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Chapter 1

138

1.1 138.guide

Texified version of data for Lesotho.

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Lesotho

1.2 138.guide/Lesotho

Lesotho

Geography (Lesotho)
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1.3 138.guide/Geography (Lesotho)

Geography (Lesotho)

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Location:

Southern Africa, an enclave of South Africa

Map references:

Africa, Standard Time Zones of the World

Area:

total area:

30,350 km²

land area:

30,350 km²

comparative area:

slightly larger than Maryland

Land boundaries:

total 909 km, South Africa 909 km

Coastline:

0 km (landlocked)

Maritime claims:

none; landlocked

International disputes:

none

Climate:

temperate; cool to cold, dry winters; hot, wet summers

Terrain:

mostly highland with some plateaus, hills, and mountains

Natural resources:

some diamonds and other minerals, water, agricultural and grazing land

Land use:

arable land:

10%

permanent crops:

0% meadows and pastures:

66%

forest and woodland:

0%

other:

24%

Irrigated land:

NA km²

Environment:

population pressure forcing settlement in marginal areas results in overgrazing, severe soil erosion, soil exhaustion; desertification

Note:

landlocked; surrounded by South Africa; Highlands Water Project will control, store, and redirect water to South Africa

1.4 138.guide/People (Lesotho)

People (Lesotho)

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Population:

1,896,484 (July 1993 est.)

Population growth rate:

2.52% (1993 est.)

Birth rate:

34.64 births/1,000 population (1993 est.)

Death rate:

9.44 deaths/1,000 population (1993 est.)

Net migration rate:

0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1993 est.)

Infant mortality rate:

71.5 deaths/1,000 live births (1993 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population:

61.73 years

male:

59.91 years

female:

63.6 years (1993 est.)

Total fertility rate:

4.6 children born/woman (1993 est.)

Nationality:

noun:

Mosotho (singular), Basotho (plural)

adjective:

Basotho

Ethnic divisions:

Sotho 99.7%, Europeans 1,600, Asians 800

Religions:

Christian 80%, rest indigenous beliefs

Languages:

Sesotho (southern Sotho), English (official), Zulu, Xhosa

Literacy:

age 15 and over can read and write (1966)

total population:

59%

male: 44%

female:

68%

Labor force:

689,000 economically active

by occupation:

86.2% of resident population engaged in subsistence agriculture; roughly ←
60%
of active male labor force works in South Africa

1.5 138.guide/Government (Lesotho)

Government (Lesotho)

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Names:

conventional long form:

Kingdom of Lesotho

conventional short form:

Lesotho

former:

Basutoland

Digraph:

LT

Type:

constitutional monarchy

Capital:

Maseru

Administrative divisions:

10 districts; Berea, Butha-Buthe, Leribe, Mafeteng, Maseru, Mohale's Hoek,
Mokhotlong, Qacha's Nek, Quthing, Thaba-Tseka

Independence:

4 October 1966 (from UK)

Constitution:

4 October 1966, suspended January 1970

Legal system:

based on English common law and Roman-Dutch law; judicial review of
legislative acts in High Court and Court of Appeal; has not accepted
compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

National holiday:

Independence Day, 4 October (1966)

Political parties and leaders:

Basotho National Party (BNP), Evaristus SEKHONYANA; Basutoland Congress
Party (BCP), Ntsu MOKHEHLE; National Independent Party (NIP), A. C. MANYELI ←
;

Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP), Vincent MALEBO; United Democratic Party,
Charles MOFELI; Communist Party of Lesotho (CPL), JOCB M. KENA

Suffrage:

21 years of age; universal

Elections:

National Assembly:

dissolved following the military coup in January 1986; military has pledged
elections will take place in March 1993

Executive branch:

monarch, chairman of the Military Council, Military Council, Council of
Ministers (cabinet)

Legislative branch:

none - the bicameral Parliament was dissolved following the military coup ↔
 in
 January 1986; note - a National Constituent Assembly convened in June 1990
 to rewrite the constitution and debate issues of national importance, but ↔
 it
 has no legislative authority
 Judicial branch:
 High Court, Court of Appeal
 Leaders:
 Chief of State:
 King LETSIE III (since 12 November 1990 following dismissal of his father,
 exiled King MOSHOESHOE II, by Maj. Gen. LEKHANYA)
 Head of Government:
 Chairman of the Military Council Gen. Elias Phisoana RAMAEMA (since 30 ↔
 April
 1991)
 Member of:
 ACP, AfDB, C, CCC, ECA, FAO, G-77, GATT, IBRD, ICAO, ICFTU, IDA, IFAD, IFC,
 ILO, IMF, INTERPOL, IOC, ITU, LORCS, NAM, OAU, SACU, SADC, UN, UNCTAD,
 UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UPU, WCL, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

1.6 138.guide/Government (Lesotho 2. usage)

Government (Lesotho 2. usage)

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Diplomatic representation in US:
 chief of mission:
 Ambassador Designate Teboho KITLEI
 chancery:
 2511 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008
 telephone:
 (202) 797-5534
 US diplomatic representation:
 chief of mission:
 Ambassador Leonard H.O. SPEARMAN, Sr.
 embassy:
 address NA, Maseru
 mailing address:
 P. O. Box 333, Maseru 100 Lesotho
 telephone:
 [266] 312-666
 FAX:
 (266) 310-116
 Flag:
 divided diagonally from the lower hoist side corner; the upper half is ↔
 white
 bearing the brown silhouette of a large shield with crossed spear and club;
 the lower half is a diagonal blue band with a green triangle in the corner

1.7 138.guide/Economy (Lesotho)

Economy (Lesotho)

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Overview:

Small, landlocked, and mountainous, Lesotho has no important natural resources other than water. Its economy is based on agriculture, light manufacturing, and remittances from laborers employed in South Africa (\$439 million in 1991). The great majority of households gain their livelihoods from subsistence farming and migrant labor. Manufacturing depends largely on farm products to support the milling, canning, leather, and jute industries; other industries include textile, clothing, and construction (in particular, a major water improvement project which will permit the sale of water to South Africa). Industry's share of GDP rose from 6% in 1982 to 15% in 1989. Political and economic instability in South Africa raises uncertainty for Lesotho's economy, especially with respect to migrant worker remittances - recently the equivalent of nearly three-fourths of domestic output.

National product:

GDP - exchange rate conversion - \$620 million (1991 est.)

note:

GNP of \$1.0 billion (1991 est.)

National product real growth rate:

5.3% (1991 est.); GNP 2.2% (1991 est.)

National product per capita:

\$340 (1991 est.); GNP \$570 (1991 est.)

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

17.9% (1991)

Unemployment rate:

at least 55% among adult males (1991 est.)

Budget:

revenues \$388 million; expenditures \$399 million, including capital expenditures of \$132 million (FY93)

Exports:

\$57 million (f.o.b., 1991)

commodities:

wool, mohair, wheat, cattle, peas, beans, corn, hides, skins, baskets

partners:

South Africa 53%, EC 30%, North and South America 13% (1989)

Imports:

\$805 million (c.i.f., 1991)

commodities:

mainly corn, building materials, clothing, vehicles, machinery, medicines, petroleum

partners:

South Africa 95%, EC 2% (1989)

External debt:

\$358 million (for public sector) (December 1990/91 est.)

Industrial production:

growth rate 5.0% (1991 est.); accounts for 11% of GDP

Electricity:

power supplied by South Africa

Industries:

food, beverages, textiles, handicrafts, tourism

Agriculture:

accounts for 19% of GDP (1990 est.) and employs 60-70% of all households; exceedingly primitive, mostly subsistence farming and livestock; principal crops corn, wheat, pulses, sorghum, barley

Economic aid:

US commitments, including Ex-Im (FY70-89), \$268 million; US, \$10.3 million (1992), \$10.1 million (1993 est.); Western (non-US) countries, ODA and OOF bilateral commitments (1970-89), \$819 million; OPEC bilateral aid (1979-89) ←
\$4 million; Communist countries (1970-89), \$14 million

1.8 138.guide/Economy (Lesotho 2. usage)**Economy (Lesotho 2. usage)**

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Currency:

1 loti (L) = 100 lisente

Exchange rates:

maloti (M) per US\$1 - 3.1576 (May 1993), 2.8497 (1992), 2.7563 (1991), 2.5863 (1990), 2.6166 (1989), 2.2611 (1988); note - the Basotho loti is at par with the South African rand

Fiscal year:

1 April - 31 March

1.9 138.guide/Communications (Lesotho)**Communications (Lesotho)**

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Railroads:

2.6 km; owned, operated by, and included in the statistics of South Africa

Highways:

7,215 km total; 572 km paved; 2,337 km crushed stone, gravel, or stabilized soil; 1,806 km improved earth, 2,500 km unimproved earth

Airports:

total:

28

usable:

28

with permanent-surface runways:

3

with runways over 3,659 m:

0

with runways 2,440-3,659 m:

1

with runways 1,220-2,439 m:

2

Telecommunications:

rudimentary system consisting of a few landlines, a small microwave system, and minor radio communications stations; 5,920 telephones; broadcast stations - 3 AM, 2 FM, 1 TV; 1 Atlantic Ocean INTELSAT earth station

1.10 138.guide/Defense Forces (Lesotho)

Defense Forces (Lesotho)

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Branches:

Royal Lesotho Defense Force (RLDF; including Army, Air Wing), Royal Lesotho Mounted Police

Manpower availability:

males age 15-49 422,802; fit for military service 228,102 (1993 est.)

Defense expenditures:

exchange rate conversion - \$55 million, 13% of GDP (1990 est.)