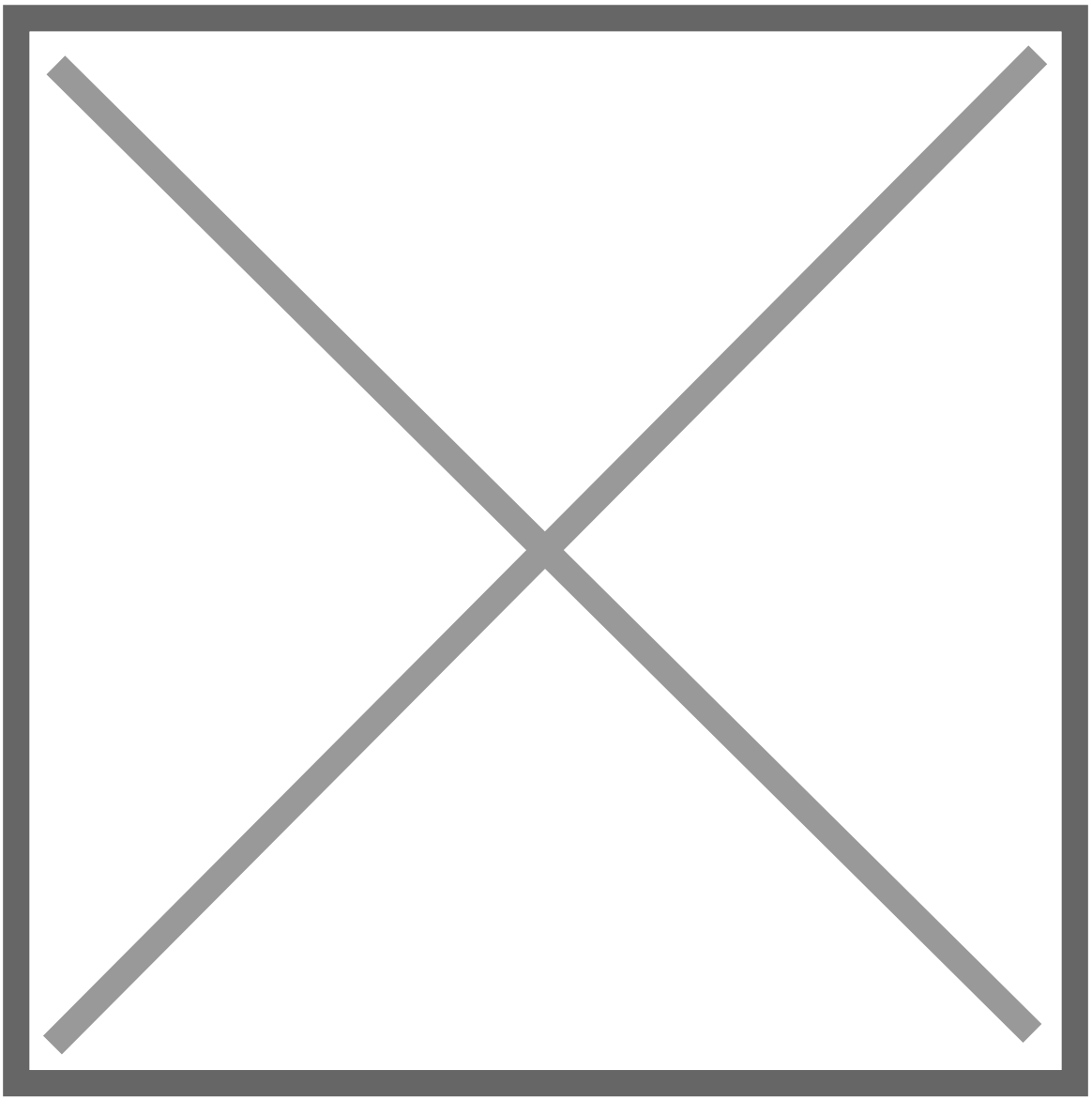
Please cite as: EASO, 'Rivers' in *Country Guidance Nigeria*, octobre 2021.

Rivers

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: October 2021

Rivers state is composed of 23 LGAs and its capital is Port-Harcourt city. The state's estimated population was 7 303 924 in 2016.



Communal violence in Rivers state has historically been triggered by battle over control of oil and gas facilities as well as disputed borders. River's capital city, Port Harcourt, was part of the independent Republic of Biafra. Additionally, cult groups have been active in the state since the 1980's. In 2020, the main actors of violence in Rivers state were criminal gangs, cult gangs, communal militias, vigilante groups and IPOB/ESN. The response of the Rivers state government

to protect communities from attacks of gangs operating across the state was described as inadequate.

Even though, compared to the previous year, cult and gang-related incidents in the state decreased in 2020, cultism remains one of the major sources of violence in Rivers state. In 2020, crime related incidents included kidnappings, piracy, robberies, clashes between gang members and security operatives. Fatalities during communal clashes and between pirates and military forces have also been reported. Cult and gang-related violence caused deaths and displacement within the state. Additionally, Nigerian military army operations have resulted in militiamen's and residents' fatalities, some of them in the context of clashes with IPOB/ESN. #EndSARS protests have also been reported in the area.

During 2020, ACLED reported a total of 37 security incidents (10 battles, 22 cases of violence against civilians, 5 incidents of riots) in Rivers state (average of 0.7 security incident per week). Security incidents took place in 12 out of 23 LGAs, with the largest overall number (6) being recorded in the LGA of Port-Harcourt .

The abovementioned security incidents resulted in 41 deaths. Compared to the estimated population in the state, this represents less than1 fatality per 100 000 inhabitants.

From 1 January to 30 April 2021, ACLED reported a total of 12 security incidents (4 battles, 8 cases of violence against civilians) in Rivers state (average of 0.7 security incident per week). These security incidents resulted in 14 deaths.

Information on the number of conflict-related IDPs and on the number of returnees in Rivers state could not be found.

Travellers on roads in Rivers state were reported to face robberies, kidnappings and sexual violence.

Looking at the indicators, it can be concluded that in the state of **Rivers** there is, in general, **no real risk** for a civilian to be personally affected within the meaning of Article 15(c) QD.

Main COI reference: Security situation 2021, 2.37

© European Union Agency for Asylum 2026 | Email: info@euaa.europa.eu