and fish products, tea, cotton, flowers and gold. The largest buyers of Ugandan products are the COMESA countries and the EU.<sup>32</sup>

### Corruption

Uganda ranks 149th out of 180 listed countries on Transparency International's corruption index. The health and education sectors are hardest-hit by the misuse of government funds. The more institutions receive state funds, the less they end up at the lowest level (in schools and hospitals). Corruption scandals repeatedly occur at the highest political level. In 2012, for example, over US\$24 million intended for peacekeeping in Northern Uganda disappeared from the Prime Minister's secretariat. As a consequence of the United Nations finding in 2018, that millions of dollars of aid money for the Ugandan refugee programme had been withdrawn from the account where they were deposited, the UK and Germany withheld aid money amounting up to 106 million USD from Uganda.

<sup>27</sup> Uhasselt, „HIV and AIDS Uganda Country Progress Report“, Uhasselt, 2013, [http://www.uhasselt.be/Documents/UHasselt/onderwijs/internationaal/noordzuid\\_2015/HIV\\_and\\_AIDS\\_Uganda\\_Country\\_Progress\\_Report\\_2013.pdf](http://www.uhasselt.be/Documents/UHasselt/onderwijs/internationaal/noordzuid_2015/HIV_and_AIDS_Uganda_Country_Progress_Report_2013.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> World Health Organization, „Uganda releases preliminary results of the 2016 Uganda population HIV impact assessment“, afro.who, <https://www.afro.who.int/news/uganda-releases-preliminary-results-2016-uganda-population-hiv-impact-assessment>, accessed July 2019.

<sup>29</sup> Evarist Twimukye, Reality Check. Economic Policies in Uganda and the Principles of Social Market Economy, (Kampala: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2011), pp.31-37.

<sup>30</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, „The World Factbook“, cia.gov, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/214.html>, accessed July 2019.

<sup>31</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, „The World Factbook“.

<sup>32</sup> Uganda Insurers Association, „A Report on the Economy – August 2018“, uia.co, August 2018, <http://uia.co.ug/a-report-on-the-economy-august-2014>.

The informal sector is estimated to employ more people than the formal sector. The informal sector's share of GDP cannot be accurately estimated. It is estimated that the informal sector accounts for 42% of sub-Saharan Africa's gross national income.<sup>33</sup>

## Tourism

Uganda is an attractive travel destination for tourists from all over the world. The unique flora and fauna attracted more than 1.7 million tourists to Uganda in 2018 - about 1 million more than in 2001. This means that the tourism sector accounted for 7.3% of GDP in 2018.<sup>34</sup>

However, the tourism sector could make a much greater contribution to the country's economic development. Although the government is continuously investing in the tourism sector, the infrastructure is still poor in many regions. In addition, the security situation, especially in the north of the country, remains unclear and many foreign missions warn against travelling to these regions and to the border regions with Congo. In some cases, the tourism industry cannot meet the expectations of foreign guests when it comes to hotel facilities and the services provided by tour operators.<sup>35</sup>

Countries such as Tanzania and Kenya have become popular destinations through investment programmes in hotel and tourism training, infrastructure and marketing. Uganda remains comparatively far behind.

## Oil Production

For some time now, the oil and gas industry has dominated the discussion about the country's economic future. It is estimated that there are 2.5-6.5 billion barrels of oil underground. The goal was to start oil production in 2018. However, many bureaucratic questions remain open and the necessary infrastructure for adequate production is lacking. Funding licenses have so far been issued to three large companies: Total, Tullow Oil and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation. The production is to start in 2020 and Uganda would then like to join the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).<sup>36</sup>

The government plans to use the oil primarily for the domestic market. This would provide a degree of independence from international markets. Some of the oil is also to be exported to Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda.

Although Museveni promises the population that they will benefit from the oil business, it remains to be seen how large the share of international oil companies in the profits from oil production will be. It remains to be seen whether the oil industry will lead to a socio-economic advantage for the entire population. However, there are already many signs, such as a lack of transparency and a negligible level of environmental protection, that inclusive growth is not expected.

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<sup>33</sup> D.L. Sparks & S.T. Barnett, "The Informal Sector In Sub-Saharan Africa: Out of the Shadows to Foster Sustainable Employment And Equity?", datapro, 2011, <https://datapro.fiu.edu/campusedge/files/articles/barnetts3107.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> World Travel & Tourism Council, "Travel & Tourism – Economic Impact 2018 Uganda", eagle, 2018, <https://eagle.co.ug/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Full-report-attached-1.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Francis Mwaura ; Solomon Seekitoleko, "Reviewing Uganda's tourism sector for economic and social upgrading", ageconsearch, 2012, <http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/148957/2/series91.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> Bernd Schröder, „Gebremster Ölboom an der Wiege der Menschheit“, Telepolis, February 2019, <https://www.heise.de/tp/features/Gebremster-Oelboom-an-der-Wiege-der-Menschheit-4291241.html>.

## 6 Culture<sup>37</sup>

Due to the ethnic diversity of the country, it is not possible to speak of a unified Ugandan culture. There are great cultural and linguistic differences between the Bantu-speaking population in the South and West of the country and the population in the North, who speak Nilotic languages. While strong social and administrative structures developed among the kingdoms of the South and West, the peoples of the North mostly lived as semi-nomads in smaller communities. Despite the diversity, the different ethnic groups now live together peacefully.

Many Ugandans are very religious and regularly go to church or mosque. Christianity and Islam are usually mixed with traditional customs, which often leads to confusion among outsiders.

### Homophobia in Uganda

Although the "Anti-Homosexuality Act" was repealed by the Supreme Court in August 2014 due to formal errors, the situation for homosexuals in the country has hardly improved. The law provided the death penalty for homosexuals and a reporting requirement for citizens who observe "anomalies". Homosexuals still have to fear prison sentences of up to 14 years. Much more serious, however, is the Ugandan society's deep dislike of homosexuals in everyday life. Cultural and religious convictions fuel the deep aversion, discrimination and persecution of homosexuals.

Dance and music are an important part of Ugandan culture. In addition to traditional dances and songs, Gospel, Reggae and Hip-Hop music are becoming more and more popular. A small music industry has developed, which is mainly used for the national market.

### Societal structures

58% of the population is younger than 15 years, a fact which strongly impacts the societal structures of Uganda. Particularly in the rural regions, children have to carry out hard work already at a young age. If parents die early, the oldest sibling takes over responsibility for the family.

Family structures are essential for survival, especially in rural areas. Since the social security systems for small-scale farmers and employees in the informal sector are not effective, the elderly and the sick depend on strong family support.

Society is strongly patriarchal and permeated by hierarchical structures. Although politics has already done a lot for the legal equality of women, de facto, women are less free in their actions. Men usually dominate the political and economic spheres. They own most of the land, even though it is predominantly managed by women. This usually makes women financially dependent on their husbands. The husband is still regarded as the head of the family.<sup>38</sup>

To make matters worse, the NRM has discovered so-called moralistic legislations in order to underpin its claim to maintaining power. The internationally known legislation against pornography from 2014, notorious under the nickname "Mini-Skirt-Bill", illegalises the wearing

<sup>37</sup> Cross-Cultural Foundation of Uganda, "National Conference on 'Pluralism: the lived reality of managing diversity in Uganda'", hivos, July 2010, <http://www.hivos.net/Hivos-Knowledge-Programme/Themes/Pluralism/Topics/Managing-ethnic-diversity/Ethnicand-Political-Diversity-in-Uganda>.

<sup>38</sup> Uganda Women's Network, "Unfinished Business. The Women's Manifesto 2016 to 2021", uwonet, April 2019, <https://www.uwonet.or.ug/download/unfinished-business-the-womens-manifesto-2016-to-2021-2016/>.

of "lewd clothes" and has already led to self-proclaimed guardians of morals assaulting, stripping and humiliating women on the open street who, in their opinion, were inappropriately dressed.

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**Updated and translated by Sophie Brandt**

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