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WRITTEN BY		August 10, 2024	

REVISION HISTORY

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

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Chapter 1

139

1.1 139.guide

Texified version of data for Liberia.

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Liberia

1.2 139.guide/Liberia

Liberia

Geography (Liberia)
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Economy (Liberia)
Economy (Liberia 2. usage)
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1.3 139.guide/Geography (Liberia)

Geography (Liberia)
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Location:

Western Africa, bordering the North Pacific Ocean between Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone

Map references:

Africa, Standard Time Zones of the World

Area: total area:

111,370 km²

land area:

96,320 km²

comparative area:

slightly larger than Tennessee

Land boundaries:

total 1,585 km, Guinea 563 km, Cote d'Ivoire 716 km, Sierra Leone 306 km

Coastline:

579 km

Maritime claims:

continental shelf:

200 m depth or to depth of exploitation

territorial sea:

200 nm

International disputes:

none

Climate:

tropical; hot, humid; dry winters with hot days and cool to cold nights;
wet, cloudy summers with frequent heavy showers

Terrain:

mostly flat to rolling coastal plains rising to rolling plateau and low mountains in northeast

Natural resources:

iron ore, timber, diamonds, gold

Land use:

arable land:

1%

permanent crops:

3%

meadows and pastures:

2%

forest and woodland:
 39%
 other:
 55%
 Irrigated land:
 20 km2 (1989 est.)
 Environment:
 West Africa's largest tropical rain forest, subject to deforestation

1.4 139.guide/People (Liberia)

People (Liberia)

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Population:
 2,874,881 (July 1993 est.)
 Population growth rate:
 3.37% (1993 est.)
 Birth rate:
 43.9 births/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Death rate:
 12.38 deaths/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Net migration rate:
 2.15 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Infant mortality rate: 115.9 deaths/1,000 live births (1993 est.)
 Life expectancy at birth:
 total population:
 57.28 years
 male:
 54.88 years
 female:
 59.76 years (1993 est.)
 Total fertility rate:
 6.42 children born/woman (1993 est.)
 Nationality:
 noun:
 Liberian(s)
 adjective:
 Liberian
 Ethnic divisions:
 indigenous African tribes 95% (including Kpelle, Bassa, Gio, Kru, Grebo, Mano, Krahn, Gola, Gbandi, Loma, Kissi, Vai, and Bella), Americo-Liberians 5% (descendants of repatriated slaves)
 Religions:
 traditional 70%, Muslim 20%, Christian 10%
 Languages:
 English 20% (official), Niger-Congo language group about 20 local languages come from this group
 Literacy:
 age 15 and over can read and write (1990)
 total population:
 40%
 male:

50%
 female:
 29%
 Labor force:
 510,000 including 220,000 in the monetary economy
 by occupation:
 agriculture 70.5%, services 10.8%, industry and commerce 4.5%, other 14.2%
 note:
 non-African foreigners hold about 95% of the top-level management and
 engineering jobs; 52% of population of working age

1.5 139.guide/Government (Liberia)

Government (Liberia)

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Names:
 conventional long form:
 Republic of Liberia
 conventional short form:
 Liberia
 Digraph:
 LI
 Type:
 republic
 Capital:
 Monrovia
 Administrative divisions: 13 counties; Bomi, Bong, Grand Bassa, Cape Mount, ←
 Grand Gedeh, Grand
 Kru,
 Lofa, Margibi, Maryland, Montserrado, Nimba, River Cess, Sinoe
 Independence:
 26 July 1847
 Constitution:
 6 January 1986
 Legal system:
 dual system of statutory law based on Anglo-American common law for the
 modern sector and customary law based on unwritten tribal practices for
 indigenous sector
 National holiday:
 Independence Day, 26 July (1847)
 Political parties and leaders:
 National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL), Augustus CAINE, chairman;
 Liberian Action Party (LAP), Emmanuel KOROMAH, chairman; Unity Party (UP),
 Carlos SMITH, chairman; United People's Party (UPP), Gabriel Baccus
 MATTHEWS, chairman
 Suffrage:
 18 years of age; universal
 Elections:
 President:
 last held on 15 October 1985 (next to be held NA); results - Gen. Dr. ←
 Samuel
 Kanyon DOE (NDPL) 50.9%, Jackson DOE (LAP) 26.4%, other 22.7%; note -

President Doe was killed by rebel forces on 9 September 1990

Senate:
 last held on 15 October 1985 (next to be held NA); results - percent of ↵
 vote
 by party NA; seats - (26 total) NDPL 21, LAP 3, UP 1, UPP 1

House of Representatives:
 last held on 15 October 1985 (next to be held NA); results - percent of ↵
 vote
 by party NA; seats - (64 total) NDPL 51, LAP 8, UP 3, UPP 2

Executive branch:
 president, vice president, Cabinet

Legislative branch:
 bicameral National Assembly consists of an upper house or Senate and a ↵
 lower
 house or House of Representatives

Judicial branch:
 People's Supreme Court

Leaders:
 Chief of State and Head of Government:
 interim President Dr. Amos SAWYER (since 15 November 1990)

note:
 this is an interim government appointed by the Economic Community of West
 African States (ECOWAS) that will be replaced after elections are held ↵
 under
 a West African-brokered peace plan; a rebel faction led by Charles TAYLOR ↵
 is
 challenging the SAWYER government's legitimacy; former president, Gen. Dr.
 Samuel Kanyon DOE, was killed on 9 September 1990 by Prince Y. JOHNSON

1.6 139.guide/Government (Liberia 2. usage)

Government (Liberia 2. usage)

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Member of:
 ACP, AfDB, CCC, ECA, ECOWAS, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICFTU, IDA, IFAD,
 IFC, ILO, IMF, IMO, INMARSAT, INTERPOL, IOC, ITU, LORCS, NAM, OAU, UN,
 UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WHO, WIPO, WMO

Diplomatic representation in US: chief of mission:
 Ambassador James TARPEH

chancery:
 5201 16th Street NW, Washington, DC 20011

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 (202) 723-0437 through 0440

consulate general:
 New York

US diplomatic representation:
 chief of mission:
 Ambassador William H. TWADDELL

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 111 United Nations Drive, Monrovia

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 P. O. Box 98, Monrovia, or APO AE 09813

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[231] 222991 through 222994

FAX:

(231) 223710

Flag:

11 equal horizontal stripes of red (top and bottom) alternating with white; there is a white five-pointed star on a blue square in the upper hoist-side corner; the design was based on the US flag

1.7 139.guide/Economy (Liberia)

Economy (Liberia)

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Overview:

Civil war since 1990 has destroyed much of Liberia's economy, especially the infrastructure in and around Monrovia. Businessmen have fled the country, taking capital and expertise with them. Many will not return. Richly endowed with water, mineral resources, forests, and a climate favorable to agriculture, Liberia had been a producer and exporter of basic products, while local manufacturing, mainly foreign owned, had been small in scope. Political instability threatens prospects for economic reconstruction and repatriation of some 750,000 Liberian refugees who have fled to neighboring countries. The political impasse between the interim government and rebel leader Charles Taylor has prevented restoration of normal economic life, including the re-establishment of a strong central government with effective economic development programs.

National product:

GDP - exchange rate conversion - \$988 million (1988)

National product real growth rate:

1.5% (1988)

National product per capita:

\$400 (1988)

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

12% (1989)

Unemployment rate:

43% urban (1988)

Budget:

revenues \$242.1 million; expenditures \$435.4 million, including capital expenditures of \$29.5 million (1989)

Exports:

\$505 million (f.o.b., 1989 est.)

commodities:

iron ore 61%, rubber 20%, timber 11%, coffee

partners:

US, EC, Netherlands

Imports:

\$394 million (c.i.f., 1989 est.)

commodities:

rice, mineral fuels, chemicals, machinery, transportation equipment, other

foodstuffs
 partners:
 US, EC, Japan, China, Netherlands, ECOWAS
 External debt:
 \$1.6 billion (December 1990 est.)
 Industrial production:
 growth rate 1.5% in manufacturing (1987); accounts for 22% of GDP
 Electricity:
 410,000 kW capacity; 750 million kWh produced, 275 kWh per capita (1991)
 Industries:
 rubber processing, food processing, construction materials, furniture, palm
 oil processing, mining (iron ore, diamonds)
 Agriculture:
 accounts for about 40% of GDP (including fishing and forestry); principal
 products - rubber, timber, coffee, cocoa, rice, cassava, palm oil,
 sugarcane, bananas, sheep, goats; not self-sufficient in food, imports 25%
 of rice consumption
 Economic aid:
 US commitments, including Ex-Im (FY70-89), \$665 million; Western (non-US)
 countries, ODA and OOF bilateral commitments (1970-89), \$870 million; OPEC
 bilateral aid (1979-89), \$25 million; Communist countries (1970-89), \$77
 million

1.8 139.guide/Economy (Liberia 2. usage)

Economy (Liberia 2. usage)

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Currency:
 1 Liberian dollar (L\$) = 100 cents
 Exchange rates:
 Liberian dollars (L\$) per US\$1 - 1.00 (fixed rate since 1940); unofficial
 parallel exchange rate of L\$7 = US\$1, January 1992
 Fiscal year:
 calendar year

1.9 139.guide/Communications (Liberia)

Communications (Liberia)

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Railroads:
 480 km total; 328 km 1.435-meter standard gauge, 152 km 1.067-meter narrow
 gauge; all lines single track; rail systems owned and operated by foreign
 steel and financial interests in conjunction with Liberian Government
 Highways:
 10,087 km total; 603 km bituminous treated, 2,848 km all weather, 4,313 km
 dry weather; there are also 2,323 km of private, laterite-surfaced roads

open to public use, owned by rubber and timber companies

Ports: Monrovia, Buchanan, Greenville, Harper (or Cape Palmas)

Merchant marine:

1,618 ships (1,000 GRT or over) totaling 57,769,476 DWT/ 101,391,576 DWT;
includes 20 passenger, 1 short-sea passenger, 132 cargo, 56 refrigerated
cargo, 21 roll-on/roll-off, 58 vehicle carrier, 97 container, 3 barge
carrier, 499 oil tanker, 108 chemical, 68 combination ore/oil, 62 liquefied
gas, 6 specialized tanker, 456 bulk, 31 combination bulk; note - a flag of
convenience registry; all ships are foreign owned; the top 4 owning flags
are US 16%, Japan 14%, Norway 11%, and Hong Kong 9%

Airports:

total:
59

usable:
41

with permanent-surface runways:
2

with runways over 3,659 m:
0

with runways 2,440-3,659 m:
1

with runways 1,220-2,439 m:
4

Telecommunications:

telephone and telegraph service via radio relay network; main center is
Monrovia; broadcast stations - 3 AM, 4 FM, 5 TV; 1 Atlantic Ocean INTELSAT
earth station; most telecommunications services inoperable due to ←
insurgency
movement

1.10 139.guide/Defense Forces (Liberia)

Defense Forces (Liberia)

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Branches:

the ultimate structure of the Liberian military force will depend on who is
the victor in the ongoing civil war

Manpower availability:

males age 15-49 684,681; fit for military service 365,518 (1993 est.)

Defense expenditures:

exchange rate conversion - \$NA, NA% of GDP