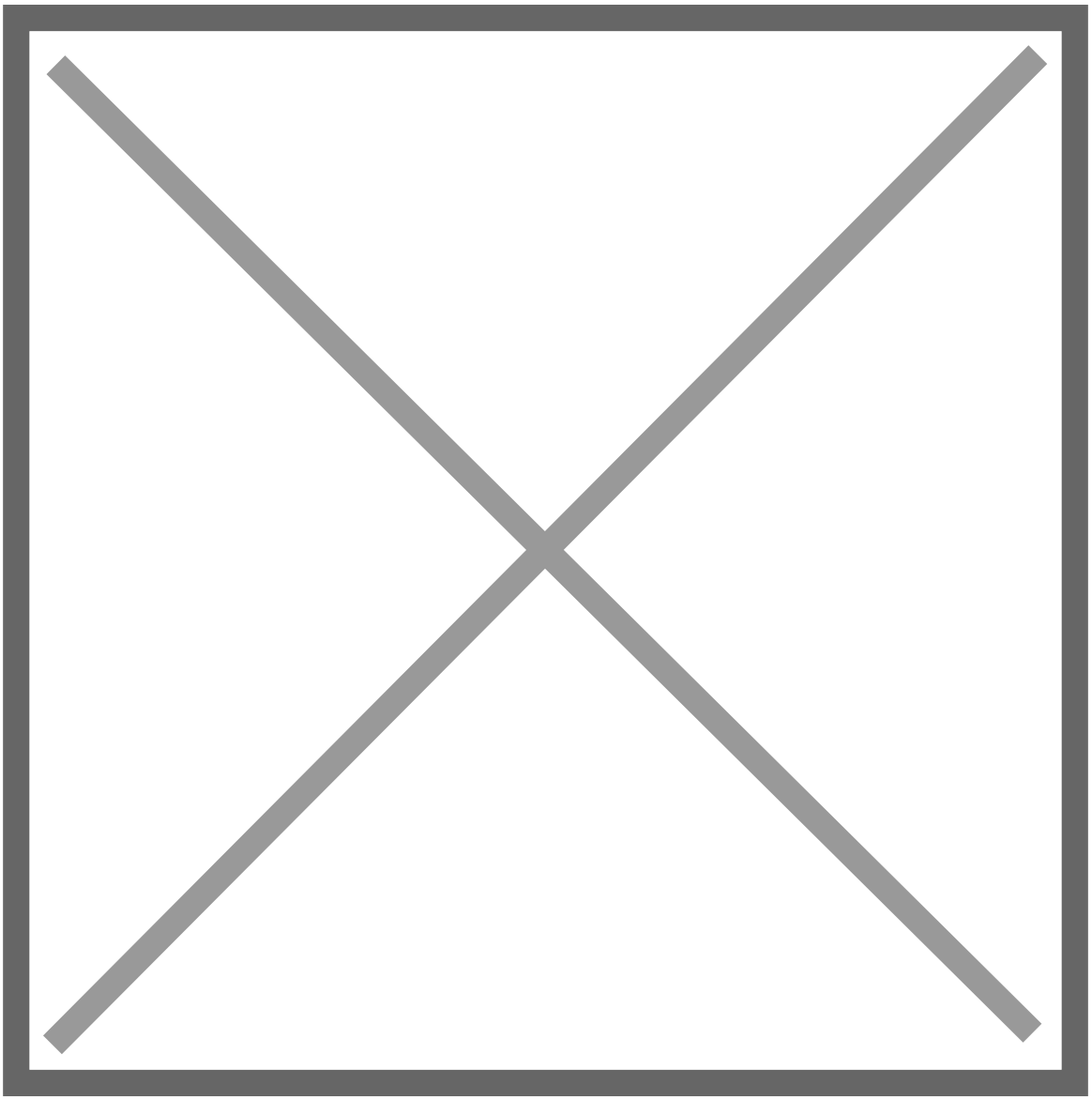
Zamfara

COMMON ANALYSIS
Last update: October 2021

Zamfara state is composed of 14 LGAs and its capital is Gusau. The state's estimated population was 4 515 427 in 2016.



The conflict in Zamfara started as competition over natural resources between Hausa farmers and Fulani herders, and escalated rapidly by armed militias on both sides. In the period from 2014 to 2020, 13 out of 14 LGAs in Zamfara state experienced violence by armed groups. Actors in security incidents included local militias or armed groups from both Fulani herders and Hausa farming communities, as well as other gangs of armed criminals involved in robbery and cattle

rustling. Gang violence started in Zamfara state and spilled over to neighbouring states. Moreover, Ansaru is engaging with and recruiting other splinter groups in Zamfara state. Although several military operations have been launched, their effectiveness has been questioned.

Clashes between the Nigerian military forces and local militia groups, including ground engagements and airstrikes carried out by the Nigerian Air Force, resulted in fatalities. The large majority of these fatalities were militia memberσ. Most of those incidents took place in Zurmi, Maru and Gusau LGAs. (Reprisal) armed attacks by unidentified gunmen, Fulani militias and suspected Yan Sakai militias against local communities resulted in civilian fatalities and abductions. For example, in February 2021, more than 300 girls were abducted from a secondary school by unknown men dressed as government security forces. Most of the girls were released several days later.

During 2020, ACLED reported a total of 129 security incidents (62 battles, 26 incidents of remote violence/explosions, 39 cases of violence against civilians, 2 incidents of riots) in Zamfara state (average of 2.5 security incidents per week). Security incidents took place in all LGAs, with the largest overall number (26) being recorded in the LGA of Zurmi.

The abovementioned security incidents resulted in 694 deaths. Compared to the estimated population in the state, this represents approximately 15 fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants.

From 1 January to 30 April 2021, ACLED reported a total of 46 security incidents (20 battles, 2 incidents of remote violence/explosions, 21 cases of violence against civilians, 3 incidents of riots) in Zamfara state (average of 2.7 security incidents per week). These security incidents resulted in 384 deaths.

The total number of IDPs for Zamfara by December 2020 was 112 316, an increase of 60 % compared to data recorded in July 2020. No specific data were found for Zamfara state with regard to the number of returnees.

A new humanitarian crisis is emerging in the state of Zamfara. In 2019, more than 10 000 houses, shops and silos in the state were reportedly destroyed due to violent attacks. Incidents of kidnapping and robbery have been reported in some roads of Zamfara.

Looking at the indicators, it can be concluded that indiscriminate violence is taking place in the state of **Zamfara**, however not at a high level. Accordingly, a **higher level of individual elements** is required in order to show substantial grounds for believing that a civilian, returned to the territory, would face a real risk of serious harm within the meaning of Article 15(c) QD.

Main COI reference: Security situation 2021, 2.7

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