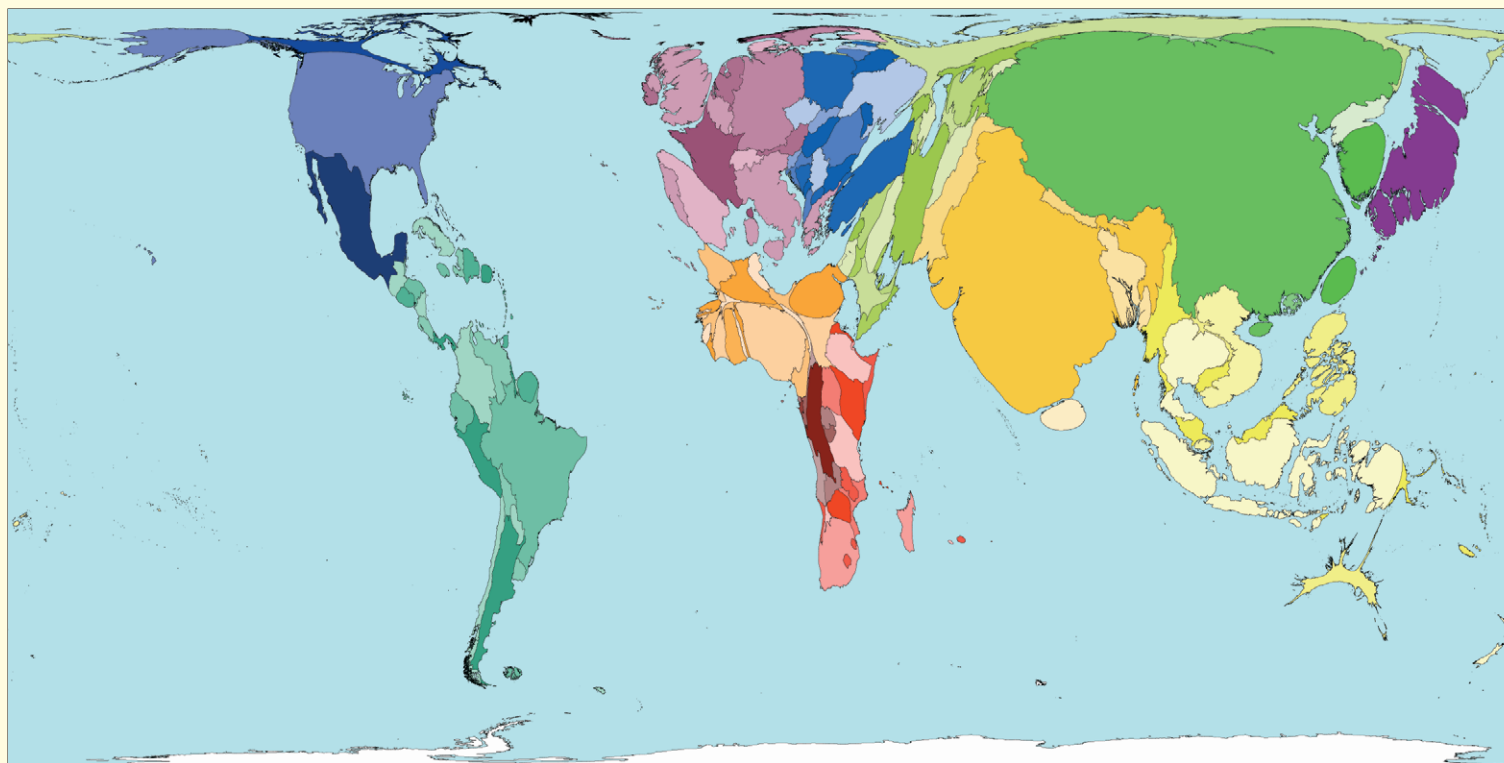


# Adult Literacy

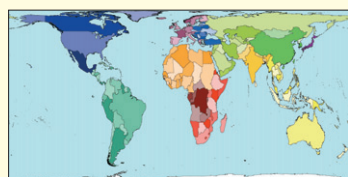


Worldwide, 3.6 billion adults are literate; 82% of the adult population are able to read and write simple statements. Here adults include people aged 15 years and over.

The percentage of literate adults is lower than that of literate youth in every region of the world. The biggest differences are 17% in Northern Africa, 13% in Central Africa, and 11% in Southeastern Africa. The smallest difference between youth and adult literacy rates is 1% in Japan.

The largest populations of literate adults live in China, India and the United States. India has a literacy rate of 61%, the other two territories have rates of 91%.

Territory size shows the proportion of all people over 15 years old who are literate, that live there.



Land area

### Technical notes

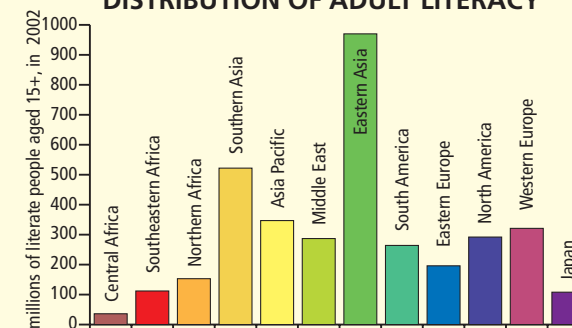
- Data are from the United Nations Development Programme's 2004 Human Development Report.
- Literacy is being able to read, write and understand a short simple statement.
- \*Children aged 15-17 are included here, the title is adults as the vast majority are aged 18 or over.
- See website for further information.

### LOWEST LEVELS OF ADULT LITERACY

Rank	Territory	Value	Rank	Territory	Value
181	Bhutan	57.6	191	Nepal	44.0
182	Comoros	56.2	192	Ethiopia	41.5
183	Egypt	55.6	192	Pakistan	41.5
184	Haiti	51.9	194	Mauritania	41.2
185	Morocco	50.7	195	Bangladesh	41.1
186	Burundi	50.4	196	Benin	39.8
187	Yemen	49.0	197	Senegal	39.3
188	Central African Republic	48.6	198	Mali	19.0
189	Mozambique	46.5	199	Niger	17.1
190	Chad	45.8	200	Burkina Faso	12.8

percentage of people aged over 15 years old who are literate

### DISTRIBUTION OF ADULT LITERACY



*“I am somehow less interested in the weight and convolutions of Einstein’s brain than in the near certainty that people of equal talent have lived and died in cotton fields and sweatshops.”*

Stephen Jay Gould, 1980