[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Distinguish2](/wiki/Template:Distinguish2) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:POV lead](/wiki/Template:POV_lead) [Template:Infobox country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_country) [Template:Special characters](/wiki/Template:Special_characters)

**Libya** ([Template:Lang-ar](/wiki/Template:Lang-ar) [*Template:Transl*](/wiki/Template:Transl); [Tamazight](/wiki/Berber_languages): ⵍⵉⴱⵢⴰ *Libia*; [Template:Lang-it](/wiki/Template:Lang-it)), officially the **State of Libya** ([Template:Lang-ar](/wiki/Template:Lang-ar) [*Template:Transl*](/wiki/Template:Transl); [Tamazight](/wiki/Berber_languages): ⴰⴷⴷⴰⴷ ⵏ ⵍⵉⴱⵢⴰ *Addad n Libia*; [Template:Lang-it](/wiki/Template:Lang-it)),[[1]](#cite_note-1)[[2]](#cite_note-2) is a country in the [Maghreb](/wiki/Maghreb) region of [North Africa](/wiki/North_Africa), part of [Tamazgha](/wiki/Tamazgha), bordered by the [Mediterranean Sea](/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea) to the north, [Egypt](/wiki/Egypt) to the east, [Sudan](/wiki/Sudan) to the southeast, [Chad](/wiki/Chad) and [Niger](/wiki/Niger) to the south, and [Algeria](/wiki/Algeria) and [Tunisia](/wiki/Tunisia) to the west. The three traditional parts of the country are [Tripolitania](/wiki/Tripolitania), [Fezzan](/wiki/Fezzan) and [Cyrenaica](/wiki/Cyrenaica). With an area of almost [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), Libya is the fourth largest country in Africa, and is the 16th [largest country in the world](/wiki/List_of_countries_and_outlying_territories_by_total_area).[[3]](#cite_note-3) Libya has the 10th-largest proven [oil reserves](/wiki/Oil_reserves) of any country in the world.[[4]](#cite_note-4) The largest city and capital, [Tripoli](/wiki/Tripoli), is located in western Libya and contains over one million[[5]](#cite_note-5) of Libya's six million people. The other large city is [Benghazi](/wiki/Benghazi), which is located in eastern Libya.

Libya has been inhabited by [Berbers](/wiki/Berber_people) since the late Bronze Age. The [Phoenicians](/wiki/Phoenicia) established trading posts in western Libya, and Ancient Greek colonists established city-states in eastern Libya. Libya was variously ruled by [Carthaginians](/wiki/Ancient_Carthage), [Persians](/wiki/Persia), [Egyptians](/wiki/Egypt) and [Greeks](/wiki/Ptolemaic_Kingdom) before becoming a part of the Roman Empire. Libya was an early center of Christianity. After the [fall of the Western Roman Empire](/wiki/Fall_of_the_Western_Roman_Empire), the area of Libya was mostly occupied by the [Vandals](/wiki/Vandalic_Kingdom) until the 7th century, when invasions brought [Islam](/wiki/Islam) and Arab colonization. In the sixteenth century, the [Spanish Empire](/wiki/Spanish_Empire) and the [Knights of St John](/wiki/Knights_of_St_John) occupied [Tripoli](/wiki/Tripoli), until [Ottoman](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) rule began in 1551. Libya was involved in the [Barbary Wars](/wiki/Barbary_Wars) of the 18th and 19th centuries. Ottoman rule continued until the Italian occupation of Libya resulted in the temporary [Italian Libya](/wiki/Italian_Libya) colony from 1911 to 1943. During the [Second World War](/wiki/Second_World_War) Libya was an important area of warfare in the [North African Campaign](/wiki/North_African_Campaign). The Italian population then went into decline. Libya became an independent kingdom in 1951.

In 1969, a military coup overthrew [King Idris I](/wiki/Idris_of_Libya), beginning a period of sweeping social reform. The most prominent coup conspirator, [Muammar Gaddafi](/wiki/Muammar_Gaddafi), was ultimately able to fully concentrate power in his own hands during the [Libyan Cultural Revolution](/wiki/Libyan_Cultural_Revolution), remaining in power until the [Libyan Civil War of 2011](/wiki/Libyan_Civil_War_(2011)), in which the rebels were supported by [NATO](/wiki/NATO).[[6]](#cite_note-6) Since then, Libya has experienced instability and political violence which has severely affected both commerce and oil production.[[7]](#cite_note-7) The [European Union](/wiki/European_Union) is involved in an operation to disrupt [human trafficking](/wiki/Human_trafficking) networks exploiting [refugees](/wiki/Refugee) fleeing from wars in Africa for Europe.[[8]](#cite_note-8)[[9]](#cite_note-9) At least two political bodies claim to be the government of Libya. The [Council of Deputies](/wiki/Council_of_Deputies) is internationally recognized as the legitimate government, but it does not hold territory in the capital, Tripoli, instead meeting in the [Cyrenaica](/wiki/Cyrenaica) city of [Tobruk](/wiki/Tobruk). Meanwhile, the [General National Congress (2014)](/wiki/General_National_Congress_(2014)) purports to be the legal continuation of the [General National Congress](/wiki/General_National_Congress), elected in the [Libyan General National Congress election, 2012](/wiki/Libyan_General_National_Congress_election,_2012) and was dissolved following the June 2014 elections but then reconvened by a minority of its members.[[10]](#cite_note-10)[[11]](#cite_note-11) The Supreme Court in the Libya Dawn and General National Congress-controlled Tripoli declared the Tobruk government unconstitutional in November 2014,[[12]](#cite_note-12) but the internationally recognized government has rejected the ruling as made under threat of violence.[[13]](#cite_note-13) Parts of Libya are outside of either government's control, with various [Islamist](/wiki/Islamism), rebel, and tribal militias administering some cities and areas.[[14]](#cite_note-14) The [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations) is sponsoring peace talks between the Tobruk and Tripoli-based factions.[[15]](#cite_note-15) An agreement to form a unified interim government was signed on 17 December 2015.[[16]](#cite_note-16) Under the terms of the agreement, a nine-member Presidency Council and a seventeen-member interim [Government of National Accord](/wiki/Government_of_National_Accord) would be formed, with a view to holding new elections within two years.[[16]](#cite_note-16)[[17]](#cite_note-17) The leaders of the new government, called the [Government of National Accord](/wiki/Government_of_National_Accord) (GNA), arrived in Tripoli on April 5, 2016. Since then the GNC, one of the two rival governments, has disbanded to support the new GNA.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Prime Minister Zeiden stepped down, and was replaced by Prime Minister [Abdullah al-Thani](/wiki/Abdullah_al-Thani).[[91]](#cite_note-91) On 25 March 2014, in the face of mounting instability, al-Thani's government briefly explored the possibility of the restoration of the Libyan monarchy.[[92]](#cite_note-92) In June 2014, [elections were held](/wiki/Libyan_Council_of_Deputies_election,_2014) to the [Council of Deputies](/wiki/Council_of_Deputies), a new legislative body intended to take over from the [General National Congress](/wiki/General_National_Congress). The elections were marred by violence and low turnout, with voting stations closed in some areas.[[93]](#cite_note-93) Secularists and liberals did well in the elections, to the consternation of Islamist lawmakers in the GNC, who reconvened and declared a [continuing mandate for the GNC](/wiki/General_National_Congress_(2014)), refusing to recognise the new Council of Deputies.[[94]](#cite_note-94) Armed supporters of the General National Congress occupied Tripoli, forcing the newly elected parliament to flee to [Tobruk](/wiki/Tobruk).[[95]](#cite_note-95)<ref name=guardian-20140909>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>

Libya has been [riven by conflict](/wiki/Second_Libyan_Civil_War_(2014–present)) between the rival parliaments since mid-2014. Tribal militias and [jihadist](/wiki/Jihad) groups have taken advantage of the power vacuum. Most notably, radical Islamist fighters seized [Derna](/wiki/Derna,_Libya) in 2014 and [Sirte](/wiki/Sirte) in 2015 in the name of the [Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant](/wiki/Islamic_State_of_Iraq_and_the_Levant). In early 2015, neighbouring [Egypt](/wiki/Egypt) [launched airstrikes](/wiki/2015_Egyptian_military_intervention_in_Libya) against ISIL in support of the Tobruk government.[[96]](#cite_note-96)[[97]](#cite_note-97)[[98]](#cite_note-98) In January 2015, meetings were held with the aim to find a peaceful agreement between the rival parties in Libya. The so-called Geneva-Ghadames talks were supposed to bring the GNC and the Tobruk government together at one table to find a solution of the internal conflict. However, the GNC actually never participated, a sign that internal division not only affected the "Tobruk Camp", but also the "Tripoli Camp". Meanwhile, terrorism within Libya has steadily increased, affecting also neighbouring countries. The [terrorist attack against the Bardo Museum](/wiki/Bardo_National_Museum_attack) on 18 March 2015, was reportedly carried on by two Libyan-trained militants.[[99]](#cite_note-99) During 2015 an extended series of diplomatic meetings and peace negotiations were supported by the United Nations, as conducted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Spanish diplomat Bernardino Leon.[[100]](#cite_note-100)[[101]](#cite_note-101)[[102]](#cite_note-102) UN support for the SRSG-led process of dialogue carried on in addition to the usual work of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL).[[103]](#cite_note-103) In July 2015 SRSG Leon reported to the UN Security Council on the progress of the negotiations, which at that point had just achieved a political agreement on 11 July setting out "a comprehensive framework…includ[ing] guiding principles…institutions and decision-making mechanisms to guide the transition until the adoption of a permanent constitution." The stated purpose of that process was "…intended to culminate in the creation of a modern, democratic state based on the principle of inclusion, the rule of law, separation of powers and respect for human rights." The SRSG praised the participants for achieving agreement, stating that "The Libyan people have unequivocally expressed themselves in favour of peace." The SRSG then informed the Security Council that "Libya is at a critical stage" and urging "all parties in Libya to continue to engage constructively in the dialogue process", stating that "only through dialogue and political compromise, can a peaceful resolution of the conflict be achieved. A peaceful transition will only succeed in Libya through a significant and coordinated effort in supporting a future Government of National Accord…". Talks, negotiations and dialogue continued on during mid-2015 at various international locations, culminating at Skhirat in Morocco in early September.[[104]](#cite_note-104)[[105]](#cite_note-105) Also in 2015, as part of the ongoing support from the international community, the UN Human Rights Council requested a report about the Libyan situation[[106]](#cite_note-106)[[107]](#cite_note-107) and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, established an investigative body (OIOL) to report on human rights and rebuilding the Libyan justice system.[[108]](#cite_note-108)

## Contents

* 1 Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]
  + 1.1 Libyan Desert[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]
* 2 Government and politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]
  + 2.1 Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]
  + 2.2 Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]
  + 2.3 Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]
* 3 Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]
* 4 Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]
  + 4.1 Immigrant Labour[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]
  + 4.2 Local demographics and ethnic groups[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]
  + 4.3 Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]
  + 4.4 Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]
  + 4.5 Largest cities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]
* 5 Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]
  + 5.1 Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]
* 6 Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]
* 7 Health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]
* 8 See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]
* 9 References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]
* 10 Bibliography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]
* 11 External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|350px|A map of Libya.](/wiki/File:Un-libya.png) [thumb|Libya map of Köppen climate classification.](/wiki/File:Libya_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) Libya extends over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), making it the [17th largest nation in the world by size](/wiki/List_of_countries_and_outlying_territories_by_total_area). Libya is bound to the north by the [Mediterranean Sea](/wiki/Mediterranean_Sea), the west by [Tunisia](/wiki/Tunisia) and [Algeria](/wiki/Algeria), the southwest by [Niger](/wiki/Niger), the south by [Chad](/wiki/Chad), [Sudan](/wiki/Sudan) on the southeast, and to the east by [Egypt](/wiki/Egypt). Libya lies between latitudes [19°](/wiki/19th_parallel_north) and [34°N](/wiki/34th_parallel_north), and longitudes [9°](/wiki/9th_meridian_east) and [26°E](/wiki/26th_meridian_east).

At [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), Libya's coastline is the longest of any African country bordering the Mediterranean.[[109]](#cite_note-109)[[110]](#cite_note-110) The portion of the Mediterranean Sea north of Libya is often called the [Libyan Sea](/wiki/Libyan_Sea). The climate is mostly extremely dry and desertlike in nature. However, the northern regions enjoy a milder [Mediterranean climate](/wiki/Mediterranean_climate).[[111]](#cite_note-111) Natural hazards come in the form of hot, dry, dust-laden [sirocco](/wiki/Sirocco) (known in Libya as the *gibli*). This is a southern wind blowing from one to four days in spring and autumn. There are also [dust storms](/wiki/Dust_storm) and [sandstorms](/wiki/Dust_storm). [Oases](/wiki/Oasis) can also be found scattered throughout Libya, the most important of which are [Ghadames](/wiki/Ghadames) and [Kufra](/wiki/Kufra).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed). Libya is one of the sunniest and driest countries in the world due to prevailing presence of desert environment.

### Libyan Desert[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[thumb|Libya is a predominantly desert country. Up to 90% of the land area is covered in desert.](/wiki/File:Libyan_Dessert.jpg) The [Libyan Desert](/wiki/Libyan_Desert), which covers much of Libya, is one of the most arid and sun-baked places on earth.[[45]](#cite_note-45) In places, decades may pass without seeing any rainfall at all, and even in the [highlands](/wiki/Highland_(geography)) rainfall seldom happens, once every 5–10 years. At [Uweinat](/wiki/Jebel_Uweinat), [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of) the last recorded [rainfall](/wiki/Rainfall) was in September 1998.[[112]](#cite_note-112) Likewise, the temperature in the Libyan Desert can be extreme; on 13 September 1922 the town of ['Aziziya](/wiki/'Aziziya), which is located southwest of [Tripoli](/wiki/Tripoli), recorded an air temperature of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), considered to be a world record.[[113]](#cite_note-113)[[114]](#cite_note-114)<ref name=El\_Azizia>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> In September 2012, however, the world record figure of 58 °C was overturned by the [World Meteorological Organization](/wiki/World_Meteorological_Organization).[[114]](#cite_note-114)<ref name=El\_Azizia/>[[115]](#cite_note-115) There are a few scattered uninhabited small oases, usually linked to the major depressions, where water can be found by digging to a few feet in depth. In the west there is a widely dispersed group of oases in unconnected shallow depressions, the Kufra group, consisting of Tazerbo, Rebianae and [Kufra](/wiki/Kufra).[[112]](#cite_note-112) Aside from the scarps, the general flatness is only interrupted by a series of [plateaus](/wiki/Plateau) and massifs near the centre of the Libyan Desert, around the convergence of the Egyptian-Sudanese-Libyan borders.

Slightly further to the south are the [massifs](/wiki/Massif) of Arkenu, Uweinat and Kissu. These [granite](/wiki/Granite) mountains are ancient, having formed long before the sandstones surrounding them. Arkenu and Western Uweinat are ring complexes very similar to those in the [Aïr Mountains](/wiki/Aïr_Mountains). Eastern Uweinat (the highest point in the Libyan Desert) is a raised sandstone plateau adjacent to the granite part further west.[[112]](#cite_note-112) The plain to the north of Uweinat is dotted with eroded volcanic features. With the discovery of oil in the 1950s also came the discovery of a massive [aquifer](/wiki/Aquifer) underneath much of LIbya. The water in this aquifer pre-dates the last ice ages and the Sahara Desert itself.[[116]](#cite_note-116) This area also contains the [Arkenu structures](/wiki/Arkenu_structures), which were once thought to be two impact craters.[[117]](#cite_note-117)

## Government and politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Expand section](/wiki/Template:Expand_section) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

The legislature of Libya is the unicameral [Council of Deputies](/wiki/Council_of_Deputies) which meets in [Tobruk](/wiki/Tobruk).

The former legislature was the [General National Congress](/wiki/General_National_Congress), which had 200 seats.<ref name=cialegbr>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The [General National Congress (2014)](/wiki/General_National_Congress_(2014)), a largely unrecognised rival parliament based in the *de jure* capital of [Tripoli](/wiki/Tripoli), claims to be a legal continuation of the GNC.[[118]](#cite_note-118)[[119]](#cite_note-119) On 7 July 2012, Libyans voted in [parliamentary elections](/wiki/Libyan_General_National_Congress_election,_2012), the first free elections in almost 40 years.[[120]](#cite_note-120) Around thirty women were elected to become members of parliament.[[120]](#cite_note-120) Early results of the vote showed the [National Forces Alliance](/wiki/National_Forces_Alliance), led by former interim Prime Minister Mahmoud Jibril, as front runner.[[121]](#cite_note-121) The [Justice and Construction Party](/wiki/Justice_and_Construction_Party), affiliated to the [Muslim Brotherhood](/wiki/Muslim_Brotherhood), has done less well than similar parties in Egypt and Tunisia.<ref name=econ-knack/> It won 17 out of 80 seats that were contested by parties, but about 60 independents have since joined its caucus.<ref name=econ-knack>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>

As of January 2013, there was mounting public pressure on the National Congress to set up a drafting body to create a new constitution. Congress had not yet decided whether the members of the body would be elected or appointed.[[122]](#cite_note-122) On 30 March 2014 General National Congress voted to replace itself with new [Council of Deputies](/wiki/House_of_Representatives_(Libya)). The new legislature allocates 30 seats for women, will have 200 seats overall (with individuals able to run as members of political parties) and allows Libyans of foreign nationalities to run for office.<ref name=lh30march>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>

Following the 2012 elections, [Freedom House](/wiki/Freedom_House) improved Libya's rating from Not Free to Partly Free, and now considers the country to be an electoral democracy.[[123]](#cite_note-123) Gaddafi merged civil and [sharia](/wiki/Sharia#Personal_status_law_only) courts in 1973. Civil courts now employ sharia judges who sit in regular [courts of appeal](/wiki/Court_of_appeal) and specialise in sharia appellate cases.[[124]](#cite_note-124) Laws regarding personal status are derived from Islamic law.[[125]](#cite_note-125) At a meeting of the [European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs](/wiki/European_Parliament_Committee_on_Foreign_Affairs) on 2 December 2014, UN Special Representative [Bernardino León](/wiki/Bernardino_León) described Libya as a non-state.[[126]](#cite_note-126) An agreement to form a unified interim government was signed on 17 December 2015.[[16]](#cite_note-16) Under the terms of the agreement, a nine-member [Presidency Council](/wiki/Presidency_Council_(Libya)) and a seventeen-member interim [Government of National Accord](/wiki/Government_of_National_Accord) would be formed, with a view to holding new elections within two years.[[16]](#cite_note-16) The [House of Representatives](/wiki/Libyan_House_of_Representatives) would continue to exist as a legislature and an advisory body, to be known as the [State Council](/wiki/State_Council_(Libya)), will be formed with members nominated by the [General National Congress (2014)](/wiki/General_National_Congress_(2014)).[[127]](#cite_note-127)

### Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|British Foreign Secretary](/wiki/File:Secretary_Kerry,_UK_Foreign_Secretary_Hague_Hold_News_Conference_With_Libyan_Prime_Minister_Ziedan_(11035773394).jpg) [William Hague](/wiki/William_Hague) with Libyan Prime Minister [Ali Zeidan](/wiki/Ali_Zeidan) and U.S. Secretary of State [John Kerry](/wiki/John_Kerry), November 2013 Libya's foreign policies have fluctuated since 1951. As a Kingdom, Libya maintained a definitively pro-Western stance, and was recognized as belonging to the conservative traditionalist bloc in the League of Arab States (the present-day [Arab League](/wiki/Arab_League)), of which it became a member in 1953.[[128]](#cite_note-128) The government was also friendly towards Western countries such as the United Kingdom, United States, [France](/wiki/French_Fifth_Republic), [Italy](/wiki/First_Italian_Republic), [Greece](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Greece#Postwar_Greece_and_the_fall_of_monarchy_(1950–1973)), and established full diplomatic relations with the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) in 1955.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Although the government supported Arab causes, including the Moroccan and Algerian independence movements, it took little active part in the [Arab-Israeli dispute](/wiki/Arab-Israeli_dispute) or the tumultuous inter-Arab politics of the 1950s and early 1960s. The Kingdom was noted for its close association with the West, while it steered a conservative course at home.[[129]](#cite_note-129) [thumb|Libyan National Security Adviser](/wiki/File:Mutassim_Gadaffi_Hillary_Clinton.jpg) [Mutassim Gaddafi](/wiki/Mutassim_Gaddafi) with U.S. Secretary of State [Hillary Clinton](/wiki/Hillary_Clinton) in 2009 After the 1969 [coup](/wiki/Coup_d'état), [Muammar Gaddafi](/wiki/Muammar_Gaddafi) closed American and British bases and partly [nationalized](/wiki/Nationalization) foreign oil and commercial interests in Libya.

Gaddafi was known for backing a number of leaders viewed as anathema to [Westernization](/wiki/Westernization) and [political liberalism](/wiki/Political_liberalism), including [Ugandan](/wiki/History_of_Uganda_(1971–79)) President [Idi Amin](/wiki/Idi_Amin),[[130]](#cite_note-130) [Central African](/wiki/Central_African_Empire) Emperor [Jean-Bédel Bokassa](/wiki/Jean-Bédel_Bokassa),[[131]](#cite_note-131)[[132]](#cite_note-132) [Ethiopian](/wiki/Derg) strongman [Haile Mariam Mengistu](/wiki/Haile_Mariam_Mengistu),[[132]](#cite_note-132) [Liberian](/wiki/Liberia) President [Charles Taylor](/wiki/Charles_Taylor_(Liberian_politician)),[[133]](#cite_note-133) and [Yugoslav](/wiki/Serbia_and_Montenegro#History) President [Slobodan Milošević](/wiki/Slobodan_Milošević).[[134]](#cite_note-134) Relations with the [West](/wiki/Western_world) were strained by a series of incidents for most of Gaddafi's rule,[[135]](#cite_note-135)[[136]](#cite_note-136)[[137]](#cite_note-137) including the killing of [London](/wiki/City_of_London_Police) policewoman [Yvonne Fletcher](/wiki/Yvonne_Fletcher), the [bombing](/wiki/1986_Berlin_discotheque_bombing) of a [West Berlin](/wiki/West_Berlin) nightclub frequented by U.S. servicemen, and the bombing of [Pan Am Flight 103](/wiki/Pan_Am_Flight_103), which led to UN sanctions in the 1990s, though by the late 2000s, the United States and other Western powers had normalised relations with Libya.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Gaddafi's decision to abandon the pursuit of [weapons of mass destruction](/wiki/Weapons_of_mass_destruction) after the [Iraq War](/wiki/Iraq_War) saw [Iraqi dictator](/wiki/History_of_Iraq_under_Ba'athist_rule) [Saddam Hussein](/wiki/Saddam_Hussein) overthrown and put on trial led to Libya being hailed as a success for Western [soft power](/wiki/Soft_power) initiatives in the [War on Terror](/wiki/War_on_Terror).[[138]](#cite_note-138)[[139]](#cite_note-139)[[140]](#cite_note-140) In October 2010, Gaddafi apologized to African leaders on behalf of Arab nations for their involvement in the African [slave trade](/wiki/Arab_slave_trade).[[141]](#cite_note-141) Libya is included in the European Union's [European Neighbourhood Policy](/wiki/European_Neighbourhood_Policy) (ENP) which aims at bringing the EU and its neighbours closer.

### Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Update](/wiki/Template:Update) The Libyan National Army comprises a [ground army](/wiki/Libyan_Ground_Forces), an [air force](/wiki/Libyan_Air_Force_(2011–present)) and a [navy](/wiki/Libyan_Navy). It is currently being re-established by the Libyan government[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed), as Libya's [previous national army](/wiki/Armed_Forces_of_the_Libyan_Arab_Jamahiriya) was defeated in the [Libyan Civil War](/wiki/2011_Libyan_Civil_War) and disbanded. As of May 2012, an estimated 35,000 personnel have joined its ranks.[[142]](#cite_note-142) As of November 2012, it was deemed to be still in the embryonic stage of development.[[143]](#cite_note-143) President [Mohammed el-Megarif](/wiki/Mohammed_Magariaf) promised that empowering the army and police force is the government's biggest priority.[[144]](#cite_note-144) President el-Megarif also ordered that all of the country's militias must come under government authority or disband.[[145]](#cite_note-145) Militias have so far refused to be integrated into a central security force.[[146]](#cite_note-146) Many of these militias are disciplined, but the most powerful of them answer only to the executive councils of various Libyan cities.[[146]](#cite_note-146) These militias make up the so-called [Libyan Shield](/wiki/Libya_Shield_Force), a parallel national force, which operates at the request, rather than at the order, of the defence ministry.[[146]](#cite_note-146)

### Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Districts of Libya since 2007](/wiki/File:Libya,_administrative_divisions_-_Nmbrs_-_colored.svg) Historically the area of Libya was considered three provinces (or states), [Tripolitania](/wiki/Tripolitania) in the northwest, [Barka (Cyrenaica)](/wiki/Cyrenaica) in the east, and [Fezzan](/wiki/Fezzan) in the southwest. It was the conquest by Italy in the [Italo-Turkish War](/wiki/Italo-Turkish_War) that united them in a single political unit.

Since 2007, Libya has been divided into 22 districts ([baladiyat](/wiki/Baladiyat)): [Template:Columns-list](/wiki/Template:Columns-list)

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Update](/wiki/Template:Update) [thumb|300px|The](/wiki/File:Bouri_NC_41_DP4_platform.jpg) [ENI](/wiki/Eni) Oil Bouri DP4 in the [Bouri Field](/wiki/Bouri_Field). The Libyan economy depends primarily upon revenues from the [oil sector](/wiki/Petroleum_industry), which accounts for 80% of GDP and 97% of exports.[[147]](#cite_note-147) Libya holds the largest proven oil reserves in Africa and is an important contributor to the global supply of light, [sweet crude](/wiki/Sweet_crude).<ref name=eia-libya>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Apart from petroleum, the other natural resources are [natural gas](/wiki/Natural_gas) and [gypsum](/wiki/Gypsum).<ref name=opec-libya/> The [International Monetary Fund](/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund) estimated Libya's real GDP growth at 122% in 2012 and 16.7% in 2013, after a 60% plunge in 2011.[[147]](#cite_note-147) The [World Bank](/wiki/World_Bank) defines Libya as an 'Upper Middle Income Economy', along with only seven other African countries.[[148]](#cite_note-148) Substantial revenues from the energy sector, coupled with a small population, give Libya one of the highest per capita GDPs in Africa.<ref name=opec-libya/> This allowed the [Libyan Arab Jamahiriya](/wiki/Libyan_Arab_Jamahiriya) state to provide an extensive level of [social security](/wiki/Social_security), particularly in the fields of housing and education.[[149]](#cite_note-149) Libya faces many structural problems including a lack of institutions, weak governance, and chronic [structural unemployment](/wiki/Structural_unemployment).<ref name=imf-survey>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The economy displays a lack of economic diversification and significant reliance on immigrant labour.<ref name=ilo-libya/> Libya has traditionally relied on unsustainably high levels of public sector hiring to create employment.<ref name=african-outlook/> In the mid-2000s, the government employed about 70% of all national employees.<ref name=ilo-libya>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

Unemployment has risen from 8% in 2008 to 21%, according to the latest census figures.[[150]](#cite_note-150) According to an [Arab League](/wiki/Arab_League) report, based on data from 2010, unemployment for women stands at 18% while for the figure for men is 21%, making Libya the only Arab country where there are more unemployed men than women.[[151]](#cite_note-151) Libya has high levels of social inequality, high rates of youth unemployment and regional economic disparities.<ref name=african-outlook>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Water supply is also a problem, with some 28% of the population not having access to safe drinking water in 2000.[[152]](#cite_note-152) [thumb|300px|](/wiki/File:Libyan_pivot_irrigation_460142568_02e969004a_o.jpg)[Pivot irrigation](/wiki/Pivot_irrigation) in [Kufra](/wiki/Kufra), southeast [Cyrenaica](/wiki/Cyrenaica). Libya imports up to 90% of its cereal consumption requirements, and imports of wheat in 2012/13 was estimated at about 1 million tonnes.[[153]](#cite_note-153) The 2012 wheat production was estimated at about 200,000 tonnes.[[153]](#cite_note-153) The government hopes to increase food production to 800,000 tonnes of cereals by 2020.[[153]](#cite_note-153) However, natural and environmental conditions limit Libya’s agricultural production potential.[[153]](#cite_note-153) Before 1958, agriculture was the country’s main source of revenue, making up about 30% of GDP. With the discovery of oil in 1958, the size of the agriculture sector declined rapidly, comprising less than 5% GDP by 2005.<ref name=voa-olive>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The country joined [OPEC](/wiki/OPEC) in 1962.<ref name=opec-libya>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Libya is not a [WTO](/wiki/WTO) member, but negotiations for its accession started in 2004.[[154]](#cite_note-154) In the early 1980s, Libya was one of the wealthiest countries in the world; its [GDP per capita](/wiki/GDP_per_capita) was higher than some developed countries.[[155]](#cite_note-155) [thumb|300px|Oil is the major natural resource of Libya, with](/wiki/File:Libya_location_map-oil_&_gas_2011-en.svg) [estimated reserves of 43.6 billion barrels](/wiki/Oil_reserves_in_Libya).[[156]](#cite_note-156) In the early 2000s officials of the Jamahiriya era carried out economic reforms to reintegrate Libya into the global economy.[[157]](#cite_note-157) [UN sanctions](/wiki/International_sanctions) were lifted in September 2003, and Libya announced in December 2003 that it would abandon programs to build weapons of mass destruction.[[158]](#cite_note-158) Other steps have included applying for membership of the [World Trade Organization](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization), reducing [subsidies](/wiki/Subsidy), and announcing plans for [privatization](/wiki/Privatization).[[159]](#cite_note-159) Authorities privatized more than 100 government owned companies after 2003 in industries including oil refining, tourism and real estate, of which 29 were 100% foreign owned.[[160]](#cite_note-160) Many international oil companies returned to the country, including oil giants [Shell](/wiki/Royal_Dutch_Shell) and [ExxonMobil](/wiki/ExxonMobil).[[161]](#cite_note-161) After sanctions were lifted there was a gradual increase of air traffic, and by 2005 there were 1.5 million yearly air travellers.[[162]](#cite_note-162) Libya had long been a notoriously difficult country for Western tourists to visit due to stringent visa requirements.[[163]](#cite_note-163) In 2007 [Saif al-Islam Gaddafi](/wiki/Saif_al-Islam_Gaddafi), the second-eldest son of Muammar Gaddafi, was involved in a [green development](/wiki/Green_development) project called the Green Mountain Sustainable Development Area, which sought to bring tourism to [Cyrene](/wiki/Cyrene,_Libya) and to preserve [Greek](/wiki/Classical_Greece) ruins in the area.[[164]](#cite_note-164) In August 2011 it was estimated that it would take at least 10 years to rebuild Libya's infrastructure. Even before the 2011 war, Libya's infrastructure was in a poor state due to "utter neglect" by Gaddafi's administration, according to the NTC.[[165]](#cite_note-165) By October 2012, the economy had recovered from the 2011 conflict, with oil production returning to near normal levels.[[147]](#cite_note-147) Oil production was more than 1.6 million barrels per day before the war. By October 2012, the average oil production has surpassed 1.4 million bpd.[[147]](#cite_note-147) The resumption of production was made possible due to the quick return of major Western companies, like [Total](/wiki/Total_S.A.), [Eni](/wiki/Eni), [Repsol](/wiki/Repsol), [Wintershall](/wiki/Wintershall) and [Occidental](/wiki/Occidental_Petroleum).[[147]](#cite_note-147)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Libyan Arab men in](/wiki/File:Libyan.jpg) [Bayda](/wiki/Bayda,_Libya). Libya is a large country with a relatively small population, with the population is concentrated very narrowly along the coast.[[166]](#cite_note-166) Population density is about 50 persons per km² (130/sq. mi.) in the two northern regions of [Tripolitania](/wiki/Tripolitania) and [Cyrenaica](/wiki/Cyrenaica), but falls to less than one person per km² (2.6/sq. mi.) elsewhere. Ninety percent of the people live in less than 10% of the area, primarily along the coast. About 88% of the population is urban, mostly concentrated in the three largest cities, [Tripoli](/wiki/Tripoli), [Benghazi](/wiki/Benghazi) and [Misrata](/wiki/Misrata). Libya has a population of about 6.5 million, 27.7% of whom are under the age of 15.[[157]](#cite_note-157) In 1984 the population was 3.6 million, an increase from the 1.54 million reported in 1964.[[167]](#cite_note-167) There are about 140 tribes and [clans](/wiki/Clan) in Libya.[[168]](#cite_note-168) Family life is important for Libyan families, the majority of which live in [apartment blocks](/wiki/Tower_block) and other independent housing units, with precise modes of housing depending on their income and wealth. Although the Libyan Arabs traditionally lived nomadic lifestyles in tents, they have now settled in various towns and cities.[[169]](#cite_note-169) Because of this, their old ways of life are gradually fading out. An unknown small number of Libyans still live in the desert as their families have done for centuries. Most of the population has occupations in [industry](/wiki/Industry) and [services](/wiki/Tertiary_sector_of_the_economy), and a small percentage is in [agriculture](/wiki/Agriculture).

According to the UNHCR, there were around 8,000 registered refugees, 5,500 unregistered refugees, and 7,000 asylum seekers of various origins in Libya in January 2013. Additionally, 47,000 Libyan nationals were internally displaced and 46,570 were internally displaced returnees.[[170]](#cite_note-170)

### Immigrant Labour[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[thumb|350px|A map indicating the ethnic composition of Libya in 1974.](/wiki/File:Libya_ethnic.svg) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), the UN estimates that around 12% of Libya's population (upwards of 740,000 people) is made up of foreign migrants.[[171]](#cite_note-171) Prior to the 2011 revolution official and unofficial figures of migrant labour range from 25% to 40% of the population (between 1.5 and 2.4 million people).

It is difficult to estimate the total number of immigrants in Libya as there are often differences between census figures, official counts and usually more accurate unofficial estimates. In the 2006 census, around 359,540 foreign nationals were resident in Libya out of a population of over 5.5 million (6.35% of the population). Almost half of these were Egyptians, followed by Sudanese and Palestinian immigrants.[[172]](#cite_note-172)During the 2011 revolution, 768,362 immigrants fled Libya as calculated by the [IOM](/wiki/International_Organization_for_Migration), around 13% of the population at the time, although many more stayed on in the country.[[172]](#cite_note-172) If consular records prior to the revolution are used to estimate the immigrant population, as many as 2 million Egyptian migrants were recorded by the Egyptian embassy in Tripoli in 2009, followed by 87200 Tunisians, and 68,200 Moroccans by their respective embassies. The number of Asian migrants before the revolution were roughly 100,000 (60,000 Bangladeshis, 18,000 Indians, 10,000 Pakistanis, 8000 Filipinos as well as Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Thai and other workers).[[173]](#cite_note-173) This would put the immigrant population at almost 40% before the revolution and is a figure more consistent with government estimates in 2004 which put the regular and irregular migrant numbers at 1.35 to 1.8 million (25–33% of the population at the time).[[172]](#cite_note-172) Libya's native population of Arabs and Berbers as well as Arab migrants of various nationalities collectively make up 97% of the population [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of). The remaining 3% of residents include mostly [Bangladeshies](/wiki/Bangladeshies), [Greeks](/wiki/Greek_people), [Indians](/wiki/Indian_people), [Italians](/wiki/Italian_people), [Maltese](/wiki/Maltese_people), [Turks](/wiki/Turkish_people), and [Ukrainians](/wiki/Ukrainians) as well as other nationalities.[[174]](#cite_note-174)

### Local demographics and ethnic groups[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

The original inhabitants of Libya belonged predominantly to various [Berber](/wiki/Berber_people) ethnic groups; however, the long series of foreign invasions – particularly by [Arabs](/wiki/Arab_people) and [Turks](/wiki/Turkish_people) – have had a profound and lasting influence on Libya's demographics.[[175]](#cite_note-175) Today, many Libyans are a mixture of Arab, Turkish and Berber ethnicities.[[175]](#cite_note-175)[[176]](#cite_note-176) The Turkish minority are often called "[Kouloughlis](/wiki/Kouloughlis)" and are concentrated in and around villages and towns.[[177]](#cite_note-177) Additionally, there are some Libyan ethnic minorities, such as the Berber-speaking [Tuareg](/wiki/Tuareg_people) and the [Tebou](/wiki/Toubou_people).[[176]](#cite_note-176) Most [Italian settlers](/wiki/Italian_settlers_in_Libya) left after Italian Libya's independence in 1947. More repatriated in 1970 after the accession of Muammar Gaddafi.[[178]](#cite_note-178)

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) According to the CIA, the official language of Libya is [Arabic](/wiki/Arabic_language).[[174]](#cite_note-174) The local [Libyan Arabic](/wiki/Libyan_Arabic) variety is spoken alongside [Modern Standard Arabic](/wiki/Modern_Standard_Arabic). Various [Berber languages](/wiki/Berber_languages) are also spoken, including [Tamasheq](/wiki/Tamasheq_language), Ghadamis, Nafusi, Suknah and Awjilah.[[174]](#cite_note-174) Both Berber and Arabic languages belong to the wider [Afroasiatic](/wiki/Afroasiatic_languages) (Hamito-Semitic) family.

In addition, [Italian](/wiki/Italian_language) and [English](/wiki/English_language) are widely understood in the major cities, with the former used in commerce and still spoken among the remaining Italian population.[[174]](#cite_note-174)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Pie chart](/wiki/Template:Pie_chart) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[thumb|210px|Mosque in](/wiki/File:Ghadames_-_Grosse_Moschee.jpg) [Ghadames](/wiki/Ghadames), close to the Tunisian and Algerian border. 97% of Libyans are followers of Islam. About 97% of the population in Libya are [Muslims](/wiki/Islam), most of whom belong to the [Sunni branch](/wiki/Sunni_Islam).[[157]](#cite_note-157) Small numbers of [Ibadi Muslims](/wiki/Ibadi), [Sufis](/wiki/Sufism) and [Ahmadis](/wiki/Ahmadiyya) also live in the country.[[179]](#cite_note-179)[[180]](#cite_note-180) Before the 1930s, the [Senussi](/wiki/Senussi) Movement was the primary Islamic movement in Libya. This was a religious revival adapted to desert life. Its *zawaaya* (lodges) were found in [Tripolitania](/wiki/Tripolitania) and [Fezzan](/wiki/Fezzan), but Senussi influence was strongest in [Cyrenaica](/wiki/Cyrenaica). Rescuing the region from unrest and anarchy, the Senussi movement gave the Cyrenaican tribal people a religious attachment and feelings of unity and purpose.[[181]](#cite_note-181) This Islamic movement, which was eventually destroyed by both [Italian invasion](/wiki/Italo-Turkish_War) and later the Gaddafi government,[[181]](#cite_note-181) was very conservative and somewhat different from the Islam that exists in Libya today. Gaddafi asserted that he was a devout Muslim, and his government was taking a role in supporting Islamic institutions and in worldwide proselytising on behalf of Islam.[[182]](#cite_note-182) Since the [fall of Gaddafi](/wiki/2011_Libyan_Civil_War), ultra-conservative strains of Islam have reasserted themselves in places. [Derna](/wiki/Derna,_Libya) in eastern Libya, historically a hotbed of [jihadist](/wiki/Jihad) thought, came under the control of militants aligned with the [Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant](/wiki/Islamic_State_of_Iraq_and_the_Levant) in 2014.[[183]](#cite_note-183) Jihadist elements have also spread to [Sirte](/wiki/Sirte) and [Benghazi](/wiki/Benghazi), among other areas, as a result of the [Second Libyan Civil War](/wiki/Second_Libyan_Civil_War_(2014–present)).[[184]](#cite_note-184)[[185]](#cite_note-185) [thumb|The](/wiki/File:LA_CATTEDRALE_DI_TRIPOLI_1960.jpg) [Cathedral of Tripoli](/wiki/Tripoli_Cathedral) before conversion into a mosque. There are small foreign communities of [Christians](/wiki/Christian). [Coptic Orthodox Christianity](/wiki/Coptic_Orthodox_Church_of_Alexandria), which is the Christian Church of Egypt, is the [largest and most historical Christian denomination in Libya](/wiki/Coptic_Orthodox_Church_in_Africa#Libya,_Tunisia,_Algeria_and_Morocco). There are about 60,000 Egyptian [Copts](/wiki/Copt) in Libya.[[186]](#cite_note-186) Most Copts in Libya are Egyptian with a small minority of them native Libyans who remained Christian after Islam came to Libya from Egypt. There are three Coptic Churches in Libya, one in Tripoli, one in Benghazi, and one in Misurata.

The Coptic Church has grown in recent years in Libya as a small number of Libyans have converted to Christianity and the growing immigration of Egyptian Copts to Libya. There are an estimated 40,000 [Roman Catholics](/wiki/Roman_Catholic) in Libya who are served by two Bishops, one in Tripoli (serving the [Italian](/wiki/Italian_people) community) and one in [Benghazi](/wiki/Benghazi) (serving the [Maltese](/wiki/Maltese_people) community). There is also a small [Anglican](/wiki/Anglican) community, made up mostly of African immigrant workers in Tripoli; it is part of the [Anglican Diocese of Egypt](/wiki/Anglican_Diocese_of_Egypt). People have been arrested on suspicion of being [Christian missionaries](/wiki/Christian_missionaries), as proselytising is illegal.[[187]](#cite_note-187) Christians have also faced the threat of violence from radical Islamists in some parts of the country, with a well-publicised video released by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant in February 2015 depicting the mass beheading of Christian Copts.[[188]](#cite_note-188)[[189]](#cite_note-189) Libya was once the home of one of the oldest [Jewish](/wiki/Jew) communities in the world, dating back to at least 300 BC.[[190]](#cite_note-190) In 1942, the Italian Fascist authorities set up forced labor camps south of Tripoli for the Jews, including Giado (about 3,000 Jews) and Gharyan, Jeren, and Tigrinna. In Giado some 500 Jews died of weakness, hunger, and disease. In 1942, Jews who were not in the concentration camps were heavily restricted in their economic activity and all men between 18 and 45 years were drafted for forced labor. In August 1942, Jews from Tripolitania were interned in a concentration camp at Sidi Azaz. In the three years after November 1945, more than 140 Jews were murdered, and hundreds more wounded, in a series of [pogroms](/wiki/Pogrom).[[191]](#cite_note-191) By 1948, about 38,000 Jews remained in the country. Upon Libya's independence in 1951, most of the Jewish community emigrated.

### Largest cities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Largest cities of Libya](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Libya)

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|Ancient Roman mosaic in](/wiki/File:Sabratha_-_Museum_mit_Funden_aus_der_Römerzeit,_Mosaik_05.jpg) [Sabratha](/wiki/Sabratha) Libya is culturally similar to its neighboring [Maghrebian states](/wiki/Maghreb). Libyans consider themselves very much a part of a wider Arab community. This is strengthened by Arabic being the only official language of the state. Under dictatorship the teaching of foreign languages previously taught in academic institutions was forbidden,[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) along with even the use of the Berber language, leaving entire generations of Libyans with limitations in their comprehension of the English language.

Libyan Arabs have a heritage in the traditions of the previously nomadic [Bedouin](/wiki/Bedouin) tribes and most Libyans will associate themselves with a particular family name originating from tribal or conquest based, typically from Ottoman forefathers, heritage.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed).

Reflecting the " nature of giving " ([Template:Lang-ar](/wiki/Template:Lang-ar) [*Template:Transl*](/wiki/Template:Transl)), amongst the Libyan people as well as the sense of hospitality, recently the state of Libya made it to the top 20 on the world giving index in 2013.[[192]](#cite_note-192) According to CAF; In a typical month, almost three quarters (72%) of all Libyans helped somebody they did not know – the third highest level across all 135 countries surveyed.

There are few theaters or art galleries due to the decades of cultural repression under the Qaddafi regime and lack of infrastructure development under the regime of dictatorship.[[193]](#cite_note-193) For many years there have been no public theaters, and only very few cinemas showing foreign films. The tradition of [folk culture](/wiki/Folk_culture) is still alive and well, with troupes performing music and dance at frequent festivals, both in Libya and abroad.[[194]](#cite_note-194) A large number of [Libyan television](/wiki/Television_in_Libya) stations are devoted to political review, Islamic topics and cultural phenomena. A number of TV stations air various styles of traditional Libyan music.[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify) [Tuareg music](/wiki/Tuareg_music) and dance are popular in [Ghadames](/wiki/Ghadames) and the south. Libyan television broadcasts air programs mostly in Arabic though usually have time slots for English and French programs.[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify) A 1996 analysis by the [Committee to Protect Journalists](/wiki/Committee_to_Protect_Journalists) found Libya’s media was the most tightly controlled in the Arab world during the country's dictatorship.[[195]](#cite_note-195) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of) hundreds of TV stations have begun to air due to the collapse of censorship from the old regime and the initiation of "free media".

[thumb|Traditional dancing in](/wiki/File:C-_Libya.jpg) [Bayda](/wiki/Bayda,_Libya) in 1976. Many Libyans frequent the country's beach and they also visit Libya's archaeological sites—especially [Leptis Magna](/wiki/Leptis_Magna), which is widely considered to be one of the best preserved Roman archaeological sites in the world.[[196]](#cite_note-196) The most common form of public transport between cities is the bus, though many people travel by automobile.[[197]](#cite_note-197) There are no railway services in Libya, but these are planned for construction in the near future (see [rail transport in Libya](/wiki/Rail_transport_in_Libya)).[[197]](#cite_note-197) Libya's capital, [Tripoli](/wiki/Tripoli), has many museums and archives. These include the Government Library, the Ethnographic Museum, the Archaeological Museum, the National Archives, the Epigraphy Museum and the Islamic Museum. The [Red Castle Museum](/wiki/Red_Castle_Museum) located in the capital near the coast and right in the city center, built in consultation with [UNESCO](/wiki/UNESCO), may be the country's most famous.[[198]](#cite_note-198)

### Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Libyan cuisine is a vibrant fusion between the different [Italian](/wiki/Italian_cuisine), Bedouin and traditional Arab culinary influences.[[199]](#cite_note-199) [Pasta](/wiki/Pasta) is the staple food in the Western side of Libya, whereas [rice](/wiki/Rice) is generally the staple food in the east.

Common Libyan foods include several variations of red (tomato) sauce based pasta dishes (similar to the Italian [Sugo all'arrabbiata](/wiki/Arrabbiata_sauce) dish); rice, usually served with lamb or chicken (typically stewed, fried, grilled, or boiled in-sauce); and [couscous](/wiki/Couscous), which is steam cooked whilst held over boiling red (tomato) sauce and meat (sometimes also containing courgettes/zucchini and chickpeas), which is typically served along with cucumber slices, lettuce and olives.

[Bazeen](/wiki/Bazeen), a dish made from barley flour and served with red tomato sauce, is customarily eaten communally, with several people sharing the same dish, usually by hand. This dish is commonly served at traditional weddings or festivities. [Asida](/wiki/Asida) is a sweet version of Bazeen, made from white flour and served with a mix of honey, ghee or butter. Another favorite way to serve Asida is with [rub](/wiki/Rub_(syrup)) (fresh date syrup) and olive oil. [Usban](/wiki/Usban) is animal tripe stitched and stuffed with rice and vegetables cooked in tomato based soup or steamed. [Shurba](/wiki/Chorba) is a red tomato sauce-based soup, usually served with small grains of pasta.[[199]](#cite_note-199) A very common snack eaten by Libyans is known as *khubs bi' tun*, literally meaning "bread with tuna fish", usually served as a baked baguette or pita bread stuffed with tuna fish that has been mixed with [harissa](/wiki/Harissa) (chili sauce) and olive oil. Many snack vendors prepare these sandwiches and they can be found all over Libya. Libyan restaurants may serve international cuisine, or may serve simpler fare such as lamb, chicken, vegetable stew, potatoes and [macaroni](/wiki/Macaroni).[[199]](#cite_note-199) Due to severe lack of infrastructure, many under-developed areas and small towns do not have restaurants and instead food stores may be the only source to obtain food products.[[199]](#cite_note-199) Alcohol consumption is illegal in the entire country.[[200]](#cite_note-200) There are four main ingredients of traditional Libyan food: [olives](/wiki/Olive) (and [olive oil](/wiki/Olive_oil)), [dates](/wiki/Date_palm), [grains](/wiki/Grain) and [milk](/wiki/Milk).[[201]](#cite_note-201) Grains are roasted, ground, sieved and used for making bread, cakes, soups and bazeen. Dates are harvested, dried and can be eaten as they are, made into syrup or slightly fried and eaten with [bsisa](/wiki/Bsisa) and milk. After eating, Libyans often drink black tea. This is normally repeated a second time (for the second glass of tea), and in the third round of tea, it is served with roasted [peanuts](/wiki/Peanut) or roasted [almonds](/wiki/Almond) known as *shay bi'l-luz* (mixed with the tea in the same glass).[[201]](#cite_note-201)

## Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Outdated as of](/wiki/Template:Outdated_as_of) [thumb|Al Manar Royal Palace in central Benghazi – the location of the](/wiki/File:Piazza_28_Ottobre,Bengasi.jpg) [University of Libya's](/wiki/University_of_Libya) first campus, founded by royal decree in 1955 Libya's population includes 1.7 million students, over 270,000 of whom study at the [tertiary level](/wiki/Tertiary_education).[[202]](#cite_note-202) Basic education in Libya is free for all citizens,[[203]](#cite_note-203) and is compulsory up to the [secondary level](/wiki/Secondary_education). The adult literacy rate in 2010 was 89.2%.<ref name=unescolit>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

After Libya's independence in 1951, its first university – the [University of Libya](/wiki/University_of_Libya) – was established in Benghazi by royal decree.[[204]](#cite_note-204) In the 1975–76 academic year the number of university students was estimated to be 13,418. [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), this number has increased to more than 200,000, with an extra 70,000 enrolled in the higher technical and vocational sector.[[202]](#cite_note-202) The rapid increase in the number of students in the higher education sector has been mirrored by an increase in the number of institutions of higher education.

Since 1975 the number of universities has grown from two to nine and after their introduction in 1980, the number of higher technical and vocational institutes currently stands at 84 (with 12 public universities).[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify)[[202]](#cite_note-202) Since 2007 some new private universities such as the [Libyan International Medical University](/wiki/Libyan_International_Medical_University) have been established. Although before 2011 a small number of private institutions were given accreditation, the majority of Libya's higher education has always been financed by the public budget. In 1998 the budget allocation for education represented 38.2% of Libya's total national budget.[[204]](#cite_note-204)

## Health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Expand section](/wiki/Template:Expand_section) In 2010, spending on healthcare accounted for 3.88% of the country's GDP. In 2009, there were 18.71 physicians and 66.95 nurses per 10,000 inhabitants.[[205]](#cite_note-205) The life expectancy at birth was 74.95 years in 2011, or 72.44 years for males and 77.59 years for females.[[206]](#cite_note-206)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal)

* [Outline of Libya](/wiki/Outline_of_Libya)
* [List of heads of state of Libya](/wiki/List_of_heads_of_state_of_Libya)
* [List of heads of government of Libya](/wiki/List_of_heads_of_government_of_Libya)
* [List of Libyans](/wiki/List_of_Libyans)
* [Index of Libya-related articles](/wiki/Index_of_Libya-related_articles)

[Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## Bibliography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)

[Template:CIA World Factbook](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook)  
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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links)

* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Template:GovPubs](/wiki/Template:GovPubs)
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Libya profile](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13754897) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News).
* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)

[Template:Libya topics](/wiki/Template:Libya_topics) [Template:Navboxes](/wiki/Template:Navboxes) [Template:Navboxes](/wiki/Template:Navboxes) [Template:Coord](/wiki/Template:Coord)

[Template:Portal bar](/wiki/Template:Portal_bar)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Category:Libya](/wiki/Category:Libya) [Category:Countries in Africa](/wiki/Category:Countries_in_Africa) [Category:North African countries](/wiki/Category:North_African_countries) [Category:Maghrebi countries](/wiki/Category:Maghrebi_countries) [Category:Arabic-speaking countries and territories](/wiki/Category:Arabic-speaking_countries_and_territories) [Category:Berber-speaking countries and territories](/wiki/Category:Berber-speaking_countries_and_territories) [Category:Member states of the African Union](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_African_Union) [Category:Member states of the Arab League](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_Arab_League) [Category:Member states of OPEC](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_OPEC) [Category:Member states of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_Organisation_of_Islamic_Cooperation) [Category:Member states of the United Nations](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_United_Nations) [Category:Muslim-majority countries](/wiki/Category:Muslim-majority_countries) [Category:States and territories established in 1951](/wiki/Category:States_and_territories_established_in_1951) [Category:1951 establishments in Africa](/wiki/Category:1951_establishments_in_Africa)