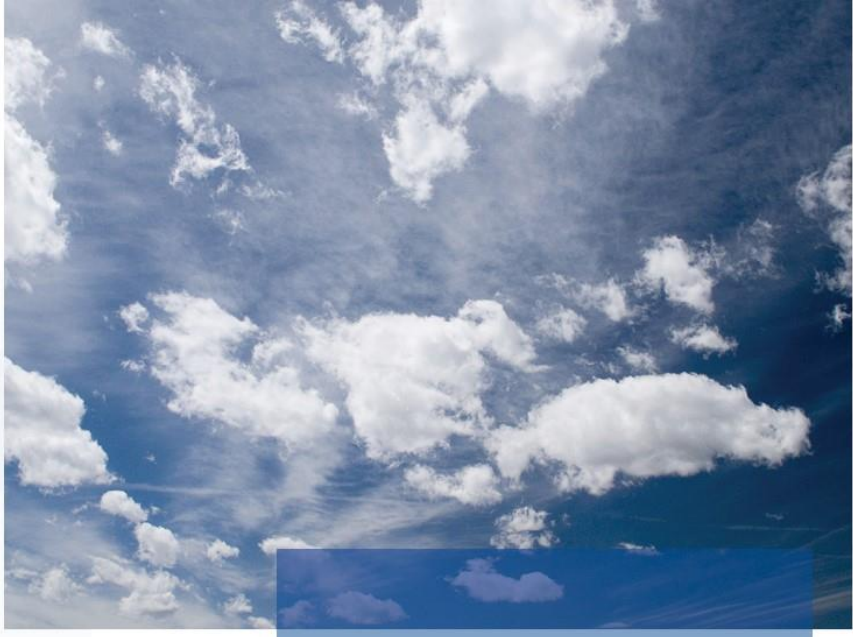


IJG Population and Housing Census 2023 review: A Larger, More Urbanised Lower Middle Income Country

December 2024

Economist:

Robin Sherbourne
robin@ijg.net
+264 (81) 958 3500

Table of Contents

Introduction....2
Population Size and Growth Rate....2
Population Distribution and Urbanisation....3
Age Distribution....4
Ethnicity and Non-Namibians....6
Mobile Phones, ICT and Social Media....7
Literacy Rates....8
Household Size....8
Sources of Income....9
Housing....9
Household Conditions....10
Conclusions....11

List of Tables

Table 1: Population Size by Urban and Rural and by Region since 1991....3
Table 2: Urban Areas with a Population Greater than 10,000 in 2023....4
Table 3: Population by Age Group and Region....5
Table 4: Social Grant and Pension Recipients....5
Table 5: Breakdown of Population by Ethnicity in 2023....6
Table 6: Breakdown of Citizenship of Non-Namibians in 2023....7
Table 7:Population Aged 3 or More Owning Mobile Phones in 2023....7
Table 8: Population Aged 3 or More Using ICT in 2023....8
Table 9: Household Sizes (People per House) in 1991, 2001, 2011 and 2023....9
Table 10: Main Sources of Household Income in 2023....9
Table 11: Types of Dwelling in 2023....10
Table 12: Household Conditions in 2011 and 2023....10

Introduction

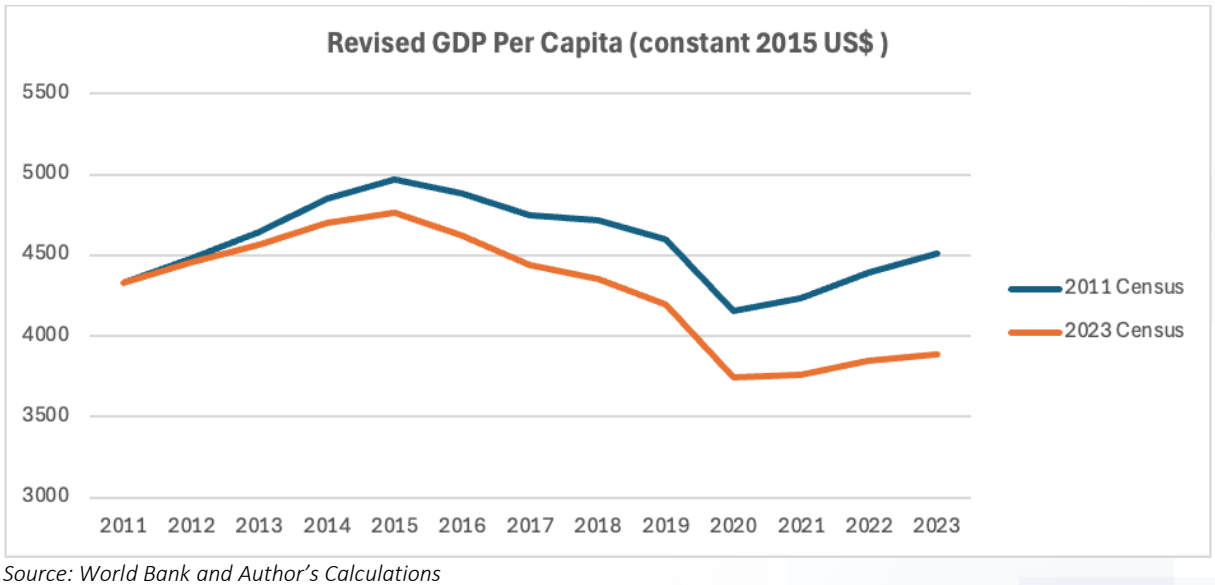
The main report of the Population and Housing Census 2023 was published by the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) on 30 October 2024 following the release of the preliminary report in March 2024. The 2023 census, which cost an estimated N$706 million, was due to take place in 2021 (in line with past censuses in 1991, 2001 and 2011) but was delayed due to fiscal constraints. Census enumeration took place within the three-week period of 18 September to 6 October 2023. The NSA should be congratulated for not only publishing the full report within a reasonable period of time following enumeration but also for making data available in the form of a detailed spreadsheet covering all the main issues covered by the main report. Unfortunately, however, the NSA announced without explanation that the data covering the labour force will only be released on 29 January 2025. This will be safely after national elections are out of the way and raises the question whether the NSA is being influenced by the governing party since they are expected to expose the dire unemployment situation facing the country. This short report looks at the data from the 2023 census and attempts to highlight key trends and draw some economic conclusions.

Population Size and Growth Rate

The Census revealed that Namibia's population stood at 3,022,401 in 2023 compared to 2,113,077 in 2011. This new population size implied a growth rate of 3.0% a year since 2011, more than double the implied growth rate of 1.4% for the previous period 2001 to 2011. This is a surprisingly high number which cannot be put down to net positive immigration. Developing countries generally tend to experience falling population growth rates as education and incomes improve and women enjoy greater participation in the labour force, have more control over reproduction, and choose to have fewer children.

The population is 525,000 larger than it would have been if it had grown at the previous rate of 1.4% from 2011. Namibia is now the country with the third rather than the second lowest population density in the world after Mongolia and Australia with 3.7 people per square kilometre. If the population continues to grow at a rate of 3.0% it will reach 3.7 million by 2030 and 4.0 million within the next ten years.

Namibian GDP per capita is lower than previously estimated. The World Bank estimated Namibia's GDP at US$12.35 billion and its population at 2,604,172 in 2023 giving a per capita GDP of US$4,742.80. The new figure implies an income per head of US$4,086.40 which places Namibia below the latest US$4,515.00 threshold for upper middle-income countries determined by the World Bank. This means Namibia has fallen back into the lower middle income country category for the first time since 2007. Namibia's Vision 2030 aims to turn the country into a high-income industrialised country by 2030. The threshold of the high-income classification is currently US$14,005.



Source: World Bank and Author's Calculations

Population Distribution and Urbanisation

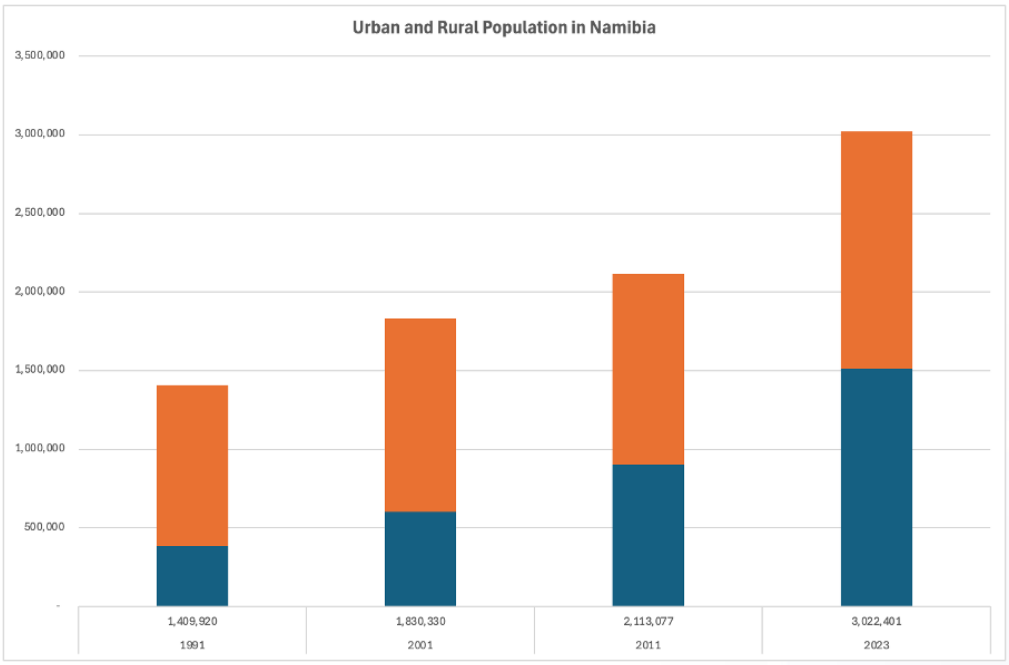
A breakdown of population by region since 1991 shows that the distribution of the population is moving away from most regions towards Erongo, Kavango (East and West) and Khomas.

Table 1: Population Size by Urban and Rural and by Region since 1991

Area	1991		2001		2011		2023		Change in
	Number	% share	Number	% share	Number	% share	Number	% share	Share since
Namibia	1 409 920		1 830 330		2 113 077		3 022 401		1991
Urban	382 680	27.1	603 612	33	903 434	42.8	1 512 685	50.0	
Rural	1 027 240	72.9	1 226 718	67	1 209 643	57.2	1 509 716	50.0	
//Kharas	61 162	4.3	69 329	3.8	77 421	3.7	109 893	3.6	- 0.7
Erongo	55 470	3.9	107 663	5.9	150 809	7.1	240 206	7.9	4.0
Hardap	66 495	4.7	68 249	3.7	79 507	3.8	106 680	3.5	- 1.2
Kavango East	116 830	8.3	202 694	11.1	136 823	6.5	218 421	7.2	3.0
Kavango West					86 529	4.1	123 266	4.1	3.0
Khomas	167 071	11.8	250 262	13.7	342 141	16.2	494 605	16.4	4.6
Kunene	64 017	4.5	68 735	3.8	86 856	4.1	120 762	4.0	- 0.5
Ohangwena	179 634	12.7	228 384	12.5	245 446	11.6	337 729	11.2	- 1.5
Omaheke	52 735	3.7	68 039	3.7	71 233	3.4	102 881	3.4	- 0.3
Omusati	189 919	13.5	228 842	12.5	243 166	11.5	316 671	10.5	- 3.0
Oshana	134 884	9.6	161 916	8.8	176 674	8.4	230 801	7.6	- 2.0
Oshikoto	128 745	9.1	161 007	8.8	181 973	8.6	257 302	8.5	- 0.6
Otjozondjupa	102 536	7.3	135 384	7.4	143 903	6.8	220 811	7.3	-
Zambezi	90 442	6.4	79 826	4.4	90 596	4.3	142 373	4.7	- 1.7

Source: NSA

Namibia's population has changed from being predominantly rural in 1991 (72.9% rural:27.1% urban) to being equally rural and urban in 2023 (50% rural:50% urban) and the growth rate of the urban population since 2011 is 4.1%. This process of urbanisation is common enough throughout the developing world. If people are free to move, they will move from rural to urban areas where there is greater access to economic opportunities and public services, perceived or real.



Source: NSA

Table 2: Urban Areas with a Population Greater than 10,000 in 2023

Town	2 011	2023	Change	% Change	% Growth
Windhoek	325,858	486,186	160,328	49.2	3.3
Rundu	63,431	118,632	55,201	87.0	5.2
Walvis Bay	62,096	102,704	40,608	65.4	4.2
Swakopmund	44,725	75,921	31,196	69.8	4.4
Oshakati	36,541	58,656	22,115	60.5	3.9
Otjiwarongo	28,249	49,022	20,773	73.5	4.6
Katima Mulilo	28,362	46,401	18,039	63.6	4.1
Okahandja	22,639	45,182	22,543	99.6	5.8
Rehoboth	28,843	40,788	11,945	41.4	2.9
Tsumeb	19,275	34,960	15,685	81.4	5.0
Ongwediva	20,260	33,777	13,517	66.7	4.3
Gobabis	19,101	33,418	14,317	75.0	4.7
Ondangwa	22,822	30,364	7,542	33.0	2.4
Helao Nafidi	19,375	29,119	9,744	50.3	3.4
Keetmanshoop	19,447	27,862	8,415	43.3	3.0
Grootfontein	10,415	26,839	16,424	157.7	7.9
Mariental	12,478	18,494	6,016	48.2	3.3
Eenhana	5,528	16,588	11,060	200.1	9.2
Luderitz	12,537	16,156	3,619	28.9	2.1
Outjo	8,445	15,063	6,618	78.4	4.8
Outapi	6,437	13,664	7,227	112.3	6.3
Opuwo	7,657	12,331	4,674	61.0	4.0
Omaruru	6,300	10,767	4,467	70.9	4.5
Otavi	5,242	10,756	5,514	105.2	6.0
Nkurenkuru	618	10,463	9,845	1593.0	23.6

Source: NSA

There are 25 towns with a population greater than 10,000 people, the five largest being Windhoek, Rundu, Walvis Bay, Swakopmund and Oshakati in that order. Windhoek is by far the largest with a population of 486,186 having grown by over 49% since 2011. One in every six people in Namibia live in Windhoek. Five smaller towns – Okahandja, Grootfontein, Eenhana, Outapi and Nkurenkuru - have more than doubled in size since 2011.

Age Distribution

Namibia has a young population with 1,290,611 aged between 0 and 17 years old. Those of voting age (18 or older) number 1,731,790. This number includes non-Namibian nationals. Of this number 873,489 or 49% were born after Namibia's independence in 1990. Some 60,000-70,000 young people per year will be coming into the labour force over the coming years.

Table 3: Population by Age Group and Region

	Major age group					
Region	0-4	5-14	15-34	35-59	60+	Total
Kharas	12,027	20,416	40,246	30,627	6,577	109,893
Erongo	26,305	44,611	87,394	67,905	13,991	240,206
Hardap	12,690	22,879	35,064	27,101	8,946	106,680
Kavango East	34,455	59,699	72,837	37,952	13,478	218,421
Kavango West	20,594	35,470	38,129	20,251	8,822	123,266
Khomas	52,406	85,996	200,948	134,473	20,782	494,605
Kunene	19,206	31,041	38,063	23,969	8,483	120,762
Ohangwena	54,756	98,202	101,026	56,629	27,116	337,729
Omaheke	15,574	21,939	35,048	23,074	7,246	102,881
Omusati	46,696	86,339	92,519	58,323	32,794	316,671
Oshana	29,303	51,036	82,000	51,578	16,884	230,801
Oshikoto	37,814	63,874	82,059	52,323	21,232	257,302
Otjozondjupa	30,710	48,608	77,077	51,815	12,601	220,811
Zambezi	22,941	33,786	48,525	29,398	7,723	142,373
Total	415,477	703,896	1,030,935	665,418	206,675	3,022,401

Source: NSA

Some 483,131 people receive some sort of social grant or pension including 17,849 private pensioners and 44,361 in receipt of pensions from the GIPF. There are 206,675 people over the age of 60. There are apparently 324 people over the age of 120. Most of those 60+ will be eligible for the state pension of N$1,600 per month implying annual expenditure of N$3,968 million per year. However, the census puts the number of state pension recipients at 176,780, considerably fewer people.

Table 4: Social Grant and Pension Recipients

Type of Social Grant or Pension	Number	%
Old age Pension	176,780	36.6
Disability Grants	61,616	12.8
State Maintenance grant	154,731	32.0
Foster parent grant	22,742	4.7
Workmen's compensation	19,151	4.0
Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) Funds	9,712	2.0
Pension from previous job	17,849	3.7
GIPF	44,361	9.2
War Veterans/ex-combatants Grants	19,912	4.1
Others	61,823	12.8
Total	**483,131**	

Source: NSA

There are 114,648 people aged 5 years or more with disabilities. Of the 1,287,612 people aged 17 or younger, 97,767 are orphans who have lost one parent and 16,021 are orphans who have lost both parents, of which both are significantly more numerous in rural areas.

The average age at which Namibians get married is 33.4 years for males and 28.3 years for females a difference of five years. While there are not significant differences between urban and rural populations, there are significant differences between regions ranging from 37.5 for males and 30.7 for females in Omusati to 29.8 for males and 24.4 for females in Zambezi. Significantly fewer men than women say they are married, either with certificate, traditionally, or through a consensual union.

Ethnicity and Non-Namibians

In previous censuses, ethnicity has not been directly measured. Instead, respondents have been classified by language group. In this census this has changed and 81 different ethnicities have been included. The table shows the top 20 ethnicities showing that "coloureds" number 62,590, "whites" 53,773 and "basters" 45,629 whilst there are 1,543 "Asians". Whites are not broken down into German, Afrikaans or English-speaking. The 2011 census provided information on main language by household rather than by individual with 48,248 households speaking Afrikaans, 4,359 speaking German, 3,306 speaking other European languages and 461 speaking Asian languages.

Table 5: Breakdown of Population by Ethnicity in 2023

Ethnicity	Total		Male	Female
	Number	Percent		
Aakwanyama	712,165	23.6	346,508	365,657
Aandonga	311,211	10.3	147,117	164,094
Ovaherero	178,987	5.9	87,644	91,343
Damara, NEC	170,112	5.6	82,621	87,491
Aakwambi	159,692	5.3	75,455	84,237
Vakwangali	147,631	4.9	71,479	76,152
Nama, NEC	93,904	3.1	45,261	48,643
Aambalantu	83,935	2.8	39,641	44,294
Vakavango, NEC	81,646	2.7	41,362	40,284
Aangandjera	76,847	2.5	36,638	40,209
Other African Ethnic group	73,486	2.4	40,601	32,885
Masubia	62,590	2.1	30,597	31,993
Coloured	62,226	2.1	30,149	32,077
Aambadja	59,243	2.0	29,047	30,196
White	53,773	1.8	26,186	27,587
Hambukushu	51,422	1.7	25,234	26,188
Vagciriku	50,529	1.7	24,203	26,326
Aakwaluudhi	47,447	1.6	21,878	25,569
Baster	45,629	1.5	22,532	23,097
Mafwe	43,398	1.4	21,056	22,342

Source: NSA

Out of the total population, some 145,395 people or 4.8% are non-Namibians consisting of more males (83,192) than females (62,203). This proportion is slightly higher than the 3.2% in 2011. Angolans make up by far the largest number of non-Namibians, followed by Zambians, Zimbabweans and South Africans. Africans make up 93% of all non-Namibians whilst Europeans make up 3.7%, Asians 1.9% and the rest of the world 0.9%.

Table 6: Breakdown of Citizenship of Non-Namibians in 2023

Citizenship	Population				Percent		
	Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female
Total	145,395	83,192	62,203		100.0	100.0	100.0
Angola	89,461	52,660	36,801		61.5	63.3	59.2
Botswana	666	330	336		0.5	0.4	0.5
South Africa	7,070	3,283	3,787		4.9	3.9	6.1
Zambia	21,476	11,936	9,540		14.8	14.3	15.3
Zimbabwe	10,080	5,602	4,478		6.9	6.7	7.2
Other SADC Countries	5,259	2,837	2,422		3.6	3.4	3.9
Other African Countries	1,946	1,234	712		1.3	1.5	1.1
European Countries	5,418	2,799	2,619		3.7	3.4	4.2
American Countries	844	443	401		0.6	0.5	0.6
Asian and Oceanic Countries	2,754	1,836	918		1.9	2.2	1.5
Others	421	232	189		0.3	0.3	0.3

Source: NSA

Mobile Phones, ICT and Social Media

Out of the population aged 3 years or above, over 52% possess a mobile phone including 28% who own a smart phone. Rates of mobile and smart phone ownership are higher in urban than rural areas and mobile and smart phone ownership is particularly high in Erongo and Khomas. The figure of 52.2% has hardly changed since 2011 when it was 52.6%.

Table 7: Population Aged 3 or More Owning Mobile Phones in 2023

Area	Population	Total	Basic phone	Feature phone	Smart phone	None	Don't know
Namibia	2,743,319	52.2	22.1	1.5	28.5	47.4	0.5
Urban	1,383,629	62.5	18.9	1.9	41.7	37.1	0.4
Rural	1,359,690	41.7	25.4	1.2	15.1	57.8	0.5
//Kharas	100,977	61.3	21.9	1.5	37.9	37.9	0.8
Erongo	220,124	67.3	18.6	1.9	46.8	31.9	0.8
Hardap	97,172	50.8	18.9	2.5	29.4	48.9	0.4
Kavango Eas	195,357	38.3	17.8	1.2	19.2	61.4	0.4
Kavango We	110,016	30.5	18.5	0.7	11.3	69.3	0.2
Khomas	457,728	70.3	18.4	2.3	49.7	29.2	0.4
Kunene	107,999	36.4	18.5	1.7	16.1	62.7	0.9
Ohangwena	304,275	41.8	25.7	0.9	15.2	57.9	0.4
Omaheke	92,310	45.6	22.0	1.2	22.4	53.8	0.5
Omusati	287,976	46.4	28.0	1.0	17.4	53.2	0.4
Oshana	210,730	59.4	25.6	1.4	32.4	40.2	0.3
Oshikoto	231,952	48.7	27.6	1.0	20.2	50.8	0.4
Otjozondjupa	199,781	52.2	20.9	1.8	29.5	47.2	0.6
Zambezi	126,922	44.9	21.7	2.1	21.0	54.9	0.3

Source: NSA

Some 2,743,319 people aged 3 years and above used ICT platforms to access information by region in the previous 3 months. Again, levels of access are particularly high in Erongo and Khomas. Almost 30% of these people use social media.

Table 8: Population Aged 3 or More Using ICT in 2023

Area	Total	Internet browsing	Social Media	Email	SMS	MMS	Radio	Television	Mobile Apps	Print media
Namibia	2 743 319	28.3	29.7	23.2	48.9	12.3	44.8	35.7	17.2	19.5
Urban	1 383 629	43.4	44.3	36.8	60.3	17.9	48.7	55.3	27.4	30.5
Rural	1 359 690	12.9	14.8	9.4	37.2	6.5	40.8	15.8	6.8	8.3
//Kharas	100 977	37.6	39.2	30.6	60.2	12.8	43.1	53.0	21.5	20.9
Erongo	220 124	47.8	49.1	41.2	64.7	18.2	52.7	61.5	32.0	33.3
Hardap	97 172	29.8	31.7	23.1	51.5	8.5	47.3	52.2	16.0	17.3
Kavango East	195 357	19.4	20.0	15.7	36.8	9.8	32.2	29.6	9.7	10.2
Kavango West	110 016	10.1	11.0	7.8	30.2	5.8	30.5	14.6	4.9	4.5
Khomas	457 728	52.3	52.6	45.6	67.9	22.8	51.1	57.5	34.6	38.5
Kunene	107 999	14.2	16.3	11.5	30.0	7.0	24.8	22.5	7.5	7.1
Ohangwena	304 275	14.0	15.5	10.0	37.0	7.2	46.3	16.1	7.9	10.3
Omaheke	92 310	20.1	22.9	14.5	43.3	7.2	42.8	28.7	9.5	10.4
Omusati	287 976	15.3	17.3	11.3	40.2	8.3	46.6	16.0	9.0	12.3
Oshana	210 730	32.6	34.4	27.0	55.9	14.9	57.5	39.6	21.0	27.0
Oshikoto	231 952	18.1	20.1	14.3	42.4	9.0	42.8	20.7	10.0	12.0
Otjozondjupa	199 781	29.5	31.1	23.1	50.3	10.6	41.8	43.5	16.9	19.0
Zambezi	126 922	20.7	21.2	16.3	43.5	9.1	37.8	31.0	10.6	11.4

Source: NSA

Literacy Rates

Literacy rates are high in Namibia with an average of 87.3% for those aged 15 years and above, 87.5% for males and 87.1% for females. As might be expected literary rates are higher for urban than for rural areas and are highest in Khomas and lowest in Kunene. Some 9.7% of those aged 6 years or 242,074 people and over have never attended school, far more in rural than urban areas. School enrolment rates for those aged 6-13 years are 92.1% for males and 93.4% for females.

Household Size

Although the total population has doubled, the number of households has almost trebled from 254,389 in 1991 to 756,339 in 2023. On average rural households are larger than urban ones. Households are smallest in //Karas and Erongo and largest in East and West Kavango. Nationally, households are headed almost equally by males (51%) and females (49%) and 50,002 households are headed by someone with a disability.

Table 9: Household Sizes (People per House) in 1991, 2001, 2011 and 2023

Area	1991		2001		2011		2023	
	Households	Percent	Households	Percent	Households	Percent	Households	Percent
Namibia	254,389	100	346,455	100	464,839	100	756,339	100
Urban	75,939	29.9	136,909	39.5	228,955	49.3	414,119	54.8
Rural	178,450	70.1	209,546	60.5	235,884	50.7	342,220	45.2
//Kharas	12,046	4.7	15,481	4.5	20,988	4.5	33,273	4.4
Erongo	13,453	5.3	27,496	7.9	44,116	9.5	74,795	9.9
Hardap	13,358	5.3	15,039	4.3	19,307	4.2	28,197	3.7
Kavango East	17,831	7.0	30,467	8.8	23,050	5.0	39,907	5.3
Kavango West					13,691	2.9	21,614	2.9
Khomas	33,662	13.2	58,580	16.9	89,438	19.2	144,630	19.1
Kunene	12,460	4.9	12,489	3.6	18,495	4.0	28,890	3.8
Ohangwena	28,427	11.2	35,958	10.4	43,723	9.4	67,820	9.0
Omaheke	9,500	3.7	12,590	3.6	16,174	3.5	28,188	3.7
Omusati	30,882	12.1	38,202	11.0	46,698	10.0	72,437	9.6
Oshana	22,190	8.7	29,557	8.5	37,284	8.0	60,412	8.0
Oshikoto	21,426	8.4	28,419	8.2	37,400	8.0	60,643	8.0
Otjozondjupa	21,093	8.3	25,338	7.3	33,192	7.1	58,237	7.7
Zambezi	18,061	7.1	16,839	4.9	21,283	4.6	37,296	4.9

Source: NSA

Sources of Income

By far the main source of household income are salaries and/or wages but this is especially the case for urban households. Only 10.6% of households depend primarily on farming and 9.0% depend on non-farming business activities. In 2023 1.4% of households depended on drought relief assistance. These ratios have not changed much since 2011.

Table 10: Main Sources of Household Income in 2023

Main source of livelihood/survival	Namibia	Urban	Rural
Households	756 339	414,119.00	342,220
Salaries and /or wages	46.6	59.7	30.8
Old age pension	13.8	7.3	21.8
Farming (Subsistence and Commercial)	10.6	1.0	22.2
Business activities non-farming	9.0	11.5	6.0
Child support (Parents)	2.4	3.3	1.4
Grants	2.6	1.9	3.3
In kind receipts	2.1	2.2	1.9
Drought relief assistance	1.4	0.4	2.6
Other sources of Livelihood	3.7	4.2	3.0
Source of livelihood not specified	3.3	4.2	2.1

Source: NSA

Housing

The number of informal dwellings has increased since 2011 and some 28.7% of all households live in informal dwellings but in Khomas and Omaheke this proportion rises to 46.9% and 46.8% respectively. In other words approximately 68,000 households mainly in Windhoek live in informal accommodation.

Table 11: Types of Dwelling in 2023

Area	Household	Formal dwelling	Traditional dwelling	Flat or apartment in a block of flats	Cluster house in complex	Town house	Semi-detached house	Formal dwelling (house/ flat/ room) in the backyard	Infomal dwelling	Caravan/ tent	Single Quarters	Others
Namibia	756339	33.2	26.0	4.1	0.2	1.2	0.6	4.6	28.7	0.3	0.6	0.4
Urban	414119	40.9	2.5	5.8	0.2	2.0	0.7	6.6	40.2	0.2	0.6	0.3
Rural	342220	23.8	54.6	2.1	0.2	0.3	0.5	2.2	14.7	0.5	0.5	0.6
Kharas	33273	41.5	11.8	8.0	0.1	1.2	1.5	5.1	29.0	0.3	1.2	0.3
Erongo	74795	44.3	1.4	5.3	0.3	1.0	0.8	8.4	37.4	0.3	0.5	0.3
Hardap	28197	49.2	1.4	2.9	0.4	0.9	1.2	3.5	39.1	0.3	0.7	0.4
Kavango Eas	39907	27.3	32.3	2.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	3.5	33.2	0.1	0.2	0.5
Kavango We	21614	16.8	62.3	1.6	0.4	0.3	0.2	1.3	16.6	0.1	0.2	0.2
Khomas	144630	37.4	0.1	6.0	0.2	1.9	0.5	6.3	46.9	0.1	0.4	0.1
Kunene	28890	30.5	36.4	2.6	0.2	0.6	0.6	2.1	23.7	1.0	1.5	0.7
Ohangwena	67820	21.4	58.3	3.1	0.2	1.5	0.4	2.6	11.3	0.2	0.6	0.4
Omaheke	28188	36.2	7.0	1.9	0.3	0.6	0.4	3.2	46.8	0.9	0.8	1.8
Omusati	72437	23.2	59.0	3.6	0.1	1.3	0.6	3.4	8.2	0.1	0.3	0.3
Oshana	60412	40.0	23.0	4.6	0.2	2.6	0.5	6.9	21.6	0.1	0.3	0.2
Oshikoto	60643	25.9	48.6	3.8	0.3	0.5	0.8	3.5	15.6	0.2	0.6	0.3
Otjozondjupa	58237	42.5	5.8	2.6	0.1	1.1	0.8	4.2	40.1	1.2	1.1	0.4
Zambezi	37296	17.7	63.1	3.5	0.0	0.1	0.2	2.4	11.0	0.6	0.6	0.9

Source: NSA

Household Conditions

An examination of how household conditions have changed since 2011 shows that some progress has been made in the last 12 years on access to safe drinking water, toilet facilities, and electricity for lighting (from the mains or from generators). Access to safe drinking water ranges from as high as 98.8% in Khomas to as low as 74.1% in Kunene. The number of improvised housing units or shacks has increased significantly as a result of increased urbanisation. Some modest improvements have been made to access to flush toilets in both urban and rural areas but the proportion of households with access to garbage collection has fallen in both urban and rural areas.

Table 12: Household Conditions in 2011 and 2023

	2011	2023
Households with:		
Safe water for drinking (piped water, well, bottled or boreholes)	80.0%	91.4%
No toilet facility	48.6%	40.0%
No toilet facility in urban	22.4%	20.3%
No toilet facility in rural	74.0%	63.8%
Electricity for lighting	43.3%	47.1%
Electricity for cooking	32.9%	34.2%
Wood/charcoal for cooking	53.7%	50.4%
Improvised housing units (shacks)	16.0%	28.7%
Sanitation:		
Urban household with access to flush toilet	68.7%	69.9%
Rural household with access to flush toilet	11.3%	18.5%
Urban household with access to garbage colletion	78.6%	69.9%
Rural household with access to garbage collection	7.2%	5.9%

Source: NSA

Conclusions – Mostly Steady Change But A Larger, More Urbanised Lower Middle Income Country

The greatest surprise in the 2023 Census was the higher than expected population growth and the size of the population. Other than that, characteristics such as the difference between urban and rural areas and differences between the 13 regions of the country as well as trends that were already long underway such as urbanisation and the improvement of access by households to safe drinking water. From the census figures alone it is hard to assess whether, given the significant public resources which have been devoted to social upliftment over the past 12 years, sufficient progress has been made. Namibia is turning into a steadily more urbanised society centered on Erongo and Khomas as well as Kavango while farming provides a main source of income for a relatively small number of households. This urban drift has given rise to many more informal dwellings in urban areas.



IJG Holdings

Mathews Hamutenya	Group Chairman		Tel: +264 (61) 256 699
Mark Späth	Group Managing Director	mark@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3510
Helena Amutenya	Group Financial Director	helena@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3528
Leonie De Klerk	Group Compliance Officer	leonie@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3533
Tashiya Josua	Financial Manager	tashiya@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3511
Benita Windisch	Financial Manager	benita@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3539
Lynnet Sasele	Financial Accountant	lynnet@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3536
Counney Kemp	Group PA	reception@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3500

IJG Securities

Leon Maloney	Equity & Fixed Income Dealing	leon@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3512
Maria Amutenya	Settlements & Administration	maria@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3515
Zane Feris	Sales and Research	zane@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3543
Robin Sherbourne	Economist	robin@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3500

IJG Wealth Management

Andri Ntema	Managing Director	andri@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3518
Wim Boshoff	Head Wealth Manager	wim@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3537
Aretha Thiart	Wealth Manager	aretha@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3540
Katja Greeff	Wealth Manager	katja@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3538
Wetu Ishitile	Junior Wealth Manager	wetu@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3500
Maunda Rautenbach	Head of Operations	maunda@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3529
Lorein Kazombaruru	Wealth Administration	lorein@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3521
Francoise van Wyk	Wealth Administration	francoise@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3513
Calvin Mwinga	Wealth Administration	calvin@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3514

IJG Capital

Jakob de Klerk	Managing Director	jakob@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3517
Mirko Maier	Senior Manager: Investments	mirko@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3531
Fares Amunkete	Senior Manager: Investments	fares@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3527
Peterson Mbise	Manager: Investments	peterson@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3532
Veripi Ngapurue	Senior Associate	veripi@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3500
Jacinda Lima	Associate	jacinda@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3500

IJG Investment Managers & IJG Unit Trusts

Chidera Onwudinjo	Portfolio Manager	chidera@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3523
Danie van Wyk	Portfolio Manager	danie@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3534

IJG Advisory

Herbert Maier	Managing Director	herbert@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3522
Jolyon Irwin	Director	jolyon@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3500
Hugo van den Heever	Corporate Advisor	hugo@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3542
Lucas Martin	Corporate Advisory Associate	lucas@ijg.net	Tel: +264 (81) 958 3541

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