

Eritrea

83.0%¹



Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM in women aged 15–49 is 83.0%.
82.2% of women aged 15–49 and 83.5% of men aged 15–59 believe FGM should be stopped.²

Geography:

The regions with the highest prevalence are in the central north: Semenawi Keih Bahri and Anseba³

Age:

58.6% of women aged 15–49 who have undergone FGM were cut before the age of five⁴

Type:

'Nicked, no flesh removed' and 'sewn closed' are the most common types of FGM practised⁵

Agent:

80.3% of FGM cases are carried out by a 'traditional circumciser'⁶

Development Indicators

HDI Rank: 179 out of 189 countries (2018)⁷

Population: 5,437,714 (as at 16 May 2017), with a 0.81% growth rate (2016 est.)⁸

Infant Mortality Rate: 34 deaths per 1,000 live births (2015)⁹

Maternal Mortality Ratio: 501 deaths per 100,000 live births (2015)¹⁰

Literacy: 73.8% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write¹¹

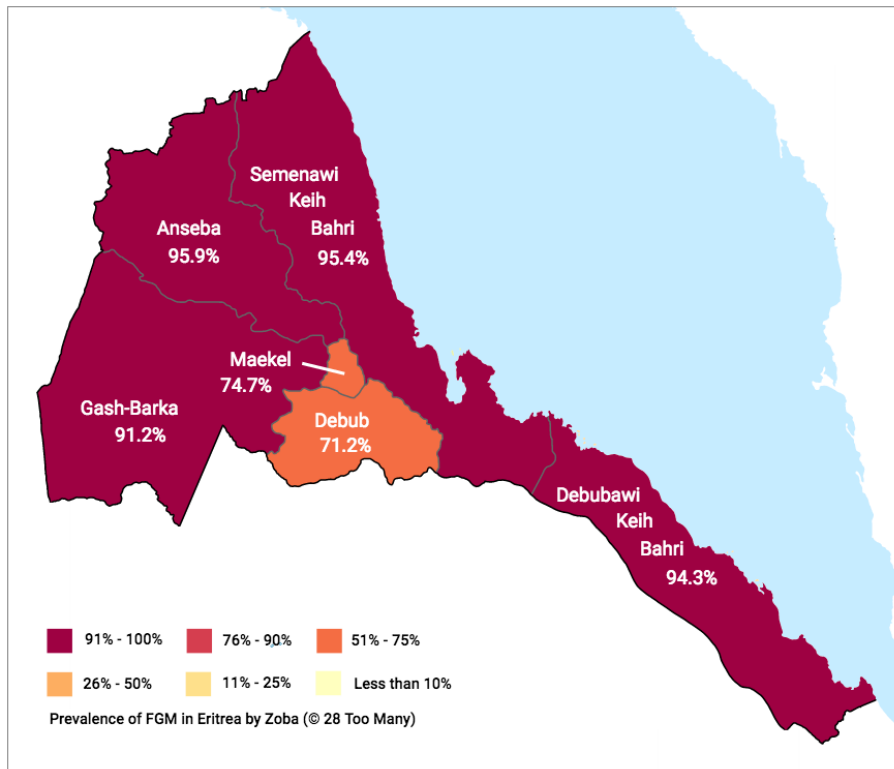
*'If you teach people that they can still keep their culture
without mutilating girls, this would be better.'*

~ Eritrean FGM survivor¹²

Prevalence

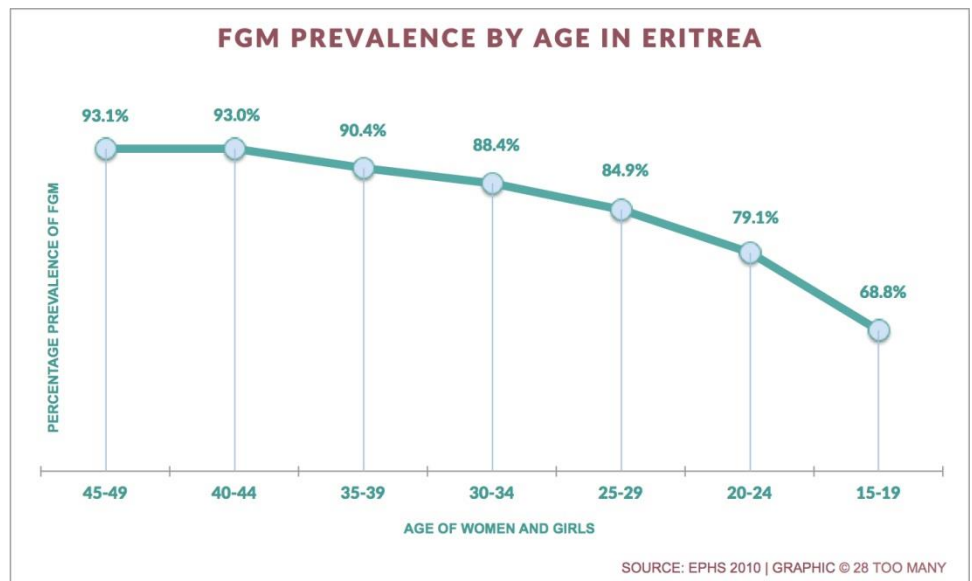
FGM in Eritrea is practised by both Christians and Muslims, although neither the DHS nor the National Statistics Office gives a breakdown of prevalence according to respondents' religion.

It is practised in all regions of the country, and slightly more in rural areas (85% of women aged 15–49) than in urban areas (80%). The regions with the highest prevalence are Semenawi Keih Bahri (95.4% of women aged 15–49) and Anseba (95.9%). The region with the lowest prevalence is Debub (71.2%). In Asmara, the capital city, prevalence is 73.6%.



Prevalence is inversely correlated to increasing levels of education and wealth.¹³

Between 2002 and 2010, the overall prevalence of FGM fell from 88.7% to 83.0%. Due to the large age-range of women included, however, the overall prevalence alone may not fully reflect the progress that has been made in recent years. Breaking down the most recent data by age group shows that the prevalence for women aged 45–49 is 93.1%, while for the youngest age group this has fallen to 68.8%. Despite the fact that a small proportion of women may be cut after the age of 15, the data demonstrates a clear trend towards lower prevalences among younger women.¹⁴



Eritrean Law

In March 2007, the Eritrean Government passed legislation that specifically prohibits the practice of FGM (Proclamation No. 158/2007: 'A Proclamation to Abolish Female Circumcision').

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- 1 (**'EPHS'**): National Statistics Office (NSO) [Eritrea] and Fafo AIS (2013) *Eritrea Population and Health Survey 2010*, p.347. Asmara, Eritrea: National Statistics Office and Fafo Institute Applied International Studies.
 - 2 EPHS, pp.347 & 364-365.
 - 3 EPHS, p.347.
 - 4 EPHS, p.350.
 - 5 National Statistics and Evaluation Office (NSEO) [Eritrea] and ORC Macro (2003) *Eritrea Demographic and Health Survey 2002*, p.197. Calverton, Maryland, USA: National Statistics and Evaluation Office and ORC Macro. Available at <http://dhsprogram.com/what-we-do/survey/survey-display-170.cfm> (accessed 22 May 2017).
 - 6 EPHS, p.352.
 - 7 United Nations Development Programme (2018) *Human Development Reports*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update> (accessed 12 June 2019).
 - 8 - Country Meters (2017) *Eritrea*, 16 May 2017. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Eritrea> (accessed 16 May 2017).
- Central Intelligence Agency (2016) *World Factbook: Eritrea*, 12 January. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/er.html> (accessed 16 May 2017).
 - 9 Countdown to 2030 (2015) *A Decade of Tracking Progress for Maternal, Newborn and Child Survival The 2015 Report: Eritrea*. Available at http://countdown2030.org/documents/2015Report/Eritrea_2015.pdf (accessed 16 May 2017).
 - 10 WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and United Nations Population Division Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (2015) *Maternal mortality in 1990-2015: Eritrea*. Available at http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/countries/eri.pdf?ua=1 (accessed 16 May 2017).
 - 11 Central Intelligence Agency, *op. cit.*
 - 12 Michael Yong (2017) 'Cut, trafficked and raped – one FGM survivor's story', *Bristol Post*, 22 February. Available at <http://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/cut-trafficked-raped-one-fgm-1928> (accessed 22 May 2017).
 - 13 EPHS, p.347.
 - 14 - EPHS, p.347.
- National Statistics and Evaluation Office (NSEO) [Eritrea] and ORC Macro (2003) *Eritrea Demographic and Health Survey 2002*, p.198. Calverton, Maryland, USA: National Statistics and Evaluation Office and ORC Macro. Available at <http://dhsprogram.com/what-we-do/survey/survey-display-170.cfm> (accessed 22 May 2017).

UNICEF Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting:

UNICEF (2014) *Eritrea: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*. Available at https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Eritrea/FGMC_ERI.pdf (accessed 16 May 2017).

Images on website:

- 1 Andrea Moroni (2014) *Eritrea – portrait #3*. Available at <https://flic.kr/p/qnAHsK>. CCL: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/>
- 2 The Come Up Show (2011) *Eritrea 2011: Watermelon*. Available at <https://flic.kr/p/9RE9x3>. CCL: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/>.
- 3 Carlos Rels (2015) *Girl: From Asmara to Massawa disused railroad*. Available at <https://flic.kr/p/GoPH5c>. CCL: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/>.