

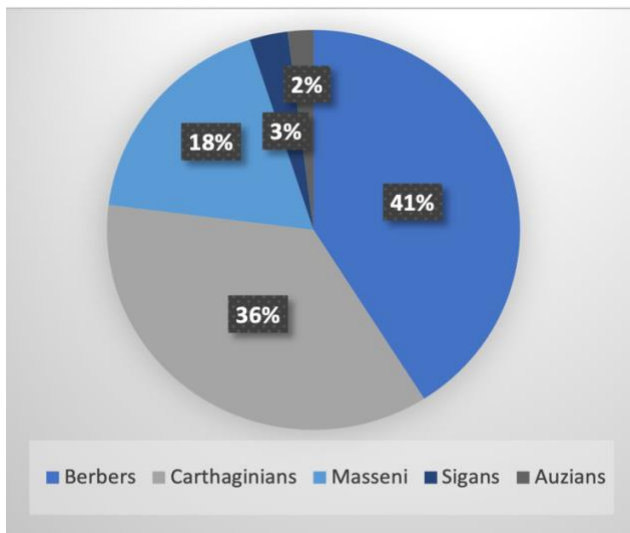
Numidia Country Factsheet

TOTAL POPULATION:
62.4 million

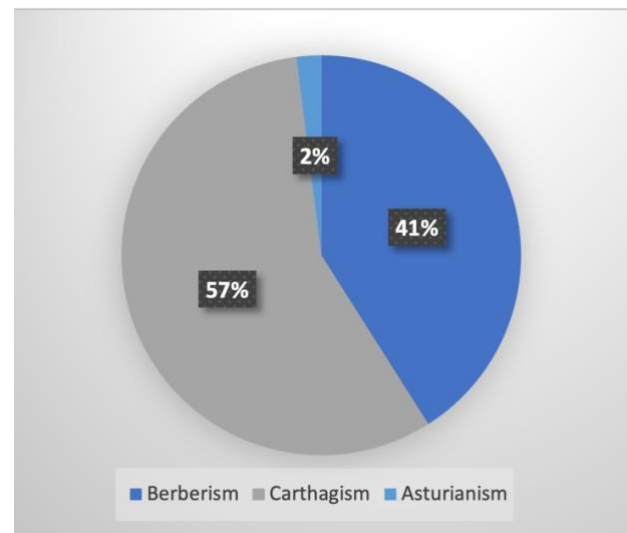
CIRTA (CAPITAL) TOTAL POPULATION:
24.8 million

NUMIDIAN DEMOGRAPHICS

Ethnolinguistic Groups



Religious Affiliation



NUMIDIA

Official language: Numdian

Official religion: Berberism

(Unofficial) religion:

- Carthagism (Carthaginians, Sigans)
- Asturianism (Auzians)

Area: 115,099 sq. km

Ethnolinguistic groups and religions:

- Berbers (main): adherents of Berberism (official religion of Numidia)
- Carthaginians: adherents of Carthagism
- Masseni: adherents of Carthagism
- Sigans: adherents of Carthagism
- Auzians: adherents of Asturianism



Background to the Numidian Crisis

1995-2012:

For 17 years, Numidia was ruled by an authoritarian regime, consisting of the Berber ethnic/religious group, that controlled every aspect of Numidian life, under the strict rules of its religious leaders. It had a powerful and disciplined military and police force to enforce these rules and keep opposition and resistance to a minimum.

Numidians of all ethnicities and religions were forced to live according to the Berbers' religious laws and minority groups were frequently targeted by military and police. Non-religious Berbers were also targeted, particularly academics and artists. Women were forced to live under extremely restrictive rules, including prohibitions on secondary-level education and employment outside of domestic work. Homosexuality was strictly prohibited and members of the LGBTIQ+ community were routinely arrested. Enforced disappearances were common.

Although dangerous and difficult, pro-democracy groups began to form in the early 2000s. Members were from all minority groups and included some who identified as Berbers but were opposed to the regime. Over the next decade, these groups grew; many obtained arms and began to organise themselves into a loose coalition of armed resistance and opposition to the Berbers regime. As they grew in numbers, they engaged in sporadic fighting with the Numidian military across all territories.

During this time, only small, occasional groups of Numidians fleeing persecution (for the reasons listed above) were able to reach Parthia, due to the military's control of the Eastern Province bordering Parthia.

2012-2014:

In 2012, this loose coalition of armed groups/opposition, coordinated in a widespread, organised attack on the Berber regime. They called themselves the **Numidian Peoples Brigade**, or "**the Brigade**". The attack caught the Berbers by surprise and armed Numidian citizens joined the rebels in large numbers, swelling the ranks of the Brigade.

A brutal and bloody civil war ensued, resulting in thousands of deaths and a large influx of refugees fleeing to Parthia. UNHCR established a Branch Office in the capital soon after the first refugees began to arrive in Parthia.

After two years of fighting the Berbers with increasing success, the Brigade were able to take over the capital of Numidia, Cirta, forcing the Berbers to tactically withdraw to the northern parts of the Eastern Province where they still maintained control. Due in part to the rich natural resources they controlled in this territory, they still maintained some leverage against the Brigade. However, the Berbers also recognised that their only option to end the war without eventually losing all power, was to agree to a peace deal.

The peace agreement gave the Brigade what they had demanded:

- the end to authoritarianism
- a transition towards democracy with the creation of a new national assembly and making the leader of the Brigade the Interim President

- an agreement to hold elections for President and members of the new assembly within 6 months

However, because of the Berbers' significant territorial, economic, and military control, they were also able to negotiate a good deal for themselves:

- the Berbers would select key military and police appointments, appointed by the interim President
- Berber territory would provide half the seats in the national assembly
- Berbers would be responsible for election administration in their territories

2014-2016:

For six months, the peace agreement held, and elections took place across the country. Members of the Berber regime formed a political group called the **Berbers Political Alliance** (the "**Berbers Alliance**"). Unsurprisingly, counties in the Eastern Province all elected members of the Berbers Alliance. Two other counties in Numidia also elected Berbers, giving them a slight majority in the national assembly.

Shocking everyone, the Interim President did not win the Presidential election. Instead, a less-known deputy in the Brigade gained a slim majority of the votes. This surprise outcome prompted cries of corruption and fraud from Numidians and the international community. Irregularities and intimidation had been widely reported throughout the country. Nevertheless, there were no official or legal attempts to challenge the outcome.

For two years, this new democratic experiment in Numidia struggled, made more vulnerable by an economy and population ravaged by civil war. The President showed himself to be weak, corrupt, and unable/unwilling to take control of the government or manage the national assembly.

Everyone knew the real power lay with the Minister of Defence & Civil Defence, a new ministry created to allow him to control the armed forces and police. A powerful Berber and leader in the former regime, he acted to undermine democratic reform by *reducing* law and order efforts and allowing violence and lawlessness to begin to escalate throughout Numidia.

Nonetheless, for two years there was relative peace – no major conflict and no refugees entering Parthia. In fact, some Numidian refugees returned, while others remained in Parthia, where they settled throughout the country.

2016-2021:

By 2016, Numidia's fragile democracy was breaking down. The economy remained devastated by the effects of civil war, widespread corruption, and under-investment from international business. Unemployment was extremely high, creating widespread food insecurity and civil unrest.

Groups of men no longer affiliated with the Brigade yet still heavily armed, having poor economic prospects and struggling to survive, began to form semi-organised criminal gangs. These gangs engaged in violence and lawlessness in urban areas all over the country, contributing to a sense amongst most Numidians that their country was barely holding together.

In early 2017, the Berbers Political Alliance splintered. Some, unhappy with this democratic "experiment" and wanting to return to the days of the old regime, withdrew from their positions (in

the national assembly, military, police, or other government roles) and regrouped in remote territories in the north-east of Numidia. They called themselves **the Berbers Blade** (“the Blade”).

The Blade quickly organised and took control of remote territories in the east, removing all Numidian government and political authorities in the area and reinstating the religious rule of the former Berber regime.

Over the years, the Blade was able to take over larger territories in Numidia, beginning with the Eastern Province and moving south-west. They were helped by the fact that the military and police did nothing to prevent or stop their progress. Members of the Brigade not already in government positions began to regroup, forming militias in the Northern Province and attempting to fight the Blade.

The President was unable to overrule the defence minister and by 2018 there were loud calls from the public for the President’s resignation.

This Blade expansion and the violence it brought with it caused some sporadic arrivals of Numidians into Parthia, but due to their territorial control along much of the border, not in large numbers.

Two months earlier:

Seemingly out of nowhere, the Numidian Defence Minister formed an alliance with the Berbers Blades and, with the support of much of the military, enacted a coup to overthrow the President and his administration, quickly taking control of the capital and announcing an immediate return to religious rule. He publicly claimed to be “simply enacting the people’s will”.

Non-Berber military and police, government officials able to escape, and former members of the Brigade attempted to regroup and resist. Widespread chaos and violence erupted throughout the country. This fighting is continuing as the new Berber regime has been unable to conclusively defeat those resisting the coup/regime. Numidia has again returned to a state of civil war.

The increasing presence of the Blade throughout Numidia has reduced its presence on the border, allowing for a large influx of Numidian refugees to cross its eastern border with Parthia. Reasons for flight include persecution against the following groups:

- All Numidian ethnic minority groups
- All religious Numidians not adhering/practicing Berberism
- Women (severe restrictions of freedom/liberties, high incidents of public and private violence, young women abducted and raped as “wives” for Blade soldiers)
- Members of the LGBTIQ+ community (routinely targeted and subjected to enforced disappearances)
- Activists and members of civil society (from all ethnic groups)
- Academics and former government employees (from all ethnic groups)
- Young men in fear of recruitment or execution (from all ethnic groups)