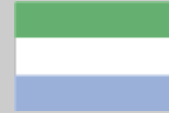


Sierra Leone



Introduction Sierra Leone

Background: The government is slowly reestablishing its authority after the 1991 to 2002 civil war that resulted in tens of thousands of deaths and the displacement of more than 2 million people (about one-third of the population). The last UN peacekeepers withdrew in December 2005, leaving full responsibility for security with domestic forces, but a new civilian UN office remains to support the government. Mounting tensions related to planned 2007 elections, deteriorating political and economic conditions in Guinea, and the tenuous security situation in neighboring Liberia may present challenges to continuing progress in Sierra Leone's stability.

Geography Sierra Leone

Location: Western Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Guinea and Liberia

Geographic coordinates: 8 30 N, 11 30 W

Map references: Africa

Area: *total:* 71,740 sq km

land: 71,620 sq km

water: 120 sq km

Area - comparative: slightly smaller than South Carolina

Land *total: 958 km*

boundaries: *border countries: Guinea 652 km, Liberia 306 km*

Coastline: 402 km

Maritime *territorial sea: 12 nm*

claims: *contiguous zone: 24 nm*

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm

Climate: tropical; hot, humid; summer rainy season (May to December); winter dry season (December to April)

Terrain: coastal belt of mangrove swamps, wooded hill country, upland plateau, mountains in east

Elevation *lowest point: Atlantic Ocean 0 m*

extremes: *highest point: Loma Mansa (Bintimani) 1,948 m*

Natural resources: diamonds, titanium ore, bauxite, iron ore, gold, chromite

Land use: *arable land: 7.95%*

permanent crops: 1.05%

other: 91% (2005)

Irrigated land: 300 sq km (2003)

Natural hazards: dry, sand-laden harmattan winds blow from the Sahara (December to February); sandstorms, dust storms

Environment - current issues: rapid population growth pressuring the environment; overharvesting of timber, expansion of cattle grazing, and slash-and-burn agriculture have resulted in deforestation and soil exhaustion; civil war depleting natural resources; overfishing

Environment - international agreements: *party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Law of the Sea, Marine Life Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands*
signed, but not ratified: Environmental Modification

Geography - note: rainfall along the coast can reach 495 cm (195 inches) a year, making it one of the wettest places along coastal, western Africa

People	Sierra Leone
Population:	6,005,250 (July 2006 est.)
Age structure:	<i>0-14 years:</i> 44.8% (male 1,321,563/female 1,370,721) <i>15-64 years:</i> 52% (male 1,494,502/female 1,625,733) <i>65 years and over:</i> 3.2% (male 90,958/female 101,773) (2006 est.)
Median age:	<i>total:</i> 17.4 years <i>male:</i> 17.1 years <i>female:</i> 17.7 years (2006 est.)
Population growth rate:	2.3% (2006 est.)
Birth rate:	45.76 births/1,000 population (2006 est.)
Death rate:	23.03 deaths/1,000 population (2006 est.)
Net migration rate:	0.23 migrant(s)/1,000 population <i>note:</i> refugees currently in surrounding countries are slowly returning (2006 est.)
Sex ratio:	<i>at birth:</i> 1.03 male(s)/female <i>under 15 years:</i> 0.96 male(s)/female <i>15-64 years:</i> 0.92 male(s)/female <i>65 years and over:</i> 0.89 male(s)/female <i>total population:</i> 0.94 male(s)/female (2006 est.)
Infant mortality rate:	<i>total:</i> 160.39 deaths/1,000 live births <i>male:</i> 177.47 deaths/1,000 live births <i>female:</i> 142.8 deaths/1,000 live births (2006 est.)
Life expectancy at birth:	<i>total population:</i> 40.22 years <i>male:</i> 38.05 years <i>female:</i> 42.46 years (2006 est.)
Total fertility rate:	6.08 children born/woman (2006 est.)
HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:	7% (2001 est.)
HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:	170,000 (2001 est.)
HIV/AIDS - deaths:	11,000 (2001 est.)
Major	<i>degree of risk:</i> very high

infectious diseases: *food or waterborne diseases:* bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever
vectorborne diseases: malaria and yellow fever are high risks in some locations
water contact disease: schistosomiasis
aerosolized dust or soil contact disease: Lassa fever (2005)

Nationality: *noun:* Sierra Leonean(s)
adjective: Sierra Leonean

Ethnic groups: 20 African ethnic groups 90% (Temne 30%, Mende 30%, other 30%), Creole (Krio) 10% (descendants of freed Jamaican slaves who were settled in the Freetown area in the late-18th century), refugees from Liberia's recent civil war, small numbers of Europeans, Lebanese, Pakistanis, and Indians

Religions: Muslim 60%, indigenous beliefs 30%, Christian 10%

Languages: English (official, regular use limited to literate minority), Mende (principal vernacular in the south), Temne (principal vernacular in the north), Krio (English-based Creole, spoken by the descendants of freed Jamaican slaves who were settled in the Freetown area, a lingua franca and a first language for 10% of the population but understood by 95%)

Literacy: *definition:* age 15 and over can read and write English, Mende, Temne, or Arabic
total population: 29.6%
male: 39.8%
female: 20.5% (2000 est.)

Government	Sierra Leone
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Country name: *conventional long form:* Republic of Sierra Leone
conventional short form: Sierra Leone
local long form: Republic of Sierra Leone
local short form: Sierra Leone

Government type: constitutional democracy

Capital: *name:* Freetown
geographic coordinates: 8 30 N, 13 15 W
time difference: UTC 0 (5 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions: 3 provinces and 1 area*; Eastern, Northern, Southern, Western*

Independence: 27 April 1961 (from UK)

National Independence Day, 27 April (1961)

holiday:

Constitution: 1 October 1991; subsequently amended several times

Legal system: based on English law and customary laws indigenous to local tribes; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Executive branch: *chief of state:* President Ahmad Tejan KABBAH (since 29 March 1996, reinstated 10 March 1998); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government
head of government: President Ahmad Tejan KABBAH (since 29 March 1996, reinstated 10 March 1998); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government
cabinet: Ministers of State appointed by the president with the approval of the House of Representatives; the cabinet is responsible to the president
elections: president elected by popular vote for a five-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held 14 May 2002 (next to be held 28 July 2007)
election results: Ahmad Tejan KABBAH reelected president; percent of vote - Ahmad Tejan KABBAH (SLPP) 70.6%, Ernest Bai KOROMA (APC) 22.4%

Legislative branch: unicameral Parliament (124 seats - 112 elected by popular vote, 12 filled by paramount chiefs elected in separate elections; members serve five-year terms)
elections: last held 14 May 2002 (next to be held May 2007)
election results: percent of vote by party - SLPP 70.06%, APC 22.35%, PLP 3%, others 4.59%; seats by party - SLPP 83, APC 27, PLP 2

Judicial branch: Supreme Court; Appeals Court; High Court

Political parties and leaders: All People's Congress or APC [Ernest Bai KOROMA]; Peace and Liberation Party or PLP [Darlington MORRISON, interim chairman]; People's Movement for Democratic Change or PMDC [Charles MARGAI]; Sierra Leone People's Party or SLPP [Solomon BEREWA]; numerous others

Political pressure groups and leaders: trade unions and student unions

International organization participation: ACP, AfDB, AU, C, ECOWAS, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICt, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ITU, ITUC,

MIGA, NAM, OIC, OPCW, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US: *chief of mission:* Ambassador Ibrahim M. KAMARA
chancery: 1701 19th Street NW, Washington, DC 20009
telephone: [1] (202) 939-9261 through 9263
FAX: [1] (202) 483-1793

Diplomatic representation from the US: *chief of mission:* Ambassador Thomas N. HULL
embassy: Corner of Walpole and Siaka Stevens Streets, Freetown
mailing address: use embassy street address
telephone: [232] (22) 515 000 or [232] (76) 515 000
FAX: [232] (22) 225471

Flag description: three equal horizontal bands of light green (top), white, and light blue

Economy	Sierra Leone
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Economy - overview: Sierra Leone is an extremely poor African nation with tremendous inequality in income distribution. While it possesses substantial mineral, agricultural, and fishery resources, its economic and social infrastructure is not well developed, and serious social disorders continue to hamper economic development. About two-thirds of the working-age population engages in subsistence agriculture. Manufacturing consists mainly of the processing of raw materials and of light manufacturing for the domestic market. Alluvial diamond mining remains the major source of hard currency earnings, accounting for nearly half of Sierra Leone's exports. The fate of the economy depends upon the maintenance of domestic peace and the continued receipt of substantial aid from abroad, which is essential to offset the severe trade imbalance and supplement government revenues. The IMF has completed a Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility program that helped stabilize economic growth and reduce inflation. A recent increase in political stability has led to a revival of economic activity, such as the rehabilitation of bauxite and rutile mining.

GDP (purchasing power parity): \$5.38 billion (2006 est.)

GDP (official exchange rate): \$1.233 billion (2006 est.)

GDP - real 6.8% (2006 est.)

growth rate:

GDP - per capita (PPP): \$900 (2006 est.)

GDP - composition by sector: *agriculture: 49%*
industry: 31%
services: 21% (2001 est.)

Labor force: 1.369 million (1981 est.)

Labor force - by occupation: *agriculture: NA%*
industry: NA%
services: NA%

Unemployment rate: NA%

Population below poverty line: 68% (1989 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share: *lowest 10%: 0.5%*
highest 10%: 43.6% (1989)

Distribution of family income - Gini index: 62.9 (1989)

Inflation rate (consumer prices): 1% (2002 est.)

Budget: *revenues: \$96 million*
expenditures: \$351 million; including capital expenditures of \$NA (2000 est.)

Agriculture - products: rice, coffee, cocoa, palm kernels, palm oil, peanuts; poultry, cattle, sheep, pigs; fish

Industries: diamond mining; small-scale manufacturing (beverages, textiles, cigarettes, footwear); petroleum refining, small commercial ship repair

Industrial production growth rate: NA%

Electricity - production: 244 million kWh (2004)

Electricity - production by *fossil fuel: 100%*
hydro: 0%

source: *nuclear:* 0%
other: 0% (2001)

Electricity - consumption: 226.9 million kWh (2004)

Electricity - exports: 0 kWh (2004)

Electricity - imports: 0 kWh (2004)

Oil - production: 3.993 bbl/day (2004 est.)

Oil - consumption: 6,600 bbl/day (2004 est.)

Oil - exports: NA bbl/day

Oil - imports: NA bbl/day

Natural gas - production: 0 cu m (2004 est.)

Natural gas - consumption: 0 cu m (2004 est.)

Exports: \$185 million f.o.b. (2004 est.)

Exports - commodities: diamonds, rutile, cocoa, coffee, fish

Exports - partners: Belgium 66%, Germany 13.4%, US 4.6% (2005)

Imports: \$531 million f.o.b. (2004 est.)

Imports - commodities: foodstuffs, machinery and equipment, fuels and lubricants, chemicals

Imports - partners: Germany 18.7%, Cote d'Ivoire 11.1%, UK 8.4%, US 6.8%, China 5.5%, Netherlands 5.3% (2005)

Debt - external: \$1.61 billion (2003 est.)

Economic aid - recipient: \$297.4 million (2003 est.)

Currency (code): leone (SLL)

Currency code: SLL

Exchange rates: leones per US dollar - 2,985.4 (2006), 2,889.6 (2005),

2,701.3 (2004), 2,347.9 (2003), 2,099 (2002)

Fiscal year: calendar year

Communications Sierra Leone

Telephones - main lines in use: 24,000 (2002)

Telephones - mobile cellular: 113,200 (2003)

Telephone system: *general assessment:* marginal telephone and telegraph service
domestic: the national microwave radio relay trunk system connects Freetown to Bo and Kenema
international: country code - 232; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean)

Radio broadcast stations: AM 1, FM 9, shortwave 1 (1999)

Radios: 1.12 million (1997)

Television broadcast stations: 2 (1999)

Televisions: 53,000 (1997)

Internet country code: .sl

Internet hosts: 20 (2006)

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): 1 (2001)

Internet users: 10,000 (2005)

Transportation Sierra Leone

Airports: 10 (2006)

Airports - with paved runways: *total:* 1
over 3,047 m: 1 (2006)

Airports - *total:* 9
with *914 to 1,523 m:* 7
unpaved *under 914 m:* 2 (2006)
runways:

Heliports: 2 (2006)

Roadways: *total:* 11,300 km
paved: 904 km
unpaved: 10,396 km (2002)

Waterways: 800 km (600 km year round) (2005)

Merchant marine: *total:* 54 ships (1000 GRT or over) 185,037 GRT/249,996 DWT
by type: bulk carrier 2, cargo 36, chemical tanker 3, combination ore/oil 3, liquefied gas 1, livestock carrier 1, passenger 1, passenger/cargo 3, petroleum tanker 2, roll on/roll off 2
foreign-owned: 14 (China 2, Cyprus 1, Egypt 1, Russia 1, Syria 1, UAE 3, Ukraine 4, US 1) (2006)

Ports and terminals: Freetown, Pepel, Sherbro Islands

Military	Sierra Leone
Military branches:	Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF): Army (includes Air Wing, Maritime Wing)
Military service age and obligation:	18 years of age (est.); no conscription (2001)
Manpower available for military service:	<i>males age 18-49:</i> 1,086,091 (2005 est.)
Manpower fit for military service:	<i>males age 18-49:</i> 539,697 (2005 est.)
Military expenditures - dollar figure:	\$14.25 million (2005 est.)
Military expenditures - percent of GDP:	1.7% (2005 est.)

**Transnational
Issues****Sierra Leone**

Disputes - international: domestic fighting among disparate rebel groups, warlords, and youth gangs in Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone perpetuate insurgencies, street violence, looting, arms trafficking, ethnic conflicts, and refugees in border areas; UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) has maintained over 4,000 peacekeepers in Sierra Leone since 1999; Sierra Leone pressures Guinea to remove its forces from the town of Yenga occupied since 1998

Refugees and internally displaced persons: *refugees (country of origin): 59,952 (Liberia) (2006)*