

Introduction

Libya

Background:  

The Italians supplanted the Ottoman Turks from the area around Tripoli in 1911 and did not relinquish their hold until 1943 when defeated in World War II. Libya then passed to UN administration and achieved independence in 1951. Following a 1969 military coup, Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-QADHAFI began to espouse his own political system, the Third Universal Theory. The system is a combination of socialism and Islam derived in part from tribal practices and is supposed to be implemented by the Libyan people themselves in a unique form of "direct democracy." QADHAFI has always seen himself as a revolutionary and visionary leader. He used oil funds during the 1970s and 1980s to promote his ideology outside Libya, supporting subversives and terrorists abroad to hasten the end of Marxism and capitalism. In addition, beginning in 1973, he engaged in military operations in northern Chad's Aozou Strip - to gain access to minerals and to use as a base of influence in Chadian politics - but was forced to retreat in 1987. UN sanctions in 1992 isolated QADHAFI politically following the downing of Pan AM Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. During the 1990s, QADHAFI began to rebuild his relationships with Europe. UN sanctions were suspended in April 1999 and finally lifted in September 2003 after Libya accepted responsibility for the Lockerbie bombing. In December 2003, Libya announced that it had agreed to reveal and end its programs to develop weapons of mass destruction and to renounce terrorism, and QADHAFI has made significant strides in normalizing relations with western nations since then. He has received various Western European leaders as well as many working-level and commercial delegations, and made his first trip to Western Europe in 15 years when he traveled to Brussels in April 2004. Libya has responded in good faith to legal cases brought against it in US courts for terrorist acts that predate its renunciation of violence. Claims for compensation in the Lockerbie bombing, LaBelle disco bombing, and UTA 772 bombing cases are ongoing. The US rescinded Libya's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism in June 2006. In late 2007, Libya was elected by the General Assembly to a nonpermanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the 2008-09 term.

Geography

Libya

[Top of Page](#)

Location:  

Northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Egypt and Tunisia

Geographic coordinates:  

25 00 N, 17 00 E

Map references:  

[Africa](#)

Area:   

total: 1,759,540 sq km

land: 1,759,540 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:  
slightly larger than Alaska

Land boundaries:  
total: 4,348 km
border countries: Algeria 982 km, Chad 1,055 km, Egypt 1,115 km, Niger 354 km, Sudan 383 km, Tunisia 459 km

Coastline:  
1,770 km

Maritime claims:  
territorial sea: 12 nm
note: Gulf of Sidra closing line - 32 degrees, 30 minutes north
exclusive fishing zone: 62 nm

Climate:  
Mediterranean along coast; dry, extreme desert interior

Terrain:  
mostly barren, flat to undulating plains, plateaus, depressions

Elevation extremes:  
lowest point: Sabkhat Ghuzayyil -47 m
highest point: Bikku Bitti 2,267 m

Natural resources:  
petroleum, natural gas, gypsum

Land use:  
arable land: 1.03%
permanent crops: 0.19%
other: 98.78% (2005)

Irrigated land:  
4,700 sq km (2003)

Total renewable water resources:  
0.6 cu km (1997)

Freshwater withdrawal
(domestic/industrial/agricultural):  
total: 4.27 cu km/yr (14%/3%/83%)
per capita: 730 cu m/yr (2000)

Natural hazards:  
hot, dry, dust-laden ghibli is a southern wind lasting one to four days in spring and fall; dust storms, sandstorms

Environment - current issues:  

desertification; limited natural fresh water resources; the Great Manmade River Project, the largest water development scheme in the world, is being built to bring water from large aquifers under the Sahara to coastal cities

Environment - international  

agreements: *party to:* Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands

signed, but not ratified: Law of the Sea

Geography - note:  

more than 90% of the country is desert or semidesert

People

Libya

[Top of Page](#)

Population:   

6,173,579

note: includes 166,510 non-nationals (July 2008 est.)

Age structure:  

0-14 years: 33.2% (male 1,046,400/female 1,002,148)

15-64 years: 62.6% (male 1,988,038/female 1,875,034)

65 years and over: 4.2% (male 128,386/female 133,573) (2008 est.)

Median age:  

total: 23.6 years

male: 23.7 years

female: 23.5 years (2008 est.)

Population growth  

rate: 2.216% (2008 est.)

Birth rate:   

25.62 births/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Death rate:   

3.46 deaths/1,000 population (2008 est.)

Net migration rate:  

NA (2008 est.)

Sex ratio:  

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female

under 15 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

15-64 years: 1.06 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.96 male(s)/female
total population: 1.05 male(s)/female (2008 est.)

Infant mortality   

rate: *total*: 21.94 deaths/1,000 live births
male: 24.14 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 19.63 deaths/1,000 live births (2008 est.)

Life expectancy at   

birth: *total population*: 77.07 years
male: 74.81 years
female: 79.44 years (2008 est.)

Total fertility rate:   

3.15 children born/woman (2008 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult   

prevalence rate: 0.3% (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS -   

people living with 10,000 (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS:

HIV/AIDS -   

deaths: NA

Nationality:  

noun: Libyan(s)
adjective: Libyan

Ethnic groups:  

Berber and Arab 97%, other 3% (includes Greeks, Maltese, Italians, Egyptians, Pakistanis, Turks, Indians, and Tunisians)

Religions:  

Sunni Muslim 97%, other 3%

Languages:  

Arabic, Italian, English, all are widely understood in the major cities

Literacy:  

definition: age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 82.6%
male: 92.4%
female: 72% (2003 est.)

Country name:  

conventional long form: Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

conventional short form: Libya

local long form: Al Jumahiriyah al Arabiyah al Libiyah ash Shabiyah al Ishtirakiyah al Uzma

local short form: none

Government type:  

Jamahiriya (a state of the masses) in theory, governed by the populace through local councils; in practice, an authoritarian state

Capital:  

name: Tripoli

geographic coordinates: 32 53 N, 13 10 E

time difference: UTC+2 (7 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative  

divisions: 25 municipalities (baladiyat, singular - baladiyah); Ajdabiya, Al 'Aziziyah, Al Fatih, Al Jabal al Akhdar, Al Jufrah, Al Khums, Al Kufrah, An Nuqat al Khams, Ash Shati', Awbari, Az Zawiyah, Banghazi, Darnah, Ghadamis, Gharyan, Misratah, Murzuq, Sabha, Sawfajjin, Surt, Tarabulus, Tarhunah, Tubruq, Yafran, Zlitan; note - the 25 municipalities may have been replaced by 13 regions

Independence:  

24 December 1951 (from UN trusteeship)

National holiday:  

Revolution Day, 1 September (1969)

Constitution:  

none; note - following the September 1969 military overthrow of the Libyan government, the Revolutionary Command Council replaced the existing constitution with the Constitutional Proclamation in December 1969; in March 1977, Libya adopted the Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority

Legal system:  

based on Italian and French civil law systems and Islamic law; separate religious courts; no constitutional provision for judicial review of legislative acts; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Suffrage:  

18 years of age; universal and compulsory

Executive branch:  

chief of state: Revolutionary Leader Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-QADHAFI (since 1 September 1969); note - holds no official title, but is de facto chief of state

head of government: Secretary of the General People's Committee (Prime Minister) al-Baghdadi Ali al-MAHMUDI (since 5 March 2006)

cabinet: General People's Committee established by the General People's Congress

elections: national elections are indirect through a hierarchy of people's committees; head of government elected by the General People's Congress; election last held March 2006 (next to be held NA)

election results: NA

Legislative branch:  

unicameral General People's Congress (approximately 2,700 seats; members elected indirectly through a hierarchy of people's committees)

Judicial branch:  

Supreme Court

Political parties  

and leaders: none

Political pressure  

groups and leaders: various Arab nationalist movements with almost negligible memberships may be functioning clandestinely, as well as some Islamic elements; an anti-QADHAFI Libyan exile movement exists, primarily based in London, but has little influence

International  

organization participation: ABEDA, AfDB, AFESD, AMF, AMU, AU, CAEU, COMESA, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, LAS, MIGA, NAM, OAPEC, OIC, OPCW, OPEC, PCA, UN, UN Security Council (temporary), UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO (observer)

Diplomatic  

representation in the US: *chief of mission:* ambassador (vacant); Charge d'Affaires Ali Suleiman AUJALI

chancery: 2600 Virginia Avenue NW, Suite 705, Washington, DC 20037

telephone: [1] (202) 944-9601

FAX: [1] (202) 944-9060

Diplomatic  

representation from the US: *chief of mission:* Ambassador (vacant); Charge d'Affaires J. Christopher Stevens

embassy: Corinthia Bab Africa Hotel, Souq At-Tlat Al-Qadim, Tripoli

mailing address: US Embassy, 8850 Tripoli Place, Washington, DC 20521-

8850

telephone: [218] 21-335-1848

Flag description:  

plain green; green is the traditional color of Islam (the state religion)

Economy

Libya

[Top of Page](#)

Economy -  

overview: The Libyan economy depends primarily upon revenues from the oil sector, which contribute about 95% of export earnings, about one-quarter of GDP, and 60% of public sector wages. Substantial revenues from the energy sector coupled with a small population give Libya one of the highest per capita GDPs in Africa, but little of this income flows down to the lower orders of society. Libyan officials in the past five years have made progress on economic reforms as part of a broader campaign to reintegrate the country into the international fold. This effort picked up steam after UN sanctions were lifted in September 2003 and as Libya announced in December 2003 that it would abandon programs to build weapons of mass destruction. Almost all US unilateral sanctions against Libya were removed in April 2004, helping Libya attract more foreign direct investment, mostly in the energy sector. Libyan oil and gas licensing rounds continue to draw high international interest; the National Oil Company set a goal of nearly doubling oil production to 3 million bbl/day by 2015. Libya faces a long road ahead in liberalizing the socialist-oriented economy, but initial steps - including applying for WTO membership, reducing some subsidies, and announcing plans for privatization - are laying the groundwork for a transition to a more market-based economy. The non-oil manufacturing and construction sectors, which account for more than 20% of GDP, have expanded from processing mostly agricultural products to include the production of petrochemicals, iron, steel, and aluminum. Climatic conditions and poor soils severely limit agricultural output, and Libya imports about 75% of its food. Libya's primary agricultural water source remains the Great Manmade River Project, but significant resources are being invested in desalinization research to meet growing water demands.

GDP (purchasing   
power parity): \$78.79 billion (2007 est.)

GDP (official  
exchange rate): \$66.01 billion (2007 est.)

GDP - real growth   
rate: 5.4% (2007 est.)

GDP - per capita   
(PPP): \$13,100 (2007 est.)

GDP - composition  
by sector: *agriculture*: 2.1%
industry: 81.7%
services: 16.2% (2007 est.)

Labor force:   
1.82 million (2007 est.)

Labor force - by  
occupation: *agriculture*: 17%
industry: 23%
services: 59% (2004 est.)

Unemployment   
rate: 30% (2004 est.)

Population below  
poverty line: 7.4% (2005 est.)

Household income  
or consumption by *lowest 10%*: NA%
percentage share: *highest 10%*: NA%

Inflation rate   
(consumer prices): 3.3% (2007 est.)

Investment (gross   
fixed): 8.8% of GDP (2007 est.)

Budget:  
revenues: \$39.62 billion
expenditures: \$19.51 billion (2007 est.)

Public debt:   
4.8% of GDP (2007 est.)

Agriculture -  
products: wheat, barley, olives, dates, citrus, vegetables, peanuts, soybeans; cattle

Industries:  
petroleum, iron and steel, food processing, textiles, handicrafts, cement

Industrial   
production growth 5.6% (2007 est.)
rate:

Electricity -   
production: 21.15 billion kWh (2005)

Electricity -   
consumption: 18.18 billion kWh (2005)

Electricity -  
exports: 0 kWh (2005)

Electricity -  
imports: 0 kWh (2005)

Oil - production:   
1.72 million bbl/day (2006 est.)

Oil - consumption:   
266,000 bbl/day (2005 est.)

Oil - exports:   
1.326 million bbl/day (2004)

Oil - imports:   
1,233 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - proved reserves:   
39.13 billion bbl (1 January 2006 est.)

Natural gas -   
production: 10.84 billion cu m (2005 est.)

Natural gas -   
consumption: 5.591 billion cu m (2005 est.)

Natural gas -   
exports: 5.246 billion cu m (2005 est.)

Natural gas -   
imports: 0 cu m (2005)

Natural gas -   
proved reserves: 1.43 trillion cu m (1 January 2006 est.)

Current account   
balance: \$11.71 billion (2007 est.)

Exports:   
\$36.37 billion f.o.b. (2007 est.)

Exports -  
commodities: crude oil, refined petroleum products, natural gas, chemicals

Exports - partners:  
Italy 36.7%, Germany 14.3%, Spain 8.7%, US 6.1%, France 5.6%, Turkey 5.3% (2006)

Imports:   
\$15.35 billion f.o.b. (2007 est.)

Imports -  
commodities: machinery, semi-finished goods, food, transport equipment, consumer products

Imports - partners:  
Italy 18.9%, Germany 7.9%, China 7.5%, Tunisia 6.3%, France 5.8%, Turkey 5.2%, US 4.7%, South Korea 4.3%, UK 4% (2006)

Economic aid -  
recipient: ODA, \$24.44 million (2005 est.)

Reserves of foreign   
exchange and gold: \$69.51 billion (31 December 2007 est.)

Debt - external:   
\$4.837 billion (31 December 2007 est.)

Stock of direct   
foreign investment \$4.305 billion (2006 est.)
- at home:

Stock of direct   
foreign investment \$2.163 billion (2006 est.)
- abroad:

Market value of   
publicly traded \$NA
shares:

Currency (code):  
Libyan dinar (LYD)

Exchange rates:  

Libyan dinars per US dollar - 1.2604 (2007), 1.3108 (2006), 1.3084 (2005), 1.305 (2004), 1.2929 (2003)

Fiscal year:  

calendar year

Communications Libya

[Top of Page](#)

Telephones - main   

lines in use: 483,000 (2006)

Telephones -   

mobile cellular: 3.928 million (2006)

Telephone system:  

general assessment: telecommunications system is being modernized; mobile cellular telephone system became operational in 1996; combined fixed line and mobile telephone density reached 75 telephones per 100 persons in 2006

domestic: microwave radio relay, coaxial cable, cellular, tropospheric scatter, and a domestic satellite system with 14 earth stations

international: country code - 218; satellite earth stations - 4 Intelsat, NA

Arabsat, and NA Intersputnik; submarine cables to France and Italy; microwave radio relay to Tunisia and Egypt; tropospheric scatter to Greece; participant in Medarabtel (1999)

Radio broadcast  

stations: AM 16, FM 3, shortwave 3 (2001)

Television  

broadcast stations: 12 (plus 1 repeater) (1999)

Internet country  

code: .ly

Internet hosts:   

24 (2007)

Internet users:   

232,000 (2005)

Transportation Libya

[Top of Page](#)

Airports:   

141 (2007)

Airports - with  
paved runways: *total: 60*
over 3,047 m: 23
2,438 to 3,047 m: 6
1,524 to 2,437 m: 23
914 to 1,523 m: 6
under 914 m: 2 (2007)

Airports - with  
unpaved runways: *total: 81*
over 3,047 m: 5
2,438 to 3,047 m: 2
1,524 to 2,437 m: 15
914 to 1,523 m: 41
under 914 m: 18 (2007)

Heliports:  
2 (2007)

Pipelines:  
condensate 882 km; gas 3,425 km; oil 6,956 km (2007)

Railways:   
0 km
note: Libya has announced plans to build seven lines totaling 2,757 km of 1.435-m gauge track (2006)

Roadways:   
total: 83,200 km
paved: 47,590 km
unpaved: 35,610 km (1999)

Merchant marine:   
total: 17 ships (1000 GRT or over) 67,200 GRT/85,931 DWT
by type: cargo 11, liquefied gas 3, petroleum tanker 2, roll on/roll off 1
foreign-owned: 3 (Kuwait 1, Norway 1, Syria 1)
registered in other countries: 4 (Malta 3, Tunisia 1) (2007)

Ports and  
terminals: As Sidrah, Az Zuwaytinah, Marsa al Burayqah, Ra's Lanuf, Tripoli, Zawiyah

Military

Libya

[Top of Page](#)

Military branches:  
Armed Peoples on Duty (APOD, Army), Libyan Arab Navy, Libyan Arab Air Force (Al-Quwwat al-Jawwiya al-Jamahiriya al-Arabia al-Libyya, LAAF) (2008)

Military service  
age and obligation: 17 years of age (2004)

Manpower  
available for *males age 17-49*: 1,505,675
military service: *females age 17-49*: 1,429,152 (2005 est.)

Manpower fit for  
military service: *males age 17-49*: 1,291,624
females age 17-49: 1,230,824 (2005 est.)

Manpower  
reaching military *males age 18-49*: 62,034
service age *females age 17-49*: 59,533 (2005 est.)
annually:

Military   
expenditures - 3.9% (2005 est.)
percent of GDP:

Transnational Issues

Libya

[Top of Page](#)

Disputes -  
international: Libya has claimed more than 32,000 sq km in southeastern Algeria and about 25,000 sq km in the Tommo region of Niger in a currently dormant dispute; various Chadian rebels from the Aozou region reside in southern Libya

Refugees and  
internally *refugees (country of origin)*: 8,873 (Palestinian Territories) (2006)
displaced persons:

Trafficking in  
persons: *current situation*: Libya is a transit and destination country for men, women, and children from sub-Saharan Africa and Asia trafficked for forced labor and sexual exploitation; many victims willingly migrate to Libya en route to Europe with the help of smugglers, but may be forced into prostitution or work as laborers and beggars to pay off their \$800-\$1,200 smuggling debt; laborers from Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia are reportedly trafficked to Libya for the purpose of labor exploitation
tier rating: Tier 2 Watch List - Libya is placed on the Tier 2 Watch List for its lack of evidence of increasing efforts to address trafficking since 2004