

Middle Eastern Ethnic Groups

Afghanistan

Ethnic groups: Pashtun 38%, Tajik 25%, Uzbek 6%, Hazara 19%

Religions: Sunni Muslim 84%, Shi'a Muslim 15%, other 1%

Languages: Pashtu, Afghan Persian (Dari), Turkic languages (primarily Uzbek and Turkmen), 30 minor languages (primarily Balochi and Pashai)

Bahrain

Ethnic groups: Bahraini Arab 63%, Asian 13%, other Arab 10%

Religions: Shi'a Muslim 75%, Sunni Muslim 25%

Languages: Arabic, English, Farsi, Urdu

Ethnic groups: Egyptian 99.6%, other 0.4% (2006 census)

Religions: Muslim (mostly Sunni) 90%, Coptic Christian 9%, other Christian 1%

Languages: Arabic (official), English and French widely understood by educated classes

Iran

Ethnic groups: Persian 51%, Azerbaijani 24%, Kurd 7%, Arab 3%,

Religions: Shi'a Muslim 89%, Sunni Muslim 10%, Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Baha'i 1%

Languages: Persian and Persian dialects, Turkic and Turkic dialects, Kurdish, Luri, Balochi, Arabic, Turkish.

Iraq

Ethnic groups: Arab 75%-80%, Kurdish 15%-20%,

Religions: Muslim 97% (Shi'a 60%-65%, Sunni 32%-37%), Christian or other 3%

Languages: Arabic, Kurdish (official in Kurdish regions), Assyrian, Armenian

Israel

Ethnic groups: Jewish 76.4% (of which Israel-born 67.1%, Europe/America-born 22.6%, Africa-born 5.9%, Asia-born 4.2%), non-Jewish 23.6% (mostly Arab)

Religions: Jewish 76.4%, Muslim 16%, Arab Christians 1.7%, other Christian 0.4%, Druze 1.6%, unspecified 3.9%

Languages: Hebrew (official), Arabic used officially for Arab minority, English most commonly used foreign language

Palestine

Gaza Strip

Ethnic groups: Palestinian Arab and other 99.4%, Jewish 0.6%

Religions: Muslim (predominantly Sunni) 98.7%, Christian 0.7%, Jewish 0.6%

Languages: Arabic, Hebrew, English (widely understood)

West Bank

Ethnic groups: Palestinian Arab and other 83%, Jewish 17%

Religions: Muslim 75% (predominantly Sunni), Jewish 17%, Christian and other 8%

Languages: Arabic, Hebrew, English (widely understood)

Jordan

Ethnic groups: Arab 98%,

Religions: Sunni Muslim 96%, Christian 4%

Languages: Arabic (official), English (widely understood)

Kuwait

Ethnic groups: Kuwaiti Arab 45%, other Arab 35%, South Asian 9%

Religions: Muslim 85% (Sunni 45%, Shi'a 40%), Christian, Hindu, Parsi, and other 15%

Languages: Arabic (official), English widely spoken

Oman

Ethnic groups: Arab, Baluchi, South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi), African

Religions: Ibadhi Muslim 75%, other (includes Sunni Muslim, Shia Muslim, Hindu) 25%

Languages: Arabic (official), English, Baluchi, Urdu, Indian dialects

Pakistan

Ethnic groups: Punjabi 44.1%, Pashtun (Pathan) 15.4%, Sindhi 14.1%, Sariaiki 10.5%, Urdu 7.6%, Balochi 3.6%, other 4.7%

Religions: Muslim 97% (Sunni 77%, Shi'a 20%), Christian, Hindu, and other 3%

Languages: Punjabi 48%, Sindhi 12%, Siraiki (a Punjabi variant) 10%, Pashtu 8%, Urdu (official) 8%, Balochi 3%, Hindko 2%, Brahui 1%, English (official and lingua franca of Pakistani elite and most government ministries)

Qatar

Ethnic groups: Arab 40%, Pakistani 18%, Indian 18%, Iranian 10%

Religions: Muslim 95%

Languages: Arabic (official), English commonly used as a second language

Saudi Arabia

Ethnic groups: Arab 90%, Afro-Asian 10%

Religions: Muslim 100%

Languages: Arabic

Syria

Ethnic groups: Arab 90.3%, Kurds, Armenians, and other 9.7%

Religions: Sunni Muslim 74%, Alawite, Druze, and other Muslim sects 16%, Christian (various sects) 10%, Jewish (tiny communities in Damascus, Al Qamishli, and Aleppo)

Languages: Arabic (official); Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, Circassian, French, English

Turkey

Ethnic groups: Turkish 80%, Kurdish 20%

Religions: Muslim 99.8% (mostly Sunni), other 0.2% (Christian and Jews)

Languages: Turkish (official), Kurdish, Arabic

United Arab Emirates

Ethnic groups: Emiri Arab 19%, other Arab and Iranian 23%, South Asian 50

Religions: Muslim 96% (Shi'a 16%), Christian, Hindu, and other 4%

Languages: Arabic (official), Persian, English, Hindi, Urdu

Yemen

Ethnic groups: predominantly Arab; Afro-Arab concentrations in western coastal locations; South Asians in southern regions; small European communities in major metropolitan areas

Religions: Muslim Sunni and Shi'a, small numbers of Jewish, Christian, and Hindu

Languages: Arabic

Middle Eastern Ethnic Groups Questions

1. List the ethnic groups you see listed at least three times in these nations.
2. Which single ethnic group is predominant?
3. List the religions you see listed at least three times in these nations.
4. Which religion is predominant?
5. What is the majority ethnic group of Iran?
6. Of Israel?
7. Of Turkey
8. In which nations are Kurds found?
9. What do you think is the religion of the Kurdish ethnic group?