

# Senegal



23.3%<sup>1</sup>

## Key Findings

The prevalence of FGM among women aged 15–49 is 23.3%.  
80.6% of women and 77.8% of men aged 15–49 believe FGM should not continue.<sup>2</sup>

### **Geography:**

FGM prevalence varies widely from 73% in the South to 5.4% in the centre.<sup>3</sup>

### **Age:**

More than 80% of girls are cut before the age of 5.<sup>4</sup>

### **Type:**

Over 50% of women aged 15–49 were 'cut, flesh removed'<sup>5</sup>

### **Agent:**

Almost all FGM is carried out by 'traditional cutters'<sup>6</sup>

## Development Indicators

**HDI Rank:** 168 out of 189 countries (2020)<sup>7</sup>

**SDG Gender Index Rating:** 104 out of 129 countries (2019)<sup>8</sup>

**Population:** 17,264,474 (as of 10 June 2021), with a 3.09% growth rate (2021 est.)<sup>9</sup>

**Infant Mortality Rate:** 22 deaths per 1,000 live births (2019)<sup>10</sup>

**Maternal Mortality Ratio:** 315 deaths per 100,000 live births (2017)<sup>11</sup>

**Literacy:** 51.9% of the total population aged 15 and over can read/write<sup>12</sup>

*'It's deeply rooted in the culture. It existed even before Islam came here.'*  
~ Senegalese activist<sup>13</sup>

## Prevalence

The prevalence of FGM varies widely across Senegal, from 5.4% of women aged 15–49 who live in the centre to 73.0% of those who live in the south.

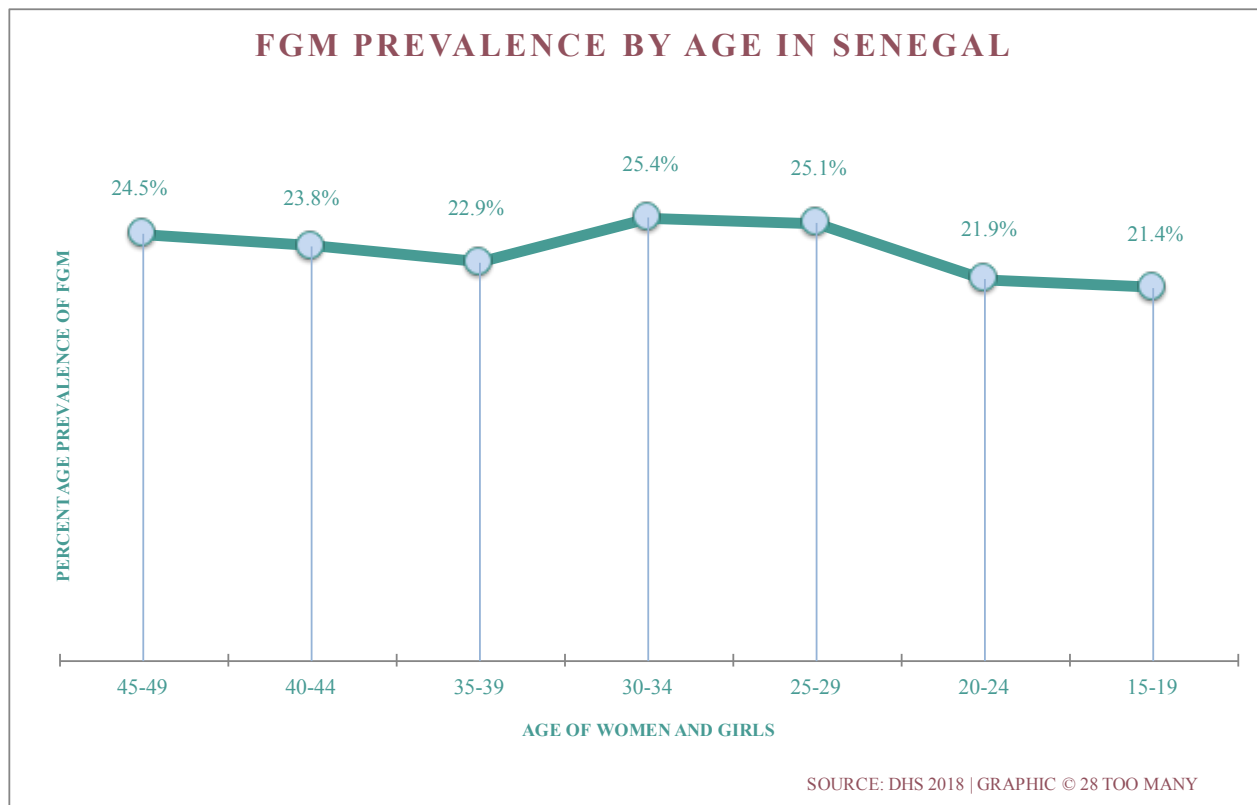
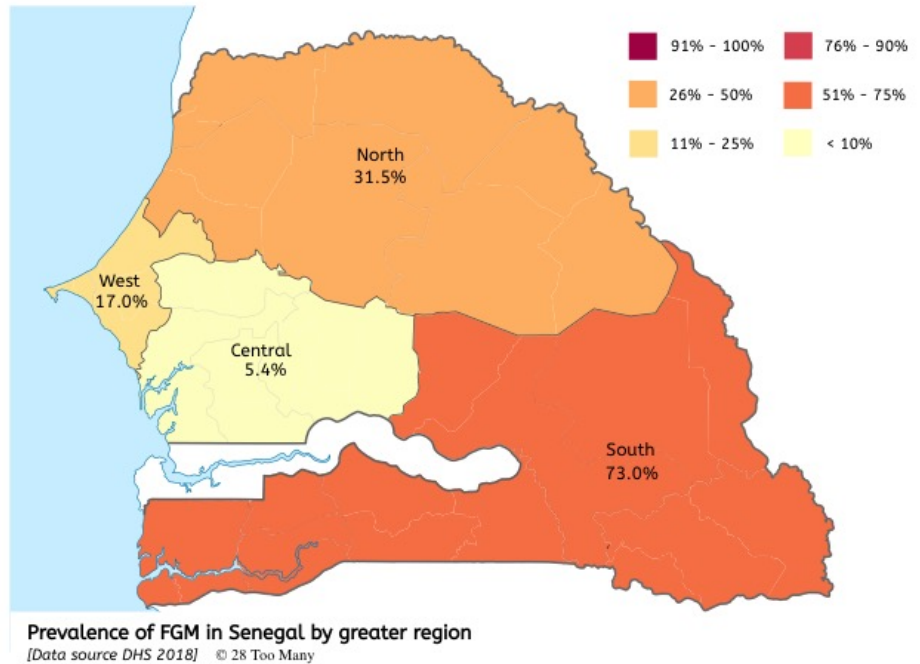
FGM prevalence also varies between peoples of different ethnic groups and religions. The highest-practising groups include the Mandigue/Soce (67.2%), Soninké (64.3%), Diola (48.7%) and Poular (52.1%). The lowest prevalences are found among the Wolof (0.7%) and the Serer (1.2%), although these are based on very small

sample sizes. Prevalence is 24.1% among Muslims and 4.6% among Christians.<sup>14</sup> 11.5% of women and 12.0% of men who have heard of FGM believe it is a religious requirement.<sup>15</sup>

The greatest support for the continuation of FGM is among young women aged 15–19, among men and women from the most-frequently-practising ethnic groups, those living in rural areas and those surveyed who had little education or were in the lowest wealth quintile.<sup>16</sup>

The prevalence of FGM in women (aged 15–49) is 23.3%. This is a slight decrease from 24.0% in 2017. 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 24.5%, while for the youngest age group this has fallen to 21.4%. Despite the fact that a small proportion of women may be cut after the age of 15, the data suggests a trend towards lower prevalences for younger women, although the data points are of course affected by statistical fluctuations.<sup>17</sup>



# Senegalese Law

In 1999, the Government of Senegal passed legislation that specifically prohibits the practice of FGM (Law No. 99-05 of 25 January 1999 amending various provisions of the Penal Code [Article 2], as incorporated into the Penal Code, Article 299 *bis*).

- 1 (**'DHS'**): Source of data: Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de la Démographie (ANSD) [Sénégal], et ICF. 2018. Sénégal : Enquête Démographique et de Santé Continue (EDS-Continue 2018). Rockville, Maryland, USA : ANSD et ICF. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR367/FR367.pdf>.
- 2 DHS, p.334.
- 3 DHS, p.330.
- 4 DHS, p.331.
- 5 DHS, p.330.
- 6 (**'DHS 2016'**): Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de la Démographie (ANSD) [Sénégal], et ICF (2017) *Sénégal : Enquête Démographique et de Santé Continue (EDS-Continue 2016)*, p.164. Rockville, Maryland, USA : ANSD et ICF. Available at <https://dhsprogram.com/publications/publication-FR331-DHS-Final-Reports.cfm>.
- 7 United Nations Development Programme (2020) *Human Development Reports*. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/SEN#> (Accessed 10 June 2021).
- 8 Equal Measures 2030 (2019) *Harnessing the Power of Data for Gender Equality: Introducing the 2019 EM2030 SDG Gender Index*, pp.12–13. Available at [www.data.em2030.org/2019-global-report](http://www.data.em2030.org/2019-global-report) (accessed 12 June 2019).
- 9 Country Meters (2021) *Senegal*, 10 June 2021. Available at <http://countrymeters.info/en/Senegal>.
- 10 Countdown to 2030 (2021) Country Profile: Senegal <https://profiles.countdown2030.org/#/ds/SEN> (Accessed 10 June 2021)
- 11 *ibid*
- 12 United Nations Development Programme (2020), *op. cit.*
- 13 Fatma Naib (2016) 'Senegal's anti-FGM campaigner: "My Child won't be cut"', *Aljazeera*, 11 March. Available at <http://www.aljazeera.com/blogs/africa/2016/03/senegal-fgm-campaigner-child-cut-160309134128545.html> (accessed 25 May 2017).
- 14 - DHS, p.330.  
- DHS 2016, p.58.
- 15 DHS 2018, p. 330
- 16 DHS, p.334.
- 17 DHS, p.330.

## **UNICEF Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting:**

UNICEF (2020) *Senegal: Statistical Profile on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting*. Available at [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country\\_profiles/Senegal/FGM\\_Country\\_Profiles\\_March2020/FGM\\_SEN.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/country_profiles/Senegal/FGM_Country_Profiles_March2020/FGM_SEN.pdf)

## **Images on website:**

- 1 Vladimir Zhoga (2013) *DAKAR/SENEGAL – NOVEMBER 12, 2013: Senegalese smiling woman with a basket of handmade jewelry and souvenirs for sale on her head and a baby on her back at the Retba salt lake near Dakar, Senegal*. Shutterstock ID 408410962.
- 2 Vladimir Zhoga (2013) *DAKAR/SENEGAL – NOVEMBER 13, 2013: Senegalese woman with her baby in a tribal village near Dakar, Senegal*. Shutterstock ID 531009769.
- 3 Vladimir Zhoga (2013) *DAKAR/SENEGAL – NOVEMBER 13, 2013: Portrait of African little girl in the tribal village*. Shutterstock ID 531009799.