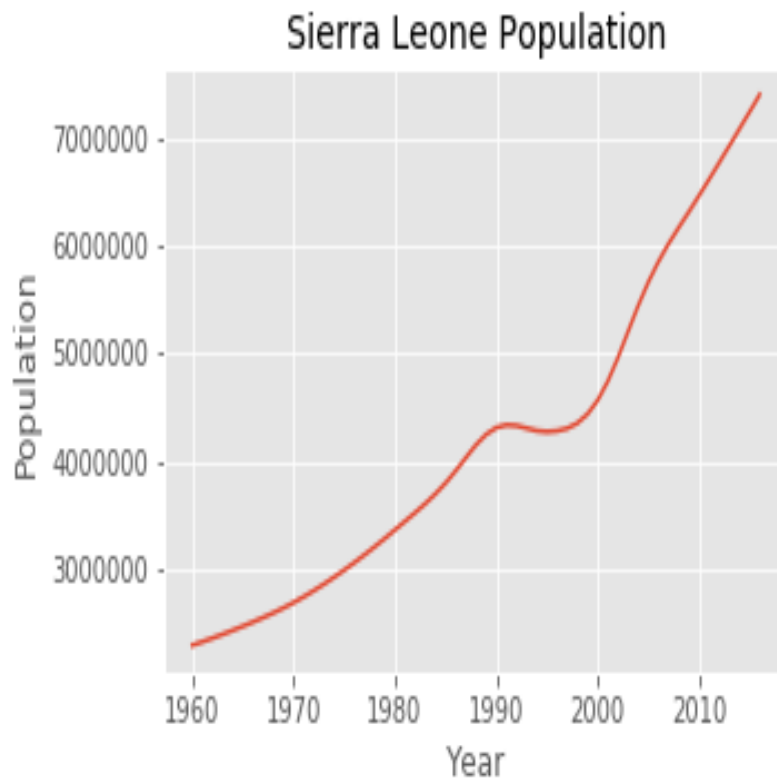


# Sierra Leone



Sierra Leone ( [listen](#))), also known informally as Salone, officially the Republic of Sierra Leone, is a country in West Africa. It is bordered by Guinea to the northeast, Liberia to the southeast and the Atlantic Ocean to the southwest. Sierra Leone has a tropical climate, with a diverse environment ranging from savanna to rainforests. The country has a total area of 71,740 km<sup>2</sup> (27,699 sq mi) and a population of 7,075,641 (based on the 2015 national census). It is a constitutional republic with a directly elected president and a directly elected 132 members of a unicameral legislature known as Parliament. Sierra Leone is made up of five administrative regions: the Northern Province, North Western Province, Eastern Province, Southern Province and the Western Area. These regions are subdivided into sixteen districts. Each district has its own directly elected local government, though with very limited powers, as most of the powers are held by the central government in Freetown. Freetown (population 1,050,301), located in the Western Area, is Sierra Leone's capital and largest city. Kenema is Sierra Leone's second most populous city and is located in the east of the country, 160 miles from Freetown. Sierra Leone became independent from the United Kingdom on 27 April 1961, led by Sir Milton Margai, who became the country's first Prime Minister. The current constitution of Sierra Leone was adopted in 1991, though it has been amended several times. Since independence in 1961 to present, Sierra Leonean politics has been dominated by two major political parties; the Sierra Leone People's Party and the All People's Congress. From 1991 to 2002, the Sierra Leone Civil War was fought and devastated the country. The proxy war left more than 50,000 people dead, much of the country's infrastructure destroyed and over two million Sierra Leoneans displaced as refugees in neighbouring countries. In January 2002, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah fulfilled his campaign promise by ending the civil war, with the help of the British government, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations. Kabbah won reelection in the 2002 general election for his final term as president, with 70% of the vote. More recently, the 2014 Ebola outbreak overburdened the weak healthcare infrastructure, leading to more deaths from medical neglect than Ebola itself. It created a humanitarian crisis situation and heavily impacted economic growth. The

country has an extremely low life expectancy relative to other countries, at 57.8 years. About sixteen ethnic groups inhabit Sierra Leone, each with its own language and customs. The two largest and most influential are the Temne and the Mende people. The Temne are predominantly found in the north of the country, while the Mende are predominant in the southeast. Comprising a small minority are the Krio people, who are descendants of freed African American and West Indian slaves. Although the English language is the official language spoken at schools and government administration, the Krio language, an English-based creole, is the most widely spoken language across Sierra Leone and is spoken by 97% of the country's population. The Krio language unites all the different ethnic groups in the country, especially in their trade and social interaction with each other. Sierra Leone is a Muslim majority country, with the overall Muslim population at 78% of the population, based on 2015 Pew research, though there is an influential Christian minority of various denominations at about 21% of the population. Sierra Leone is regarded as one of the most religiously tolerant nations in the world. Muslims and Christians collaborate and interact with each other very peacefully. Religious violence is very rare in the country. The major Christian and Muslim holidays are officially public holidays in the country, including Christmas, Easter, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. In politics, the overwhelming majority of Sierra Leoneans vote for a candidate without regard to whether they are a Muslim or a Christian. Almost all of Sierra Leone's Heads of State have been Christians. Sierra Leone has a large population of people with more secular lifestyles, both Christian and Muslim. Sierra Leone has relied on mining, especially diamonds, for its economic base. It is also among the largest producers of titanium and bauxite, a major producer of gold and has one of the world's largest deposits of rutile. Sierra Leone is home to the third-largest natural harbour in the world. Despite exploitation of this natural wealth, 70% of its population live in poverty. Sierra Leone is a member of many international organisations, including the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Mano River Union, the Commonwealth of Nations, the African Development Bank and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

== History ==

=== Early history ===

Archaeological finds show that Sierra Leone has been inhabited continuously for at least 2,500 years, populated successively by societies who migrated from other parts of Africa. The people adopted the use of iron by the 9th century and by 1000 AD agriculture was being practised along the coast. The climate changed considerably and boundaries among different ecological zones changed as well, affecting migration and conquest. Sierra Leone's dense tropical rainforest and swampy environment was considered impenetrable; it was also host to the tsetse fly, which carried a disease fatal to horses and the zebu cattle used by the Mande people. This environmental factor protected its people from conquests by the Mande and other African empires. This also reduced the Islamic influence of the Mali Empire but Islam, introduced by Susu traders, merchants and migrants from the north and east, became widely adopted in the 18th century.

=== European trading ===

European contacts within Sierra Leone were among the first in West Africa in the 15th century. In 1462, Portuguese explorer Pedro de Sintra mapped the hills surrounding what is now Freetown Harbour, naming the shaped formation Serra da Leoa or "Serra Leoa" (Portuguese for Lioness Mountains). The Spanish rendering of this geographic formation is Sierra Leona, which later was adapted and, misspelled, became the country's current name. Although according to the professor C. Magbaily Fyle this could have been a misinterpretation of historians: according to him, there has been evidence of travellers calling the region Serra Lyoa well before 1462, the year when Sintra first arrived. This would imply that the identity of the person who named Sierra Leone still remains unclear. Soon after Sintra's expedition, Portuguese traders arrived at the harbour. By 1495 they had built a fortified trading post on the coast. The Dutch and French also set up trade here, and each nation used Sierra Leone as a trading point for slaves brought by African traders from interior areas undergoing tribal wars and conflicts over territory. In 1562, the English initiated the Triangle Trade when admiral Sir John Hawkins of the Royal Navy transported 300 enslaved Africans – acquired "by the sword and partly by other means" – to the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo on Hispaniola in the Caribbean Sea area of the West Indies islands, where he sold them.

=== Early colonies ===

Following the American Revolutionary War, the British evacuated thousands of freed African-American slaves and resettled them in Canadian and Caribbean colonies and London which gave them new lives. In 1787 the British Crown founded a settlement in Sierra Leone in what was called the "Province of Freedom". It intended to resettle some of the "Black Poor of London," mostly African Americans freed by the British during the war. About 400 blacks and 60 whites reached Sierra Leone on 15 May 1787. The group also included some West Indians of African descent from London. After they established Granville Town, most of the first group of colonists died, owing to disease and warfare with the indigenous African peoples (Temne and Mende), who resisted their encroachment.

The 64 remaining colonists established a second Granville Town. Following the Revolution, more than 3,000 Black Loyalists had also been settled in Nova Scotia, where they were finally granted land. They founded Birchtown, Nova Scotia, but faced harsh winters and racial discrimination from nearby Shelburne, Nova Scotia. Thomas Peters pressed British authorities for relief and more aid; together with British abolitionist John Clarkson, the Sierra Leone Company was established to relocate Black Loyalists who wanted to take their chances in West Africa. In 1792 nearly 1200 persons from Nova Scotia crossed the Atlantic to build the second (and only permanent) Colony of Sierra Leone and the settlement of Freetown on 11 March 1792. In Sierra Leone they were called the Nova Scotian Settlers, the Nova Scotians, or the Settlers. The Settlers built Freetown in the styles they knew from their lives in the American South; they also continued American fashion and American manners. In addition, many continued to practice Methodism in Freetown. Black settlers in Sierra Leone enjoyed much more autonomy in that they were more politically engaged. Black immigrants elected different levels of political representatives, 'tithingmen,' who represented each dozen settlers, and 'hundreders' who represented larger amounts. This sort of representation was not available in Nova Scotia. The initial process of society-building in Freetown, however, was a harsh struggle. The Crown did not supply enough basic supplies and provisions, and the Settlers were continually threatened by illegal slave trading and the risk of re-enslavement. In the 1790s, the Settlers, including adult women, voted for the first time in elections. The Sierra Leone Company, controlled by London investors, refused to allow the settlers to take freehold of the land. In 1799 some of the Settlers revolted. The Crown subdued the revolt by bringing in forces of more than 500 Jamaican Maroon people, whom they transported from Trelawny Town via Nova Scotia in 1800. On 1 January 1808, Thomas Ludlam, the Governor of the Sierra Leone Company and a leading abolitionist, surrendered the Company's charter. This ended its 16 years of running the Colony. The British Crown reorganised the Sierra Leone Company as the African Institution; it was directed to improve the local economy. Its members represented both British who hoped to inspire local entrepreneurs and those with interest in the Macauley & Babington Company, which held the (British) monopoly on Sierra Leone trade. At about the same time (following the abolition of the slave trade in 1807), British crews delivered thousands of formerly enslaved Africans to Freetown, after liberating them from illegal slave ships. These Liberated Africans or recaptives were sold for \$20 a head as apprentices to the white settlers, Nova Scotian Settlers, and the Jamaican Maroons. Some of the recaptives who were not sold as apprentices were forced to join the Navy. Many recaptives were treated poorly and even abused because some of the original settlers considered them their property. Cut off from their various homelands and traditions, the Liberated Africans were forced to assimilate to the Western styles of Settlers and Maroons. For example, some of the recaptives were forced to change their name to a more Western sounding names. Though some people happily embraced these changes because they considered it as being part of the community, some were not happy with these changes and wanted to keep their own identity. Many recaptives were so unhappy that they risked the possibility of being sold back into slavery by leaving Sierra Leone and going back to their original villages. They built a flourishing trade in flowers and beads on the West African coast. These returned Africans were from many areas of Africa, but principally the west coast. During the 19th century, freed black Americans, some Americo Liberian 'refugees', and particularly West Indians, also immigrated and settled in Freetown. Together these peoples created a new creole ethnicity called the Krio people (initially called Creoles) and a trading language, Krio, which became commonly used among many of the ethnicities in the country. === Colonial era (1800–1960) === The settlement of Sierra Leone in the 1800s was unique in that the population was composed of displaced Africans who were brought to the colony after the British abolition of the slave trade in 1807. Upon arrival in Sierra Leone, each "recaptive" was given a registration number, and information on their physical qualities would be entered into the Register of Liberated Africans. However, oftentimes the documentations of the recaptives would be overwhelmingly subjective and would result in inaccurate entries on the recaptives and would make them difficult to track. In addition, differences between the Register of Liberated Africans of 1808 and the List of Captured Negroes of 1812 (which emulated the 1808 document) revealed some disparities in the entries of the recaptives, specifically in the names; many recaptives decided to change their given names to a more anglicised version which contributed to the difficulty in tracking the recaptives after they arrived in Sierra Leone. According to the British Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 1807, the recaptives could be subject to apprenticeships led by British colonists in Sierra Leone and the males enlisted into the Army or Navy. In many instances, the recaptives who were assigned to apprenticeships were sold for \$20, giving the apprenticeship system qualities similar to slavery. It is documented that the recaptive apprentices were unpaid and the settlers

who they were appointed to had devices which could be used to discipline them, namely sticks. According to Suzanne Schwartz, a historian on colonial Sierra Leone, in June 1808 a group of 21 men and women ran away to the nearby native settlement of Robiss and upon recapture were imprisoned by the settlers in Sierra Leone, thus contributing to the slavery-like qualities of the apprenticeship system. In the early 19th century, Freetown served as the residence of the British colonial governor of the region, who also administered the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and the Gambia settlements. Sierra Leone developed as the educational centre of British West Africa. The British established Fourah Bay College here in 1827, which rapidly became a magnet for English-speaking Africans on the West Coast. For more than a century, it was the only European-style university in western Sub-Saharan Africa. The British interacted mostly with the Krios in Freetown, who did most of the trading with the indigenous peoples of the interior. In addition, educated Krios held numerous positions in the colonial government, giving them status and good-paying positions. Following the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, the UK decided that it needed to establish more dominion over the inland areas, to satisfy what was described by the European powers as "effective occupation" of territories. In 1896 it annexed these areas, declaring them the Sierra Leone Protectorate. With this change, the British began to expand their administration in the region, recruiting British citizens to posts, and pushing Krios out of positions in government and even the desirable residential areas in Freetown. In addition, the British annexation of the Protectorate interfered with the sovereignty of indigenous chiefs. They designated chiefs as units of local government, rather than dealing with them individually as had been previous practice. They did not maintain relationships even with longtime allies, such as Bai Bureh, chief of Kasseh, a community on the Small Scarcies River. He was later unfairly portrayed as a prime instigator of the Hut Tax war in 1898. Colonel Frederic Cardew, military governor of the Protectorate, in 1898 established a new tax on dwellings and demanded that the chiefs use their peoples to maintain roads. The taxes were often higher than the value of the dwellings, and 24 chiefs signed a petition to Cardew, telling how destructive this was; their people could not afford to take time off from their subsistence agriculture. They resisted payment of taxes. Tensions over the new colonial requirements, and administration suspicions about the chiefs, led to the Hut Tax war of 1898, also called the Temne-Mende War. The British fired first. The Northern front of majority Temne people was led by Bai Bureh. The Southern front, consisting mostly of Mende people, entered conflict somewhat later and for different reasons. For several months, Bureh's fighters had the advantage over the vastly more powerful British forces but the British troops and Bureh's warriors suffered hundreds of fatalities. Bai Bureh finally surrendered on 11 November 1898 to end the destruction of his people's territory and dwellings. Although the British government recommended leniency, Cardew insisted on sending the chief and two allies into exile in the Gold Coast; his government hanged 96 of the chief's warriors. Bai Bureh was allowed to return in 1905, when he resumed his chieftaincy of Kasseh. The defeat of the Temne and Mende in the Hut Tax war ended mass resistance to the Protectorate and colonial government but intermittent rioting and labour unrest continued throughout the colonial period. Riots in 1955 and 1956 involved "many tens of thousands" of Sierra Leonians in the protectorate. Domestic slavery, which continued to be practised by local African elites, was abolished in 1928. A notable event in 1935 was the granting of a monopoly on mineral mining to the Sierra Leone Selection Trust, run by De Beers. The monopoly was scheduled to last 98 years. Mining of diamonds in the east and other minerals expanded, drawing labourers there from other parts of the country. In 1924, the UK government divided Sierra Leone into a Colony and a Protectorate, with different political systems constitutionally defined for each. The Colony was Freetown and its coastal area; the Protectorate was defined as the hinterland areas dominated by local chiefs. Antagonism between the two entities escalated to a heated debate in 1947, when proposals were introduced to provide for a single political system for both the Colony and the Protectorate. Most of the proposals came from leaders of the Protectorate, whose population far outnumbered that in the colony. The Creoles (Krios), led by Isaac Wallace-Johnson, opposed the proposals, as they would have resulted in reducing the political power of the Krios in the Colony. In 1951, the educated protectorate leaders from different groups, including Sir Milton Margai, Lamina Sankoh, Siaka Stevens, Mohamed Sanusi Mustapha, John Karefa-Smart, Kande Bureh, Sir Albert Margai, Amadu Wurie and Sir Banja Tejan-Sie joined together with the powerful paramount chiefs in the protectorate to form the Sierra Leone People's Party or SLPP as the party of the protectorate. The SLPP leadership, led by Sir Milton Margai, negotiated with the British and the educated Krio-dominated colony based in Freetown to achieve independence [3]. Owing to the astute politics of Milton Margai of the Mende, the educated Protectorate elite was won over to join forces with the paramount chiefs in the face of Krio intransigence. Later, Margai used the same skills to win over opposition leaders and moderate Krio

elements to achieve independence from the UK. In November 1951, Margai oversaw the drafting of a new constitution, which united the separate Colonial and Protectorate legislatures and—most importantly—provided a framework for decolonisation. In 1953, Sierra Leone was granted local ministerial powers and Margai was elected Chief Minister of Sierra Leone. The new constitution ensured Sierra Leone a parliamentary system within the Commonwealth of Nations. In May 1957, Sierra Leone held its first parliamentary election. The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), which was then the most popular political party in the colony of Sierra Leone and was supported by the powerful paramount chiefs in the provinces, won the most seats in Parliament and Margai was re-elected as Chief Minister by a landslide. === 1960 Independence Conference === On 20 April 1960, Milton Margai led a twenty four member Sierra Leonean delegation at constitutional conferences that were held with Queen Elizabeth II and British Colonial Secretary Iain Macleod in negotiations for independence held in London. On the conclusion of talks in London on 4 May 1960, the United Kingdom agreed to grant Sierra Leone Independence on 27 April 1961. === Independence (1961) and Margai Administration (1961–1964) === On 27 April 1961, Sir Milton Margai led Sierra Leone to independence from Great Britain and became the country's first Prime Minister. Thousands of Sierra Leoneans took to the streets in celebration. Sierra Leone retained a parliamentary system of government and was a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The leader of the main opposition All People's Congress (APC), Siaka Stevens, along with Isaac Wallace-Johnson, another outspoken critic of the SLPP government, were arrested and placed under house arrest in Freetown, along with sixteen others charged with disrupting the independence celebration. In May 1962, Sierra Leone held its first general election as an Independent nation. The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) won a plurality of seats in parliament, and Milton Margai was re-elected as prime minister. Margai was very popular among Sierra Leoneans during his time in power, most known for his self-effacement. He was neither corrupt nor did he make a lavish display of his power or status. He based the government on the rule of law and the separation of powers, with multiparty political institutions and fairly viable representative structures. Margai used his conservative ideology to lead Sierra Leone without much strife. He appointed government officials to represent various ethnic groups. Margai employed a brokerage style of politics, by sharing political power among political parties and interest groups; and with the powerful paramount chiefs in the provinces, most of whom were key allies of his government . === Final years of democracy (1964–1967) === Upon Milton Margai's unexpected death in 1964, his half-brother, Sir Albert Margai, was appointed as Prime Minister by parliament. Sir Albert's leadership was briefly challenged by Sierra Leone's Foreign Minister John Karefa-Smart, who questioned Sir Albert's succession to the SLPP leadership position. Karefa-Smart led a prominent small minority faction within the SLPP party in opposition of Albert Margai as Prime Minister. However, Kareefa-Smart failed to receive strong support within the SLPP and the SLPP dominated members of parliament in his attempt to have Albert Margai stripped of as the leader of the SLPP and prime minister of the country. The large majority of SLPP members backed Albert Margai over Kareefa-Smart. Soon after Albert Margai was sworn in as Prime Minister, he immediately dismissed several senior government officials who had served under his elder brother Milton's government, as he viewed them as a threat to his administration, including Kareefa-Smart. Sir Albert resorted to increasingly authoritarian actions in response to protests and enacted several laws against the opposition All People's Congress (APC), whilst attempting to establish a one-party state. Sir Albert was opposed to the colonial legacy of allowing executive powers to the Paramount Chiefs, many of whom had been key allies of his late brother Sir Milton. Accordingly, they began to consider Sir Albert as a threat to the ruling houses across the country. Margai appointed many non ethnic Creole to the country's civil service in Freetown, in an overall diversity of the civil service in the capital, which was previously dominated by members of the Creole ethnic group, as a result Albert Margai became unpopular in the Creole community, many of whom had supported his older brother Sir Milton. Margai was accused of favoring members of his own Mende ethnic group for prominent positions. In 1967, riots broke out in Freetown against Sir Albert's policies; in response Margai declared a state of emergency across the country. Sir Albert was accused of corruption and of a policy of affirmative action in favour of his own Mende ethnic group. Although Sir Albert had the full backing of the country's security forces, he called for free and fair elections. === Military coups (1967–1968) === The APC, with its leader Siaka Stevens, narrowly won a small majority of seats in Parliament over the SLPP in a closely contested 1967 Sierra Leone general election. Stevens was sworn in as Prime Minister on 21 March 1967. Within hours after taking office, Stevens was ousted in a bloodless military coup led by Brigadier General David Lansana, the commander of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces. He was a close ally of Sir Albert Margai, who had appointed him to the position in 1964. Brigadier Lansana

placed Stevens under house arrest in Freetown and insisted that the determination of the Prime Minister should await the election of the tribal representatives to the House. Upon his release, Stevens went into exile in Guinea. On 23 March 1967, a group of military officers in the Sierra Leone Army led by Brigadier General Andrew Juxon-Smith, overrode this action by a coup d'état; they seized control of the government, arresting Brigadier Lansana, and suspending the constitution. The group set up the National Reformation Council (NRC), with Brigadier Andrew Juxon-Smith as its chairman and Head of State of the country. On 18 April 1968 a group of low ranking soldiers in the Sierra Leone Army who called themselves the Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement (ACRM), led by Brigadier General John Amadu Bangura, overthrew the NRC junta. The ACRM junta arrested many senior NRC members. They reinstated the constitution and returned power to Stevens, who at last assumed the office of Prime Minister. === One-party state (1968–1991) === Stevens assumed power again in 1968 with a great deal of hope and ambition. Much trust was placed upon him as he championed multi-party politics. Stevens had campaigned on a platform of bringing the tribes together under socialist principles. During his first decade or so in power, Stevens renegotiated some of what he called "useless prefinanced schemes" contracted by his predecessors, both Albert Margai of the SLPP and Juxon-Smith of the NRC. Some of these policies by the SLPP and the NRC were said to have left the country in an economically deprived state. Stevens reorganised the country's refinery, the government-owned Cape Sierra Hotel, and a cement factory. He cancelled Juxon-Smith's construction of a church and mosque on the grounds of Victoria Park (since mid 2017 Freetown Amusement Park). Stevens began efforts that would later bridge the distance between the provinces and the city. Roads and hospitals were constructed in the provinces, and Paramount Chiefs and provincial peoples became a prominent force in Freetown. Under pressure of several coup attempts, real or perceived, Stevens' rule grew more and more authoritarian, and his relationship with some of his ardent supporters deteriorated. He removed the SLPP party from competitive politics in general elections, some believed, through the use of violence and intimidation. To maintain the support of the military, Stevens retained the popular John Amadu Bangura as the head of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces. After the return to civilian rule, by-elections were held (beginning in autumn 1968) and an all-APC cabinet was appointed. Calm was not completely restored. In November 1968, unrest in the provinces led Stevens to declare a state of emergency across the country. Many senior officers in the Sierra Leone Army were greatly disappointed with Stevens' policies and his handling of the Sierra Leone Military; but none could confront Stevens. Brigadier General Bangura, who had reinstated Stevens as Prime Minister, was widely considered the only person who could put the brakes on Stevens. The army was devoted to Bangura, and this made him potentially dangerous to Stevens. In January 1970, Bangura was arrested and charged with conspiracy and plotting to commit a coup against the Stevens government. After a trial that lasted a few months, Bangura was convicted and sentenced to death. On 29 March 1970, Brigadier Bangura was executed by hanging in Freetown. After the execution of Brigadier Bangura, a group of soldiers loyal to the executed Brigadier Bangura held a mutiny in the capital Freetown and in some other parts of the country in opposition of Stevens' government. Dozens of soldiers were arrested and convicted by a court martial in the capital Freetown for their participation in the mutiny against president Stevens; and among the soldiers arrested was a little known army Corporal Foday Sankoh, a strong supporter of the executed Brigadier Bangura. Corporal Sankoh was convicted and jailed for seven years at the Pademba Road Prison in Freetown. In April 1971, a new republican constitution was adopted under which Stevens became President. In the 1972 by-elections the opposition SLPP complained of intimidation and procedural obstruction by the APC and militia. These problems became so severe that the SLPP boycotted the 1973 general election; as a result the APC won 84 of the 85 elected seats. An alleged plot to overthrow president Stevens failed in 1974 and its leaders were executed. In mid 1974, Guinean soldiers, requested by Stevens, were in the country to help maintain his hold on power. As Stevens was a close ally of then Guinean president Ahmed Sekou Toure. In March 1976, Stevens was elected without opposition for a second five-year term as president. On 19 July 1975, 14 senior army and government officials including Brigadier David Lansana, former cabinet minister Mohamed Sorie Forna (father of writer Aminatta Forna), Brigadier General Ibrahim Bash Taqi and Lieutenant Habib Lansana Kamara were executed after being convicted of allegedly attempting a coup to topple president Stevens' government. In 1977, a nationwide student demonstration against the government disrupted Sierra Leone politics. The demonstration was quickly put down by the army and Stevens' own personal Special Security Division (SSD) force, a heavily armed paramilitary force he had created to protect him and to maintain his hold on power. The SSD officers were very loyal to Stevens and were deployed across Sierra Leone to put down any rebellion or protest against Stevens'

government. A general election was called later that year in which corruption was again endemic; the APC won 74 seats and the SLPP 15. In 1978, the APC-dominant parliament approved a new constitution making the country a one-party state. The 1978 constitution made the APC the only legal political party in Sierra Leone. This move led to another major demonstration against the government in many parts of the country but again it was put down by the army and Stevens' SSD forces. Stevens is generally criticised for dictatorial methods and government corruption, but on a positive note, he kept the country stable and from going into civil war. He built several government institutions that are still in use today. Stevens also reduced ethnic polarisation in government by incorporating members of various ethnic groups into his all-dominant APC government. Siaka Stevens retired from politics in November 1985 after being in power for eighteen years. The APC named a new presidential candidate to succeed Stevens at their last delegate conference held in Freetown in November 1985. He was Major General Joseph Saidu Momoh, the head of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces and Stevens' own choice to succeed him. As head of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces, Major General Momoh was very loyal to Stevens, who had appointed him to the position. Like Stevens, Momoh was also a member of the minority Limba ethnic group. Momoh was elected President as the only contesting candidate, without any opposition, and was sworn in as Sierra Leone's second president on 28 November 1985 in Freetown. A one-party parliamentary election between APC members was held in May 1986. President Momoh appointed his former military colleague and key ally, Major General Mohamed Tarawalie to succeed him as the head of the Sierra Leone Military. Major General Tarawalie was also a strong loyalist and key supporter of president Momoh. President Momoh named James Bambay Kamara as the head of the Sierra Leone Police. Bambay Kamara was a key loyalist and strong supporter of President Momoh. Momoh broke away from former president Siaka Stevens, by integrating the powerful SSD into the Sierra Leone Police as a special paramilitary force of the Sierra Leone Police. Previously under President Stevens, the SSD was a personal force of Stevens to maintain his hold on power, and the SSD was very powerful and was independent from the Sierra Leone Military and Sierra Leone Police Force, and the SSD was directly under the control of President Stevens. The Sierra Leone Police under Bambay Kamara leadership, was accused of physical violence, arrest and intimidation against critics of President Momoh's government. President Momoh's strong links with the army and his verbal attacks on corruption earned him much-needed initial support among Sierra Leoneans. With the lack of new faces in the new APC cabinet under president Momoh and the return of many of the old faces from Stevens' government, criticisms soon arose that Momoh was simply perpetuating the rule of Stevens. The next couple of years under the Momoh administration were characterised by corruption, which Momoh defused by sacking several senior cabinet ministers. To formalise his war against corruption, President Momoh announced a "Code of Conduct for Political Leaders and Public Servants." After an alleged attempt to overthrow President Momoh in March 1987, more than 60 senior government officials were arrested, including Vice President Francis Minah, who was removed from office, convicted of plotting the coup, and executed by hanging in 1989 along with 5 others. === Sierra Leone Civil War (1991–2002) === In October 1990, owing to mounting pressure from both within and outside the country for political and economic reform, president Momoh set up a constitutional review commission to assess the 1978 one-party constitution. Based on the commission's recommendations a constitution re-establishing a multi-party system was approved by the exclusive APC Parliament by a 60% majority vote, becoming effective on 1 October 1991. There was great suspicion that president Momoh was not serious about his promise of political reform, as APC rule continued to be increasingly marked by abuses of power. The brutal civil war that was going on in neighbouring Liberia played a significant role in the outbreak of fighting in Sierra Leone. Charles Taylor – then leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia – reportedly helped form the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) under the command of former Sierra Leonean army corporal Foday Saybana Sankoh, an ethnic Temne from Tonkolili District in Northern Sierra Leone. Sankoh was a British trained former army corporal who had also undergone guerrilla training in Libya. Taylor's aim was for the RUF to attack the bases of Nigerian dominated peacekeeping troops in Sierra Leone who were opposed to his rebel movement in Liberia. On 29 April 1992, a group of young soldiers in the Sierra Leone Army, and led by a group of seven army officers consisting of Lieutenant Sahr Sandy, Captain Valentine Strasser, Sargent Solomon Musa, Captain Komba Mondeh, Lieutenant Tom Nyuma, Captain Julius Maada Bio and Captain Komba Kambo that launched a military coup, which sent president Momoh into exile in Guinea and the young soldiers established the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) with twenty five year old Captain Valentine Strasser as its chairman and Head of State of the country. Sargent Solomon Musa, a childhood friend of Strasser, became the deputy chairman and deputy leader

of the NPRC junta government. Strasser became the world's youngest Head of State when he seized power just three days after his 25th birthday. The NPRC junta established the National Supreme Council of State as the military highest command and final authority in all matters, and was exclusively made up of the highest ranking NPRC soldiers, included Strasser himself and the original soldiers who toppled president Momoh. One of the highest ranking soldiers of the NPRC Junta, Lieutenant Sahr Sandy, a trusted ally of Strasser, was assassinated, allegedly by Major S.I.M. Turay, a key loyalist of ousted president Momoh. A heavily armed military manhunt took place across the country to find Lieutenant Sandy's killer, however, the main suspect Major S.I.M Turay went into hiding and fled the country to Guinea, fearing for his life. Dozens of soldiers loyal to the ousted president Momoh were arrested including colonel Kahota M Dumbuya and Major Yayah Turay. Lieutenant Sandy' was given a state funeral and his funeral prayers service at the cathedral church in Freetown was attended by many high ranking soldiers of the NPRC junta including Strasser himself and NPRC deputy leader Sergeant Solomon Musa. The NPRC Junta immediately suspended the constitution, banned all political parties, limited freedom of speech and freedom of the press and enacted a rule-by-decree policy, in which soldiers were granted unlimited powers of administrative detention without charge or trial, and challenges against such detentions in court were precluded. The NPRC Junta maintained relations with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and strengthened support for Sierra Leone-based ECOMOG troops fighting in Liberia. On 28 December 1992, an alleged coup attempt against the NPRC government of Strasser, aimed at freeing the detained Colonel Yahya Kanu, Colonel Kahota M.S. Dumbuya and former inspector general of police Bambay Kamara was foiled. Several Junior army officers led by Seargen Mohamed Lamin Bangura were identified as being behind the coup plot. The coup plot led to the firing squad execution of seventeen soldiers in the Sierra Leone Army including Colonel Kahota M Dumbuya, Major Yayah Kanu and Seargent Mohamed Lamin Bangura. Several prominent members of the Momoh government who had been in detention at the Pa Demba Road prison, including former inspector general of police Bambay Kamara were also executed. On 5 July 1994 the deputy NPRC leader Seargent Solomon Musu, who was very popular with the general population, particularly in Freetown, was arrested and sent into exile after he was accused of planning a coup to topple Strasser. An accusation Seargent Musa denied. Strasser replaced Musa as deputy NPRC chairman with Captain Julius Maada Bio, who was instantly promoted by Strasser to Brigadier. The NPRC proved to be nearly as ineffectual as the Momoh-led APC government in repelling the RUF. More and more of the country fell to RUF fighters, and by 1994 they held much of the diamond-rich Eastern Province and were at the edge of Freetown. In response, the NPRC hired several hundred mercenaries from the private firm Executive Outcomes. Within a month they had driven RUF fighters back to enclaves along Sierra Leone's borders, and cleared the RUF from the Kono diamond producing areas of Sierra Leone. With Strasser's two most senior NPRC allies and commanders Lieutenant Sahr Sandy and Lieutenant Solomon Musa no longer around to defend him, Strasser's leadership within the NPRC Supreme Council of State was not considered much stronger. On 16 January 1996, after about four years in power, Strasser was arrested in a palace coup at the Defence Headquarter in Freetown by his fellow NPRC soldiers. Strasser was immediately flown into exile in a military helicopter to Conakry, Guinea. In his first public broadcast to the nation following the 1996 coup, Brigadier Bio stated that his support for returning Sierra Leone to a democratically elected civilian government and his commitment to ending the civil war were his motivations for the coup. Promises of a return to civilian rule were fulfilled by Bio, who handed power over to Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), after the conclusion of elections in early 1996. President Kabbah took power with a great promise of ending the civil war. President Kabbah opened dialogue with the RUF and invited RUF leader Foday Sankoh for peace negotiations. On 25 May 1997, seventeen soldiers in the Sierra Leone army led by Corporal Tamba Gborie, loyal to the detained Major General Johnny Paul Koroma, launched a military coup which sent President Kabbah into exile in Guinea and they established the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). Corporal Gborie quickly went to the SLBS FM 99.9 headquarters in Freetown to announce the coup to a shocked nation and to alert all soldiers across the country to report for guard duty. The soldiers immediately released Koroma from prison and installed him as their chairman and Head of State. Koroma suspended the constitution, banned demonstrations, shut down all private radio stations in the country and invited the RUF to join the new junta government, with its leader Foday Sankoh as the Vice-Chairman of the new AFRC-RUF coalition junta government. Within days, Freetown was overwhelmed by the presence of the RUF combatants who came to the city in thousands. The Kamajors, a group of traditional fighters mostly from the Mende ethnic group under the command of deputy Defence Minister Samuel Hinga Norman, remained loyal to President Kabbah



and defended the Southern part of Sierra Leone from the soldiers. === Kabbah's government and the end of civil war (2002–2014) === After 9 months in office, the junta was overthrown by the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces, and the democratically elected government of president Kabbah was reinstated in February 1998. On 19 October 1998 twenty-four soldiers in the Sierra Leone army were executed by firing squad after they were convicted at a court martial in Freetown, some for orchestrating the 1997 coup that overthrew President Kabbah and others for failure to reverse the mutiny. In October 1999, the United Nations agreed to send peacekeepers to help restore order and disarm the rebels. The first of the 6,000-member force began arriving in December, and the UN Security Council voted in February 2000 to increase the force to 11,000, and later to 13,000. But in May, when nearly all Nigerian forces had left and UN forces were trying to disarm the RUF in eastern Sierra Leone, Sankoh's forces clashed with the UN troops, and some 500 peacekeepers were taken hostage as the peace accord effectively collapsed. The hostage crisis resulted in more fighting between the RUF and the government as UN troops launched Operation Khukri to end the siege. The Operation was successful with Indian and British Special Forces being the main contingents. The situation in the country deteriorated to such an extent that British troops were deployed in Operation Palliser, originally simply to evacuate foreign nationals. However, the British exceeded their original mandate, and took full military action to finally defeat the rebels and restore order. The British were the catalyst for the ceasefire that ended the civil war. Elements of the British Army, together with administrators and politicians, remain in Sierra Leone to this day, helping train the armed forces, improve the infrastructure of the country and administer financial and material aid. Tony Blair, the Prime Minister of Britain at the time of the British intervention, is regarded as a hero by the people of Sierra Leone, many of whom are keen for more British involvement. Sierra Leoneans have been described as "The World's Most Resilient People". Between 1991 and 2001, about 50,000 people were killed in Sierra Leone's civil war. Hundreds of thousands of people were forced from their homes and many became refugees in Guinea and Liberia. In 2001, UN forces moved into rebel-held areas and began to disarm rebel soldiers. By January 2002, the war was declared over. In May 2002, Kabbah was re-elected president by a landslide. By 2004, the disarmament process was complete. Also in 2004, a UN-backed war crimes court began holding trials of senior leaders from both sides of the war. In December 2005, UN peacekeeping forces pulled out of Sierra Leone. In August 2007, Sierra Leone held presidential and parliamentary elections. However, no presidential candidate won the 50% plus one vote majority stipulated in the constitution on the first round of voting. A runoff election was held in September 2007, and Ernest Bai Koroma, the candidate of the main opposition APC, was elected president. Koroma was re-elected president for a second (and final) term in November 2012. === Struggle with epidemic (2014–2016) === In 2014 an Ebola virus epidemic in Sierra Leone began, which had widespread impact on the country, including forcing Sierra Leone to declare a state of emergency. By the end of 2014 there were nearly 3000 deaths and 10 thousand cases of the disease in Sierra Leone. The epidemic also led to the Ouse to Ouse Tock in September 2014, a nationwide three-day quarantine. The epidemic occurred as part of the wider Ebola virus epidemic in West Africa. In early August 2014 Sierra Leone cancelled league football (soccer) matches because of the Ebola epidemic. On 16 March 2016, the World Health Organisation declared Sierra Leone to be free from Ebola. === 14 August 2017 mudslides === Several mudslides occurred around 6:30 AM on the fourteenth of August 2017 in and near the country's capital Freetown. == Geography and climate == Sierra Leone is located on the west coast of Africa, lying mostly between latitudes 7° and 10°N (a small area is south of 7°), and longitudes 10° and 14°W. The country is bordered by Guinea to the north and northeast, Liberia to the south and southeast, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Sierra Leone has a total area of 71,740 km<sup>2</sup> (27,699 sq mi), divided into a land area of 71,620 km<sup>2</sup> (27,653 sq mi) and water of 120 km<sup>2</sup> (46 sq mi). The country has four distinct geographical regions. In eastern Sierra Leone the plateau is interspersed with high mountains, where Mount Bintumani reaches 1,948 m (6,391 ft), the highest point in the country. The upper part of the drainage basin of the Moa River is located in the south of this region. The centre of the country is a region of lowland plains, containing forests, bush and farmland, that occupies about 43% of Sierra Leone's land area. The northern section of this has been categorised by the World Wildlife Fund as part of the Guinean forest-savanna mosaic ecoregion, while the south is rain-forested plains and farmland. In the west, Sierra Leone has some 400 km (249 mi) of Atlantic coastline, giving it both bountiful marine resources and attractive tourist potential. The coast has areas of low-lying Guinean mangroves swamp. The national capital Freetown sits on a coastal peninsula, situated next to the Sierra Leone Harbour, the world's third largest natural harbour. The climate is tropical, with two seasons determining the agricultural cycle: the rainy season from May to November, and a dry season from December to May,

which includes harmattan, when cool, dry winds blow in off the Sahara Desert and the night-time temperature can be as low as 16 °C (60.8 °F). The average temperature is 26 °C (78.8 °F) and varies from around 26 to 36 °C (78.8 to 96.8 °F) during the year. === Environment === Human activities claimed to be responsible or contributing to land degradation in Sierra Leone include unsustainable agricultural land use, poor soil and water management practices, deforestation, removal of natural vegetation, fuelwood consumption and to a lesser extent overgrazing and urbanisation. Deforestation, both for commercial timber and to make room for agriculture, is the major concern and represents an enormous loss of natural economic wealth to the nation. Mining and slash and burn for land conversion – such as cattle grazing – dramatically diminished forested land in Sierra Leone since the 1980s. It is listed among countries of concern for emissions, as having Low Forest Cover with High Rates of Deforestation (LFHD). There are concerns that heavy logging continues in the Tama-Tonkoli Forest Reserve in the north. Loggers have extended their operations to Nimini, Kono District, Eastern Province; Jui, Western Rural District, Western Area; Loma Mountains National Park, Koinadugu, Northern Province; and with plans to start operations in the Kambui Forest reserve in the Kenema District, Eastern Province. Habitat degradation for the African wild dog, *Lycaon pictus*, has been increased, such that this canid is deemed to have been extirpated in Sierra Leone. Until 2002, Sierra Leone lacked a forest management system because of the civil war that caused tens of thousands of deaths. Deforestation rates have increased 7.3% since the end of the civil war. On paper, 55 protected areas covered 4.5% of Sierra Leone as of 2003. The country has 2,090 known species of higher plants, 147 mammals, 626 birds, 67 reptiles, 35 amphibians, and 99 fish species. The Environmental Justice Foundation has documented how the number of illegal fishing vessels in Sierra Leone's waters has multiplied in recent years. The amount of illegal fishing has significantly depleted fish stocks, depriving local fishing communities of an important resource for survival. The situation is particularly serious as fishing provides the only source of income for many communities in a country still recovering from over a decade of civil war. In June 2005, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and BirdLife International agreed to support a conservation-sustainable development project in the Gola Forest in south eastern Sierra Leone, an important surviving fragment of rainforest in Sierra Leone. == Government and politics == Sierra Leone is a constitutional republic with a directly elected president and a unicameral legislature. The current system of national government in Sierra Leone, established under the 1991 Constitution, is modelled on the following structure of government: the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. Within the confines of the 1991 Constitution, supreme legislative powers are vested in Parliament, which is the law making body of the nation. Supreme executive authority rests in the president and members of his cabinet and judicial power with the judiciary of which the Chief Justice is head. The president is the head of state, the head of government and the commander-in-chief of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces and the Sierra Leone Police. The president appoints and heads a cabinet of ministers, which must be approved by the Parliament. The president is elected by popular vote to a maximum of two five-year terms. The president is the highest and most influential position within the government of Sierra Leone. To be elected president of Sierra Leone, a candidate must gain at least 55% of the vote. If no candidate gets 55%, there is a second-round runoff between the top two candidates. The current president of Sierra Leone is former military junta leader Julius Maada Bio. Bio defeated Samura Kamara of the All People's Congress in the country's tightly contested presidential elections. Bio replaced outgoing President Ernest Bai Koroma after Bio was sworn into office on 4 April 2018 by Chief Justice Abdulai Cham. Bio is leader of the Sierra Leone People's Party. Former President Koroma, who was sworn in on 17 September 2007, was the first person of Temne ancestry to be elected president. Koroma won a tense run-off election, defeating then incumbent Vice-president, Solomon Berewa of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). Koroma was re-elected as President for his second and final term, on 23 November 2012, with 58.7%, in the 2012 Sierra Leone Presidential election, defeating his main opponent, Retired Brigadier Julius Maada Bio of the main opposition Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), who got 37.4% Koroma was sworn in as President for his second and final term by Chief Justice Umu Hawa Tejan Jalloh at State House in Freetown; the same day he was declared the winner of the election. Next to the president is the Vice-president, who is the second-highest ranking government official in the executive branch of the Sierra Leone Government. As designated by the Sierra Leone Constitution, the vice-president is to become the new president of Sierra Leone upon the death, resignation, or removal of the president by parliament and to assume the Presidency temporarily while the president is otherwise temporarily unable to fulfil his or her duties. The vice-president is elected jointly with the president as his or her running mate. Sierra Leone's former vice-president was Victor Bockarie Foh, who was sworn in on 19

March 2015 [4][5][6].

=== Parliament === The Parliament of Sierra Leone is unicameral, with 124 seats. Each of the country's fourteen districts is represented in parliament. 112 members are elected concurrently with the presidential elections; the other 12 seats are filled by paramount chiefs from each of the country's 12 administrative districts. The Sierra Leone parliament is led by the Speaker of Parliament, who is the overall leader of Parliament and is directly elected by sitting members of parliament. The current speaker of the Sierra Leone parliament is Sheku Badara Bashiru Dumbuya, who was elected by members of parliament on 21 January 2014. The current members of Parliament of Sierra Leone were elected in the 2012 Sierra Leone parliamentary election. The All People's Congress (APC) currently has 70 of the 112 elected parliamentary seats and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) has 42 of the elected 112 parliamentary seats. Sierra Leone's two most dominant parties, the APC and the SLPP, collectively won every elected seats in Parliament in the 2012 Sierra Leone parliamentary election. To be qualified as Member of Parliament, the person must be a citizen of Sierra Leone, must be at least 21 years old, must be able to speak, read and write the English language with a degree of proficiency to enable him to actively take part in proceedings in Parliament; and must not have any criminal conviction. Since independence in 1961, Sierra Leone's politics has been dominated by two major political parties: the SLPP and the ruling APC. Other minor political parties have also existed but with no significant support.

=== Judiciary === The judicial power of Sierra Leone is vested in the judiciary, headed by the Chief Justice and comprising the Sierra Leone Supreme Court, which is the highest court in the country and its ruling therefore cannot be appealed; the High Court of Justice; the Court of Appeal; the magistrate courts; and traditional courts in rural villages. The president appoints and parliament approves Justices for the three courts. The Judiciary have jurisdiction in all civil and criminal matters throughout the country. The current acting Chief Justice of Sierra Leone is Valicious Thomas [7]

=== Foreign relations === The Sierra Leone Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is responsible for foreign policy of Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone has diplomatic relations that include China, Russia, Libya, Iran, and Cuba. Sierra Leone has good relations with the West, including the United States, and has maintained historical ties with the United Kingdom and other former British colonies through membership in the Commonwealth of Nations. The United Kingdom has played a major role in providing aid to the former colony, together with administrative help and military training since intervening to end the Civil War in 2000. Former President Siaka Stevens' government had sought closer relations with other West African countries under the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) a policy continued by the current government. Sierra Leone, along with Liberia and Guinea, form the Mano River Union (MRU). It is primarily designed to implement development projects and promote regional economic integration between the three countries. Sierra Leone is also a member of the United Nations and its specialised agencies, the African Union, the African Development Bank (AFDB), the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Sierra Leone is a member of the International Criminal Court with a Bilateral Immunity Agreement of protection for the US military (as covered under Article 98).

=== Administrative divisions === The Republic of Sierra Leone is composed of four regions: the Northern Province, Southern Province, the Eastern Province, and the Western Area. The three provinces are further divided into 12 districts; and the Western Area is divided into two district, The provincial districts are divided into 149 chiefdoms, which have traditionally been led by paramount chiefs, recognised by the British administration in 1896 at the time of organising the Protectorate of Sierra Leone. The Paramount Chiefs are very influential, particularly in villages and small rural towns. Each chiefdom has ruling families that were recognised at that time; the Tribal Authority, made up of local notables, elects the paramount chief from the ruling families. Typically, chiefs have the power to "raise taxes, control the judicial system, and allocate land, the most important resource in rural areas." Within the context of local governance, the districts are governed as localities. Each has a directly elected local district council to exercise authority and carry out functions at a local level. In total, there are 19 local councils: 13 district councils, one for each of the 12 districts and one for the Western Area Rural, and six municipalities also have elected local councils. The six municipalities include Freetown, which functions as the local government for the Western Area Urban District, and Bo, Bonthe, Kenema, Koidu, and Makeni. While the district councils are under the oversight of their respective provincial administrations, the municipalities are directly overseen by the Ministry of Local Government & Community Development and thus administratively independent of district and provincial administrations.

=== Military === The Military of Sierra Leone, officially the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), are the unified armed forces of Sierra Leone responsible for the territorial security of Sierra Leone's border and defending the national interests of Sierra Leone within the framework of its

international obligations. The armed forces were formed after independence in 1961, on the basis of elements of the former British Royal West African Frontier Force present in the country. The Sierra Leone Armed Forces consists of around 15,500 personnel, comprising the largest Sierra Leone Army, the Sierra Leone Navy and the Sierra Leone Air Wing. The president of Sierra Leone is the Commander in Chief of the military, with the Minister of Defence responsible for defence policy and the formulation of the armed forces. The current Sierra Leone Defence Minister is retired Major Alfred Paolo Conteh. The Military of Sierra Leone also has a Chief of the Defence Staff who is a uniformed military official responsible for the administration and the operational control of the Sierra Leone military. Brigadier General Alfred Nelson-Williams who was appointed by president Koroma succeeded the retired Major General Edward Sam M'boma on 12 September 2008 as the Chief of Defence Staff of the Military. Before Sierra Leone gained independence in 1961, the military was known as the Royal Sierra Leone Military Force. The military seized control in 1968, bringing the National Reformation Council into power. On 19 April 1971, when Sierra Leone became a republic, the Royal Sierra Leone Military Forces were renamed the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF). The RSLMF remained a single-service organisation until 1979, when the Sierra Leone Navy was established. In 1995 Defence Headquarters was established, and the Sierra Leone Air Wing formed. The RSLMF was renamed as the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone (AFRSL).

=== Law enforcement ===

Law enforcement in Sierra Leone is primarily the responsibility of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP). Sierra Leone Police was established by the British colony in 1894; it is one of the oldest police forces in West Africa. It works to prevent crime, protect life and property, detect and prosecute offenders, maintain public order, ensure safety and security, and enhance access to justice. The Sierra Leone Police is headed by the Inspector General of Police, the professional head of the Sierra Leone Police force, who is appointed by the President of Sierra Leone. Each one of Sierra Leone's 14 districts is headed by a district police commissioner who is the professional head of their respective district. These Police Commissioners report directly to the Inspector General of Police at the Sierra Leone Police headquarters in Freetown. The current Inspector General of Police is Brima Acha Kamara, who was appointed to the position by former president Ahmad Tejan Kabbah.

== Economy ==

By the 1990s economic activity was declining and economic infrastructure had become seriously degraded. Over the next decade much of the formal economy was destroyed in the country's civil war. Since the end of hostilities in January 2002, massive infusions of outside assistance have helped Sierra Leone begin to recover. Much of the recovery will depend on the success of the government's efforts to limit corruption by officials, which many feel was the chief cause for the civil war. A key indicator of success will be the effectiveness of government management of its diamond sector. There is high unemployment, particularly among the youth and ex-combatants. Authorities have been slow to implement reforms in the civil service, and the pace of the privatisation programme is also slackening and donors have urged its advancement. The currency is the leone. The central bank is the Bank of Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone operates a floating exchange rate system, and foreign currencies can be exchanged at any of the commercial banks, recognised foreign exchange bureaux and most hotels. Credit card use is limited in Sierra Leone, though they may be used at some hotels and restaurants. There are a few internationally linked automated teller machines that accept Visa cards in Freetown operated by ProCredit Bank.

Sierra Leone is a country that is exposed to vulnerable situations (not so as a result of the non-existence of natural wealth), but more to do with poor management of its natural wealth (linked with the concept of resource curse).

=== Agriculture ===

Two-thirds of the population of Sierra Leone are directly involved in subsistence agriculture. Agriculture accounted for 58 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2007. Agriculture is the largest employer with 80 percent of the population working in the sector. Rice is the most important staple crop in Sierra Leone with 85 percent of farmers cultivating rice during the rainy season and an annual consumption of 76 kg per person.

=== Mining ===

Rich in minerals, Sierra Leone has relied on mining, especially diamonds, for its economic base. The country is among the top ten diamond producing nations. Mineral exports remain the main currency earner. Sierra Leone is a major producer of gem-quality diamonds. Though rich in diamonds, it has historically struggled to manage their exploitation and export. Sierra Leone is known for its blood diamonds that were mined and sold to diamond conglomerates during the civil war, to buy the weapons that fuelled its atrocities. In the 1970s and early 1980s, economic growth rate slowed because of a decline in the mining sector and increasing corruption among government officials. Annual production of Sierra Leone's diamond estimates range between US\$250 million–\$300 million. Some of that is smuggled, where it is possibly used for money laundering or financing illicit activities. Formal exports have dramatically improved since the civil war, with efforts to improve the management of them having some

success. In October 2000, a UN-approved certification system for exporting diamonds from the country was put in place and led to a dramatic increase in legal exports. In 2001, the government created a mining community development fund (DACDF), which returns a portion of diamond export taxes to diamond mining communities. The fund was created to raise local communities' stake in the legal diamond trade. Sierra Leone has one of the world's largest deposits of rutile, a titanium ore used as paint pigment and welding rod coatings. === Transport infrastructure === There are a number of systems of transport in Sierra Leone, which has a road, air and water infrastructure, including a network of highways and several airports. There are 11,300 kilometres (7,000 miles) of highways in Sierra Leone, of which 904 km (562 mi) are paved (about 8% of the roads). Sierra Leone highways are linked to Conakry, Guinea, and Monrovia, Liberia. Sierra Leone has the largest natural harbour on the African continent, allowing international shipping through the Queen Elizabeth II Quay in the Cline Town area of eastern Freetown or through Government Wharf in central Freetown. There are 800 km (497 mi) of waterways in Sierra Leone, of which 600 km (373 mi) are navigable year-round. Major port cities are Bonthe, Freetown, Sherbro Island and Pepel. There are ten regional airports in Sierra Leone, and one international airport. The Lungi International Airport located in the coastal town of Lungi in Northern Sierra Leone is the primary airport for domestic and international travel to or from Sierra Leone. Passengers cross the river to Aberdeen Heliports in Freetown by hovercraft, ferry or a helicopter. Helicopters are also available from the airport to other major cities in the country. The airport has paved runways longer than 3,047 metres (9,997 feet). The other airports have unpaved runways, and seven have runways from 914 to 1,523 metres (2,999 to 4,997 feet) long; the remaining two have shorter runways. Sierra Leone appears on the EU list of prohibited countries with regard to the certification of airlines. This means that no airline registered in Sierra Leone may operate services of any kind within the European Union. This is due to substandard safety standards. As of May 2014 the country's only international airport had regularly scheduled direct flights to London, Paris, Brussels and most major cities in West Africa. In September 2014 there were many Districts with travel restrictions including Kailahun, Kenema, Bombali, Tonkolili, and Port Loko because of Ebola. == Society ==

Demographics === In 2013 Sierra Leone had an officially projected population of 6,190,280 and a growth rate of 2.216% a year. The country's population is mostly young, with an estimated 41.7% under 15, and rural, with an estimated 62% of people living outside the cities. As a result of migration to cities, the population is becoming more urban with an estimated rate of urbanisation growth of 2.9% a year. Population density varies greatly within Sierra Leone. The Western Area Urban District, including Freetown, the capital and largest city, has a population density of 1,224 persons per square km. The largest district geographically, Koinadugu, has a much lower density of 21.4 persons per square km. English is the official language, spoken at schools, government administration and in the media. Krio (derived from English and several indigenous African languages, and the language of the Sierra Leone Krio people) is the most widely spoken language in virtually all parts of Sierra Leone. As the Krio language is spoken by 90% of the country's population, it unites all the different ethnic groups, especially in their trade and interaction with each other. According to the World Refugee Survey 2008, published by the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, Sierra Leone had a population of 8,700 refugees and asylum seekers at the end of 2007. Nearly 20,000 Liberian refugees voluntarily returned to Liberia over the course of 2007. Of the refugees remaining in Sierra Leone, nearly all were Liberian. The populations quoted above for the five largest cities are from the 2004 census. The figure for Freetown is for the Western Urban Area (Greater Freetown). Other figures are estimates from the source cited. Different sources give different estimates. Some claim that Magburaka should be included in the above list, but there is considerable difference among sources. One source estimates the population at 14,915, whilst another puts it as high as 85,313. "Pandebu-Tokpombu" is presumably the extended town of Torgbonbu, which had a population of 10,716 in the 2004 census. "Gbendembu" had a larger population of 12,139 in that census. In the 2004 census, Waterloo had a population of 34,079. === Religion === Sierra Leone is officially a secular state, although Islam and Christianity are the two main religions in the country. The constitution of Sierra Leone provides for freedom of religion and the Sierra Leone Government generally protects it. The Sierra Leone Government is constitutionally forbidden from establishing a state religion. According to a 2010 estimates by the Pew Research Center[8] 78% of Sierra Leone's population are Muslims (mostly Sunni), 20.9 are Christians (mostly Protestants) and 1% belong to a traditional African religion or other beliefs. The Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone estimated that 77% of Sierra Leone's population are Muslims, 21% are Christians, and 2% are followers of traditional African religion. Most of Sierra Leone's ethnic groups are Muslim majority, including the country's two largest ethnic groups: the Mende and Temne. Sierra Leone is

regarded as one of the most religiously tolerant countries in the world. Muslims and Christians collaborate and interact with each other peacefully. Religious violence is very rare in the country. Even during the Sierra Leonean Civil War people were never targeted because of their religion. The country is home to the Sierra Leone Inter-Religious Council, which is made up of both Christian and Muslim religious leaders to promote peace and tolerance throughout the country. The Islamic holidays of Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha and Maulid-un-Nabi (Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad) are observed as national holidays in Sierra Leone. The Christian holidays of Christmas, Boxing Day, Good Friday and Easter are also national holidays in Sierra Leone. The overwhelming majority of Sierra Leonean Muslims are adherent to the Sunni tradition of Islam, a significant portion of country's Muslims, at eight percent, are adherents to the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam. Shia Muslims form a very small portion at less than one percent of Sierra Leone's Muslim population. Sierra Leonean Muslims across sects generally pray together in the same Mosque. Though most of the Mosques in the country are based within Sunni Islam. There are also around five hundred Ahmadiyya Mosques across Sierra Leone. The Maliki school is the most dominant Islamic madrasa school of jurisprudence across Sierra Leone and is based within Sunni Islam. The United Council of Imams, is the highest ranking Islamic religious body in Sierra Leone, and is made up of all imams of mosques throughout Sierra Leone. The president of the United Council of Imams is Sheikh Alhaji Muhammad Habib Sheriff.[9]. The two largest mosques in Sierra Leone are the Freetown Central Mosque and the Ghadafi Central Mosque, both located in the capital Freetown. The vast majority of Sierra Leonean Muslim scholars and preachers are adherent to the Sunni tradition of Islam. Among the most prominent Sierra Leonean Muslim preachers are Sheikh Umarr S. Kanu, Sheikh Ahmad Tejan Sillah, Sheikh Saeedu Rahman, a Sheikh Muhammad Habib Sheriff and Sheikh Abu Bakarr Cotco Kamara. The large majority of Sierra Leonean Christians are Protestant, of which the largest groups are the Wesleyan Methodists. Other Christian Protestant denominations with significant presence in the country include Presbyterians, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, Anglicans, Lutherans, and Pentecostals. The Council of Churches is the Christian religious organisation that is made up of Protestant churches across Sierra Leone. Recently there has been an increase of Pentecostal churches, especially in Freetown. In September 2017, a Sierra Leone-based Nigerian Pentecostal Christian pastor named Victor Ajisafe was arrested by the Sierra Leone Police and held in jail after he preached a very extreme religious intolerance and a fanatical hate speech against Islam and Sierra Leonean Muslims at his church in the capital Freetown[cityvoiceng.com/hate]. His church was temporarily shut down by the Sierra Leone government and his church license was temporarily suspended by the Sierra Leone government. The incident brought religious tension in Sierra Leone, in a country known for its very high level of religious tolerance, as many Sierra Leonean Muslims at home and abroad were extremely angry, many called for Ajisafe to be deported back to his home country of Nigeria. The pastor while in Sierra Leone police custody apologized to Sierra Leonean Muslims and to the government of Sierra Leone. After several days in jail, Ajisafe was released, his church license was given back to him, and his church was later reopened under strict government condition during several months of probation. Non-denominational Christians form a significant minority of Sierra Leone's Christian population. Catholics are the largest group of non-Protestant Christians in Sierra Leone, forming about 8% of Sierra Leone's population and 26% of the Christian population in Sierra Leone. The Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons are the two most prominent non-Trinitarian Christians in Sierra Leone, and they form a small but significant minority of the Christian population in Sierra Leone. A small community of Orthodox Christians resides in the capital Freetown. === Ethnic groups === Sierra Leone is home to about sixteen ethnic groups, each with its own language. The largest and most influential are the Temne at about 35%, and the Mende at about 31%. The Temne predominate in the Northern Sierra Leone and the areas around the capital of Sierra Leone. The Mende predominate in South-Eastern Sierra Leone (with the exception of Kono District). The vast majority of Temne are Muslims at over 85%; and with a small Christian minority at about 10%. The Mende are also Muslim majority at about 70%, though with a large Christian minority at about 28%. Sierra Leone's national politics centres on the competition between the north-west, dominated by the Temne, and the south-east dominated by the Mende. The vast majority of the Mende support the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP); while the majority of the Temne support the All People's Congress (APC). The Mende, who are believed to be descendants of the Mane, originally occupied the Liberian hinterland. They began moving into Sierra Leone slowly and peacefully in the eighteenth century. The Temne are thought to have come from Futa Jallon, which is in present-day Guinea. The third-largest ethnic group are the Limba at about 8% of the population. The Limba are native people of Sierra Leone. They have no tradition of origin, and it is believed that they have lived in Sierra Leone since before the European

encounter. The Limba are primarily found in Northern Sierra Leone, particularly in Bombali, Kambia and Koinadugu District. The Limba are about equally divided between Muslims and Christians. The Limba are close political allies of the neighbouring Temne. Since Independence, the Limba have traditionally been very influential in Sierra Leone's politics, along with the Mende. The vast majority of Limba support the All People's Congress (APC) political party. Sierra Leone's first and second presidents, Siaka Stevens and Joseph Saidu Momoh, respectively, were both ethnic Limba. Sierra Leone's current Defense Minister Alfred Paolo Conteh is an ethnic Limba. The fourth largest ethnic group are the Fula at around 7% of the population. Descendants of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Fula migrant settlers from the Fouta Djallon region of Guinea, they live primarily in the northeast and the western area of Sierra Leone. The Fula are virtually all Muslims at over 99%. The Fula are primarily traders, and many live in middle-class homes. Because of their trading, the Fulas are found in nearly all parts of the country. The other ethnic groups are the Mandingo (also known as Mandinka). They are descendants of traders from Guinea who migrated to Sierra Leone during the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. The Mandinka are predominantly found in the east and the northern part of the country. They predominate in the large towns, most notably Karina, in Bombali District in the north; Kabala and Falaba in Koinadugu District in the north; and Yengema, Kono District in the east of the country. Like the Fula, the Mandinka are virtually all Muslims at over 99%. Sierra Leone's third president Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, and Sierra Leone's first Vice-President Sorie Ibrahima Koroma were both ethnic Mandingo. Next in proportion are the Kono, who live primarily in Kono District in Eastern Sierra Leone. The Kono are descendants of migrants from Guinea; today their workers are known primarily as diamond miners. The majority of the Kono ethnic group are Christians, though with an influential Muslim minority. Sierra Leone's former Vice-President Alhaji Samuel Sam-Sumana is an ethnic Kono. The small but significant Krio people (descendants of freed African American, West Indian and Liberated African slaves who settled in Freetown between 1787 and about 1885) make up about 3% of the population. They primarily occupy the capital city of Freetown and its surrounding Western Area. Krio culture reflects the Western culture and ideals within which many of their ancestors originated – they also had close ties with British officials and colonial administration during years of development. The Krio have traditionally dominated Sierra Leone's judiciary and Freetown's elected city council. One of the first ethnic groups to become educated according to Western traditions, they have traditionally been appointed to positions in the civil service, beginning during the colonial years. They continue to be influential in the civil service. The vast majority of Krios are Christians at about 95%, though with a small but significant Muslim minority at 5%. Other minority ethnic groups are the Kuranko, who are related to the Mandingo, and are largely Muslims. The Kuranko are believed to have begun arriving in Sierra Leone from Guinea in about 1600 and settled in the north, particularly in Koinadugu District. The Kuranko are primarily farmers; leaders among them have traditionally held several senior positions in the Military. The current Governor of the Bank of Sierra Leone Kaifala Marah is an ethnic Kuranko. The Kuranko are largely Muslim majority. The Loko in the north are native people of Sierra Leone, believed to have lived in Sierra Leone since the time of European encounter. Like the neighbouring Temne, the Loko are Muslim majority. The Susu and their related Yalunka are traders; both groups are primarily found in the far north in Kambia and Koinadugu District close to the border with Guinea. The Susu and Yalunka are both descendants of migrants from Guinea; and they both are virtually all Muslims at over 99%. The Kissi live further inland in South-Eastern Sierra Leone. They predominate in the large town of Koinadu and its surrounding areas in Kailahun District. The vast majority of Kissi are Christians. The much smaller Vai and Kru peoples are primarily found in Kailahun and Pujehun Districts near the border with Liberia. The Kru predominate in the Kroubay neighbourhood in the capital Freetown. The Vai are largely Muslim majority at about 90%, while the Kru are virtually all Christians at over 99%. On the coast in Bonthe District in the south are the Sherbro. Native to Sierra Leone, they have occupied Sherbro Island since it was founded. The Sherbro are primarily fisherman and farmers, and they are predominantly found in Bonthe District. The Sherbro are virtually all Christians, and their paramount chiefs had a history of intermarriage with British colonists and traders. A small number of Sierra Leoneans are of partial or full Lebanese ancestry, descendants of traders who first came to the nation in the 19th century. They are locally known as Sierra Leonean-Lebanese. The Sierra Leonean-Lebanese community are primarily traders and they mostly live in middle-class households in the urban areas, primarily in Freetown, Bo, Kenema, Koidu Town and Makeni. == Education == Education in Sierra Leone is legally required for all children for six years at primary level (Class P1-P6) and three years in junior secondary education, but a shortage of schools and teachers has made implementation impossible. Two thirds of the adult population of the country are illiterate. The Sierra

Leone Civil War resulted in the destruction of 1,270 primary schools, and in 2001, 67% of all school-age children were out of school. The situation has improved considerably since then with primary school enrolment doubling between 2001 and 2005 and the reconstruction of many schools since the end of the war. Students at primary schools are usually 6 to 12 years old, and in secondary schools 13 to 18. Primary education is free and compulsory in government-sponsored public schools. The country has three universities: Fourah Bay College, founded in 1827 (the oldest university in West Africa), University of Makeni (established initially in September 2005 as The Fatima Institute, the college was granted university status in August 2009, and assumed the name University of Makeni, or UNIMAK), and Njala University, primarily located in Bo District. Njala University was established as the Njala Agricultural Experimental Station in 1910 and became a university in 2005. Teacher training colleges and religious seminaries are found in many parts of the country. Israel grants scholarships to Sierra Leone students as part of its international development cooperation program.

**== Health ==** The CIA estimated average life expectancy in Sierra Leone was 57.39 years. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the population is 1.6%, higher than the world average of 1% but lower than the average of 6.1% across Sub-Saharan Africa. Medical care is not readily accessible, with doctors and hospitals out of reach for many villagers. While free health care may be provided in some villages, the medical staff is poorly paid and sometimes charge for their services, taking advantage of the fact that the villagers are not aware of their right to free medical care. A dialysis machine, the first of its kind in the country, was donated by Israel. According to an Overseas Development Institute report, private health expenditure accounts for 85.7% of total spending on health.

**=== Endemic and infectious diseases ===** Sierra Leone suffers from epidemic outbreaks of diseases, including yellow fever, cholera, lassa fever and meningitis. Yellow fever and malaria are endemic to Sierra Leone.

**=== 2014 Ebola outbreak ===** Ebola is prevalent in Africa where social and economic inequalities are common. The central African countries are the most prevalent of EVD; like Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Uganda, and Gabon In 2014 there was an outbreak of the Ebola virus in West Africa. As of 19 October 2014, there had been 3,706 cases of Ebola in Sierra Leone, and 1,259 deaths, including that of the leading physician trying to control the outbreak, Sheik Umar Khan. In early August 2014 Guinea closed its borders to Sierra Leone to help contain the spreading of the virus, which originated in Guinea, as more new cases of the disease were being reported in Sierra Leone than in Guinea. Aside from the human cost, the outbreak was severely eroding the economy. By September 2014, with the closure of borders, the cancellation of airline flights, the evacuation of foreign workers and a collapse of cross-border trade, the national deficit of Sierra Leone and other affected countries was widening to the point where the IMF was considering expanding its financial support.

**=== Mental health ===** Mental healthcare in Sierra Leone is almost non-existent. Many sufferers try to cure themselves with the help of traditional healers. During the Civil War (1991–2002), many soldiers took part in atrocities and many children were forced to fight. This left them traumatised, with an estimated 400,000 people (by 2009) being mentally ill. Thousands of former child soldiers have fallen into substance abuse as they try to blunt their memories.

**=== Maternal and child health ===** According to 2010 estimates, Sierra Leone has the 5th highest maternal mortality rate in the world. According to a 2013 UNICEF report, 88% of women in Sierra Leone have undergone female genital mutilation. As of 2014, Sierra Leone was estimated as having the 11th highest infant mortality rate in the world.

**=== Drinking water supply ===** Water supply in Sierra Leone is characterised by limited access to safe drinking water. Despite efforts by the government and numerous non-governmental organisations, access has not much improved since the end of the Sierra Leone Civil War in 2002, stagnating at about 50% and even declining in rural areas. It is hoped that a new dam in Orugu, for which China committed financing in 2009, will alleviate water scarcity. According to a national survey carried out in 2006, 84% of the urban population and 32% of the rural population had access to an improved water source. Those with access in rural areas were served almost exclusively by protected wells. The 68% of the rural population without access to an improved water source relied on surface water (50%), unprotected wells (9%) and unprotected springs (9%). Only 20% of the urban population and 1% of the rural population had access to piped drinking water in their home. Compared to the 2000 survey access has increased in urban areas, but has declined in rural areas, possibly because facilities have broken down because of a lack of maintenance. With a new decentralisation policy, embodied in the Local Government Act of 2004, responsibility for water supply in areas outside the capital was passed from the central government to local councils. In Freetown the Guma Valley Water Company remains in charge of water supply.

**== Culture ==**

**=== Polygamy ===** 37 percent of married women in Sierra Leone were in polygamous marriages in 2008.

**=== Food and customs ===** Rice is the staple food of Sierra Leone and is consumed at virtually every meal daily. The rice is



prepared in numerous ways, and topped with a variety of sauces made from some of Sierra Leone's favourite toppings, including potato leaves, cassava leaves, crain crain, okra soup, fried fish and groundnut stew. Along the streets of towns and cities across Sierra Leone one can find foods consisting of fruit, vegetables and snacks such as fresh mangoes, oranges, pineapple, fried plantains, ginger beer, fried potato, fried cassava with pepper sauce; small bags of popcorn or peanuts, bread, roasted corn, or skewers of grilled meat or shrimp. Poyo is a popular Sierra Leonean drink. It is a sweet, lightly fermented palm wine, and is found in bars in towns and villages across the country. Poyo bars are areas of lively informal debate about politics, football, basketball, entertainment and other issues. === Media === Media in Sierra Leone began with the introduction of the first printing press in Africa at the start of the 19th century. A strong free journalistic tradition developed with the creation of a number of newspapers. In the 1860s, the country became a journalist hub for Africa, with professionals travelling to the country from across the continent. At the end of the 19th century, the industry went into decline, and when radio was introduced in the 1930s, it became the primary communication media in the country. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) was created by the colonial government in 1934 making it the earliest English language radio broadcaster service in West Africa. The service began broadcasting television in 1963, with coverage extended to all the districts in the country in 1978. In April 2010, the SLBS merged with the United Nations peacekeeping radio station in Sierra Leone to form the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation, the government-owned current national broadcaster in Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone constitution guarantees freedom of speech, and freedom of the press; however, the government maintains strong control of media, and at times restricts these rights in practice. Some subjects are seen as taboo by society and members of the political elite; imprisonment and violence have been used by the political establishment against journalists. Under legislation enacted in 1980, all newspapers must register with the Ministry of Information and pay sizeable registration fees. The Criminal Libel Law, including Seditious Libel Law of 1965, is used to control what is published in the media. In 2006, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah committed to reforming the laws governing the press and media to create a freer system for journalists to work in. As of 2013 Sierra Leone is ranked 61st (up two slots from 63rd in 2012) out of 179 countries on Reporters Without Borders' Press Freedom Index. Print media is not widely read in Sierra Leone, especially outside Freetown and other major cities, partially due to the low levels of literacy in the country. In 2007 there were 15 daily newspapers in the country, as well as those published weekly. Among newspaper readership, young people are likely to read newspapers weekly and older people daily. The majority of newspapers are privately run and are often critical of the government. The standard of print journalism tends to be low owing to lack of training, and people trust the information published in newspapers less than that found on the radio. Radio is the most-popular and most-trusted media in Sierra Leone, with 85% of people having access to a radio and 72% of people in the country listening to the radio daily. These levels do vary between areas of the country, with the Western Area having the highest levels and Kailahun the lowest. Stations mainly consist of local commercial stations with a limited broadcast range, combined with a few stations with national coverage – Capital Radio Sierra Leone being the largest of the commercial stations. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) ran one of the most popular stations in the country, broadcasting programs in a range of languages. The UN mission were restructured in 2008 and it was decided that the UN Radio would be merged with SLBS to form the new Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC). This merger eventually happened in 2011 after the necessary legislation was enacted. SLBC transmits radio on FM and has two television services, one of which is uplinked by satellite for international consumption. FM relays of BBC World Service (in Freetown, Bo, Kenema and Makeni), Radio France Internationale (Freetown only) and Voice of America (Freetown only) are also broadcast. Outside the capital Freetown and other major cities, television is not watched by a great many people, although Bo, Kenema and Makeni are served by their own relays of the main SLBC service. There are two free terrestrial television stations in Sierra Leone, one run by the government SLBC and the other a private station in Freetown, Star TV which is run by the owner of the Standard Times newspaper. There are a number of religious funded TV stations that operate intermittently. Two other commercial TV operators (ABC and AIT) closed after they were not profitable. In 2007, a pay-per-view service was also introduced by GTV as part of a pan-African television service in addition to the nine-year-old sub-Saharan Digital satellite television service (DStv) originating from Multichoice Africa in South Africa. GTV subsequently went out of business, leaving DStv as the only provider of pay-per-view television in the country. A number of organisations are competing for the rights to operate digital TV services, with Multichoice's Go TV having built infrastructure ahead of getting a licence. Internet access in Sierra Leone has been sparse

but is on the increase, especially since the introduction of 3G cellular phone services across the country. There are several main internet service providers (ISPs) operating in the country. Freetown has internet cafés and other businesses offering internet access. Problems experienced with access to the Internet include an intermittent electricity supply and a slow connection speed in the country outside Freetown. === Arts === The arts in Sierra Leone are a mixture of tradition and hybrid African and western styles. === Sports === Football is by far the most popular sport in Sierra Leone. Children, youth and adult are frequently seen playing street football across Sierra Leone. There are organised youth and adult football tournaments across the country, and there are various primary and secondary schools with football teams across Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone national football team, popularly known as the Leone Stars, represents the country in international competitions. It has never qualified for the FIFA World Cup but participated in the 1994 and 1996 African Cup of Nations. When the national football team, the Leone Stars, have a match, Sierra Leoneans across the country come together united in support of the national team and people rush to their local radio and television stations to follow the live match. The country's national television network, The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) broadcasts the national football team live match, along with many local radio stations across the country. When the Leone Stars win an important match, many youth across the county rush to the street to celebrate. Many of the Sierra Leone national team footballers play for teams based in Europe although virtually all of them started professional football in the Sierra Leone National Premier League. Many of the national team footballers are celebrities across Sierra Leone and they are often well known by the general population. Some of Sierra Leonean international footballers include Mohamed Kallon, Mohamed Bangura, Rodney Strasser, Kei Kamara, Ibrahim Tete, Bangura, Mustapha Dumbuya, Christian Caulker, Alhassan Bangura, Sheriff Suma, Mohamed Kamara, Umaru Bangura and Julius Gibrilla Woobay. The Sierra Leone National Premier League is the top professional football league in Sierra Leone and is controlled by the Sierra Leone Football Association. Fourteen clubs from across the country compete in the Sierra Leone Premier League. The two biggest and most successful football clubs are East End Lions and Mighty Blackpool. East End Lions and Mighty Blackpool have an intense rivalry and when they play each other the national stadium in Freetown is often sold out and supporters of both clubs often clash with each other before and after the game. There is a huge police presence inside and outside the national stadium during a match between the two great rivals to prevent a clash. Many Sierra Leonean youth follow the local football league. Many Sierra Leonean youth, children and adults follow the major football leagues in Europe, particularly the English Premier League, Italian Serie A, Spanish La Liga, German Bundesliga and French Ligue 1. The Sierra Leone cricket team represents Sierra Leone in international cricket competitions, and is among the best in West Africa. It became an affiliate member of the International Cricket Council in 2002. It made its international debut at the 2004 African Affiliates Championship, where it finished last of eight teams. But at the equivalent tournament in 2006, Division Three of the African region of the World Cricket League, it finished as runner-up to Mozambique, and just missed a promotion to Division Two. In 2009, the Sierra Leone Under-19 team finished second in the African Under-19 Championship in Zambia, thus qualifying for the Under-19 World Cup qualifying tournament with nine other teams. However, the team was unable to obtain Canadian visas to play in the tournament, which was held in Toronto. Basketball is not a very popular sport in Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone national basketball team represents Sierra Leone in international men's basketball competitions and is controlled by the Sierra Leone Basketball Federation. The National Basketball Association (NBA) is popular among a small portion of the youth population. NBA superstars LeBron James, Kobe Bryant and Kevin Durant are popular among Sierra Leone's youthful population. Former NBA stars, in particular Michael Jordan, Shaquille O'Neal, Allen Iverson and Magic Johnson are popular in the country. Michael Jordan in particular is the most famous basketball player in the country and he is very popular among the general population. Current NBA youngstar Victor Oladipo is of Sierra Leonean descent, as his father is a native of Sierra Leone. Although tennis is not very popular in the country, up-and-coming American player Frances Tiafoe is the son of two Sierra Leoneans who emigrated to the United States. Sierra Leone is the first African country to join the International Floorball Federation. == See also == Index of Sierra Leone-related articles Outline of Sierra Leone 2014 Ebola virus epidemic in Sierra Leone Sierra Leone – Wikipedia book == References == == Bibliography == === Further reading === Acemoglu, Daron, Tristan Reed, and James A. Robinson. "Chiefs: Economic Development and Elite Control of Civil Society in Sierra Leone," *Journal of Political Economy* (2014) 122#2 pp. 319–368 in JSTOR Imodale Caulker-Burnett, The Caulkers of Sierra Leone: The Story of a Ruling Family and Their Times (Xlibris, 2010) Harris, David. *Civil War and Democracy in West Africa: Conflict Resolution, Elections*

and Justice in Sierra Leone and Liberia, I.B. Tauris, 2012 Keen, David (2005). Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone. Oxford: James Currey. ISBN 0-85255-883-X. Retrieved 17 June 2014. Kup, Alexander Peter (1961). A History of Sierra Leone, 1400–1787. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 0-7864-1814-1. Sillinger, Brett (2003). Sierra Leone: Current Issues and Background. New York: Nova Science Publishers. ISBN 1-59033-662-3. Utting, Francis A (1931). The Story of Sierra Leone. Ayer Company Publishers. ISBN 0-8369-6704-6. Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission. TRC Report. Retrieved 14 May 2016. == Fiction and memoir == Massucco W. Life does not lose its value/La Vita non perde valore, documentary, Bluindaco Productions, 2012. Link: La vita non perde valore Bonnet, Laurent. Salone, a novel en Terre Krio, Vents d'Ailleurs, 2012 Beah, Ishmael. A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier (2007). Sarah Crichton Books: New York. Link: A Long Way Gone === Secondary sources === Levinson, Robby (1998). Ethnic Groups Worldwide: A Ready Reference Handbook. Phoenix: Oryx Press. ISBN 1-57356-019-7. == External links == Government The Republic of Sierra Leone official government site Chief of State and Cabinet Members Ministry of Mineral Resources official government minerals site thepatrioticvanguard.com The Patriotic Vanguard – official government newspaper General information Country Profile, BBC News "Sierra Leone". The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency. Sierra Leone, UCB Libraries GovPubs Sierra Leone at Curlie (based on DMOZ) Wikimedia Atlas of Sierra Leone Key Development Forecasts for Sierra Leone, International Futures News media Awareness Times Newspaper The New People, Newspaper News headline links, AllAfrica.com Sierra Leone News & Blog, Current Sierra Leone News & Blog Trade Sierra Leone 2002 Summary Trade Statistics Tourism National Tourist Board of Sierra Leone official site Telecommunication Sierra Leone, telecom Other Sierra Leone Forum Friends of Sierra Leone Schools for Salone, non-profit dedicated to rebuilding schools ENCISS civil society and governance The Auradicals Club, Student Club in Fourah Bay College Sierra Leone Web Sweet Salone, 2008 film on new music in Sierra Leone War Crimes Trials in Sierra Leone Hurrarc – Human Rights Respect Awareness Raising Campaigners, Sierra Leone NGO Environmental Justice Foundation's report on pirate fishing in Sierra Leone Stories from Lakka Beach, 2011 documentary about life in a post-conflict beach town