

Factsheet: Lesotho

Last update: 28 April 2014

DEFINITION OF YOUTH

The Lesotho Ministry of Gender & Youth, Sports & Recreation website defines youth as aged 15- 35 years old. The group is split into three sub-categories: 12-15 (developing youth); 15-25 (well-developed youth); 25-35 (young adults).

CANDIDACY AGE

Lower House **21**
Source: [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#)

Upper House **21**
Source: [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#)
Partially appointed and by other means.

MARRIAGEABLE AGE

	Opposite Sex		Same Sex
	WITHOUT PARENTAL CONSENT	WITH PARENTAL CONSENT	
Male	21	18	XX
Female	21	16	--

Marriage without parental consent requires the written consent of the minister responsible. Male homosexual acts illegal. Female homosexual acts legal. Source: [UNSD, ILGA](#)

VOTING AGE

18

Source: [Inter-Parliamentary Union](#)

MAJORITY AGE

21

Source: [CRIN](#)

CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY

7

Minimum Age
From 7-14 years old, the state must prove criminal capacity. A child below the age of 7 cannot be held legally responsible for their actions. Source: [Penal Code Act of Lesotho \(2010\)](#)

SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INDEX

0.52

115 out of 170 countries.

Year: 2013

Source: [Commonwealth Youth Programme](#)

LITERACY RATES

85.09%

Both sexes (15-24) %

76.98% **93.40%**

Male (15-24) % Female (15-24) %

Year: 2015

Source: [UNESCO](#)

NET ENROLMENT RATE

Secondary School

33.37%

Both sexes %

26.08% **40.82%**

Male % Female %

Year: 2012

Source: [UNESCO](#)

SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

PREVALENCE OF HIV

5.8%

Male (15-24) %

10.5%

Female (15-24) %

Year: 2013

Source: [World Bank](#)

TOBACCO USE

Consumed any smokeless or smoking tobacco product at least once 30 days prior to the survey.

24.80%

Both sexes (13-15) %

26.40%

Male (13-15) %

21.70%

Female (13-15) %

Year: 2010

Source: [WHO](#)

POLICY & LEGISLATION

A 2006 paper by the Ministry of Gender & Youth, Sport & Recreation describes Lesotho's original youth policy. Its objectives focus on environment, poverty reduction, employment, education & training, health & welfare, arts & sports, human rights, social integration, culture & values and youth participation. A "supportive national youth policy" will be created, as described on the [UNDP Lesotho country page](#). The youth policy is one focus of the [Youth Empowerment Project](#), which has the overall objective of creating "decent employment for youth, women and men". This project is related to [Millennium Development Goal 1](#): Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. The estimated project end date is listed as 31 December 2013, however at the time of publication of this Fact Sheet, no updated youth policy could be found.

Is there a national youth policy?

UNCLEAR

There is a national youth policy of Lesotho from 2005. A new one is currently under development.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

GDP PER CAPITA

USD 1125.59

Year: 2013

Source: [World Bank](#)

HDI

0.461

Year: 2013

Source: [UNDP](#)
162 out of 187 countries.

GINI

54.17

Year: 2010

Source: [World Bank](#)

CORRUPTION PERCEPTION

49

55 out of 177 countries.
Year: 2014

Source: [Transparency International](#)

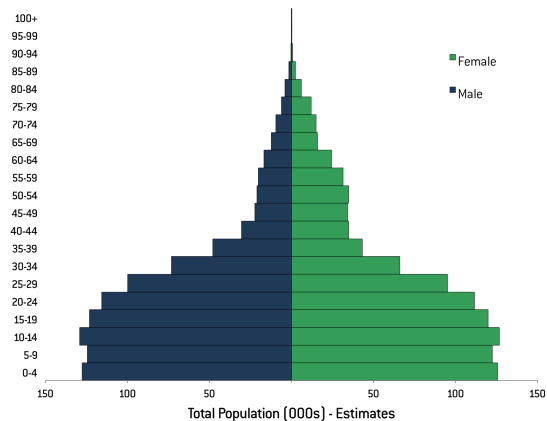
PRESS FREEDOM

28.36

74 out of 180 countries.
Year: 2013

Source: [Reporters Without Borders](#)

POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX 2010



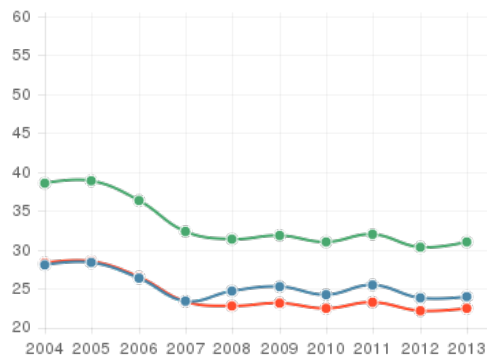
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Source: [United Nations - Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Population Division](#)

2012 Revision - Estimates. (Accessed August 2013).

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Share of labour force aged 15-24 available and seeking employment



male - (15-24)

female - (15-24)

total labour force

Source: [World Bank](#)

Gaps indicate missing data from the original data source. (Accessed August 2013).

BUDGET & SPENDING

What is the budget allocated to the governmental authority (ministry, department or office) that is primarily responsible for youth and/or

The Department of Youth within the [Ministry of Gender & Youth, Sport & Recreation](#) aims to

promote the dignity and self esteem of all Lesotho youth; to ensure their physical, intellectual and moral well-being; and to take all measures to accelerate their full participation in the socio-economic, cultural and political life.

The Department runs two vocational training centres and has District Offices in all ten districts of Lesotho. The offices provide services such as workshops, consultations with Youth Officers, and computer access.

Is there a governmental authority (ministry, department or office) that is primarily responsible for youth?

YES

youth programming?

UNCLEAR

According to the [Budget Speech to Parliament for the 2013/14 Fiscal Year](#), the total allocated budget (Recurrent & Capital) for the [Ministry of Gender & Youth, Sport & Recreation](#) is LSL 121.6 million (USD 11 million). It is unclear what portion of this amount is specifically for youth. According to the [World Bank](#), Lesotho spent 23.72% of its government expenditure and 12.98% of its GDP on education provision in 2008.

YOUTH AND REPRESENTATION

Makalo Theko, Principal Secretary for [Ministry of Gender & Youth, Sport & Recreation](#), described the National Youth Council (NYC) as providing "[advice to] the minster on programmes relating to youth development", as reported by Mahoaba Majoro on [26 February 2010](#) for [African Voices](#). The launch of the council was due to occur between February and June of 2010, however as described on the [Innovations in Civic Participation Lesotho page](#), elections did not take place until March 2012. The formation of a youth council is mandated by the National Youth Council Act of 2008.

Does the country have a national youth organisation / association (council, platform, body)?

YES

TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND GDP

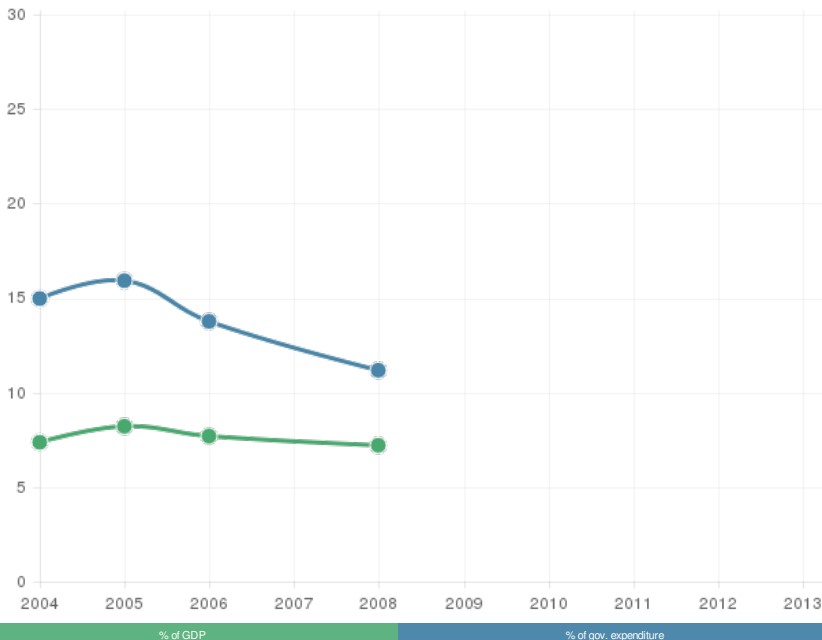
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UNCLEAR

TOTAL EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION AS A PERCENTAGE OF GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND GDP



Source: [World Bank](#)
Gaps indicate missing data from the original data source. (Accessed August 2013).

% of GDP

% of gov. expenditure

Source: [World Bank](#)
Gaps indicate missing data from the original data source. (Accessed August 2013).

PUBLICATIONS AND REVIEWS

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