LIBERIA INSTITUTE OF STATISTICS AND GEO-INFORMATION SERVICES (LISGIS)

Thematic Report on Population Size, Distribution and Structure

2022 Liberia Population and Housing Census

Dear Reader,

I am pleased to present this document as a highlight summary of the upcoming Thematic Report on Population Size, Distribution and Structure from the 2022 Liberia Population and Housing Census (LPHC). This summary offers a snapshot of the key findings and insights that will be detailed in the final report.

Please note that the full report is currently undergoing finalization, which includes comprehensive editing, formatting, graphic designing, and proofreading. The finalized version will replace this document once it is completed.

We appreciate your patience and look forward to sharing the complete report with you soon.

Best regards,

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Outline

⇨ Introduction, Background and Context

⇨ Population Size and Distribution

⇨ Population Composition and Structure

⇨ Socio-Cultural Composition of the Population

⇨ Household Size, Structure and Composition

⇨ Conclusions, Policy Implications and Recommendations

- 2022 Liberia Population and Housing Census (LPHC) is the 5ᵗʰ and first digital census (1962, 1974, 1984, 2008, 2022)

- Digital census refers to the use of Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) or use of tablets instead of paper questionnaires

- Collected data on the socio-economic and demographic characteristics (including mortality) of the country's population

- Data will support planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting on national and global goals such as the ARREST agenda, the AU Agenda 2063 ("the Africa we want") and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (All SDG Goals)

Demographic and Social Context

- Land area is 37,483 square miles

- Borders by 3 countries (Guinea, Sierra Leone and Cote D'Ivoire) and the Atlantic Ocean

- It has 15 administrative counties

- The dominant ethnic groups – the Kpelle, Bassa, Gio, Mano, and Loma

- The Liberian population is characterized by diversity, reflecting the country's history and cultural heritage.

Demographic and Social Context (Cont'd)

- Liberia's population has increased by more than three folds between 1962 (1,016,443) and 2008 (3,476,608).

- High population growth rates of 3.3 percent from 1962 to 1974 and 3.4 percent between 1974 and 1984.

- The high population growth rate will continue to impact Liberia's urban settlements and fundamentally determine its urbanisation features.

- Liberia has a target of reducing the overall growth rate of the population from 6.1 percent in 2000 to 2.7 percent in 2020.

- Total fertility rate was targeted to reduce from the 2000 level of 6.1 to 5.0 in 2010, then to 3.0 in 2020.

- The Liberia Population Policy intended to reduce infant mortality rate from 117 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000 to 50 deaths per 1000 live births in 2020.

- The policy also targeted an increase in life expectancy at birth from 48 years in 2000 to 55 years in 2010 and to 65 years in 2020.

- Liberia has a youthful population requiring heavy investment in every sector of the economy especially health, education, social services and employment

- However, it has one of the world's lowest rates of GDP per capita (US$674.21) in 2019 (UNICEF, 2019)

- More than half of the country's estimated 4.9 million population live below the poverty line (HIES 2016)

Justification

- A population and housing census (NPHC) is the most comprehensive and reliable national data resource that provides critical input into national development planning and programmes.

- A report on population size, distribution and composition will provide data to monitor various development programmes embarked on by Governments, NGOs and other stakeholders.

- Provides avenue to study the growth of the population

- For monitoring of the country's medium-term priorities as set out in the ARREST Agenda, SDGs, AU Agenda 2063, reliable and up-to-date information on the social, demographic and economic characteristics of the population.

- The main source of data for this report is the 2022 Liberia Population and Housing Census

- Methodology involved:
  - Assessing data quality issues

  - Construction and description of tables and charts for analysis and report preparation

  - Comparison of data from previous censuses

Population by size, 1962-2022

Year of Census	Number			Percent	
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Male	Female
1962	1,016,443	503,588	512,855	49.5	50.5
1974	1,503,368	759,109	744,259	50.5	49.5
1984	2,101,628	1,063,127	1,038,501	50.6	49.4
2008	3,489,072	1,764,555	1,724,517	50.6	49.4
2022	**5,250,187**	**2,644,027**	**2,606,160**	**50.4**	**49.6**

Compiled from 1984, 2008 and 2022 population and housing census reports, LISGIS

Over a period of 62 years, the population of Liberia has increased by 4,233,744 persons; from 1,016,443 persons in 1962 to 5,250187 persons in 2022.

Population Change, Annual Growth and Doubling time

Period	Percentage change	Annual Intercensal Growth Rate	Doubling time
1962-1974	47.9	3.3	21
1974-1984	39.8	3.4	21
1984-2008	66	2.1	34
2008-2022	50.5	3.0	25

Compiled from 1984, 2008 and 2022 population and housing census reports, LISGIS

Population Distribution by County and Annual Growth Rate

County	Population		Annual Growth Rate
	2008	2022	2008-2022
Liberia	**3,489,072**	**5,250,187**	**3.0**
Bomi	82,036	133,705	3.3
Bong	328,919	467,561	2.4
Gbarpolu	83,758	95,995	0.9
Grand Bassa	224,839	293,689	1.8
Grand Cape Mount	129,055	178,867	2.2
Grand Gedeh	126,146	216,692	3.7
Grand Kru	57,106	109,342	4.4
Lofa	270,114	367,376	2.1
Margibi	199,689	304,946	2.9
Maryland	136,404	172,587	1.6
Montserrado	1,144,806	1,920,965	3.5
Nimba	468,088	621,841	1.9
Rivercess	65,862	90,819	2.2
River Gee	67,318	124,653	4.2
Sinoe	104,932	151,149	2.5

Compiled from 2008 and 2022 population and housing census reports, LISGIS

Share of population by County, 1984-2022

County	1984	2008	2022
Bomi	3.2	2.4	2.5
Bong	12.2	9.4	8.9
Gbarpolu	2.3	2.4	1.8
Grand Bassa	7.6	6.4	5.6
Grand Cape Mount	3.8	3.7	3.4
Grand Gedeh	3.0	3.6	4.1
Grand Kru	3.0	1.6	2.1
Lofa	9.5	7.7	7.0
Margibi	7.2	5.7	5.8
Maryland	3.3	3.9	3.3
Montserrado	23.4	32.8	36.6
Nimba	14.9	13.4	11.8
Rivercess	1.8	1.9	1.7
River Gee	1.9	1.9	2.4
Sinoe	3.1	3.0	2.9

- The largest proportion of Liberia's population lived in Montserrado

- Marked variations in the growth of population across the counties.

- Montserrado increased from 23.3 percent in 1984 to 32.8 in 2008 and 36.6 in 2022, while Rivercess decreased from 1.9 in 2008 to 1.7 in 2022

Population Density

County	Area (SQ.M)	Population Density		
		1984	**2008**	**2022**
Liberia	37, 483	56	93	140
Bomi	750	89	109	178
Bong	3, 387	76	97	138
Gbarpolu	3, 741	13	22	26
Grand Bassa	3, 064	52	73	96
Grand Cape Mount	1, 993	40	65	90
Grand Gedeh	4, 048	16	31	54
Grand Kru	1,504	42	38	73
Lofa	3,854	52	70	95
Margibi	1,010	150	198	302
Maryland	887	78	154	195
Montserrado	737	666	1,553	2606
Nimba	4,460	70	105	139
Rivercess	2,160	18	30	42
River Gee	1,974	20	34	63
Sinoe	3,914	16	27	39

The population density increased from 93 in 2008 to 140 persons per Sq. mile in 2022.

Montserrado had a population density of 666 persons per square mile in 1984, 1553 in 2008 and 2,606 in 2022 persons per square miles.

Counties such as Bomi, Bong, and Grand Cape Mount exhibited notable increases in population density, suggesting a trend of rural-urban migration or county development stimulating population growth.
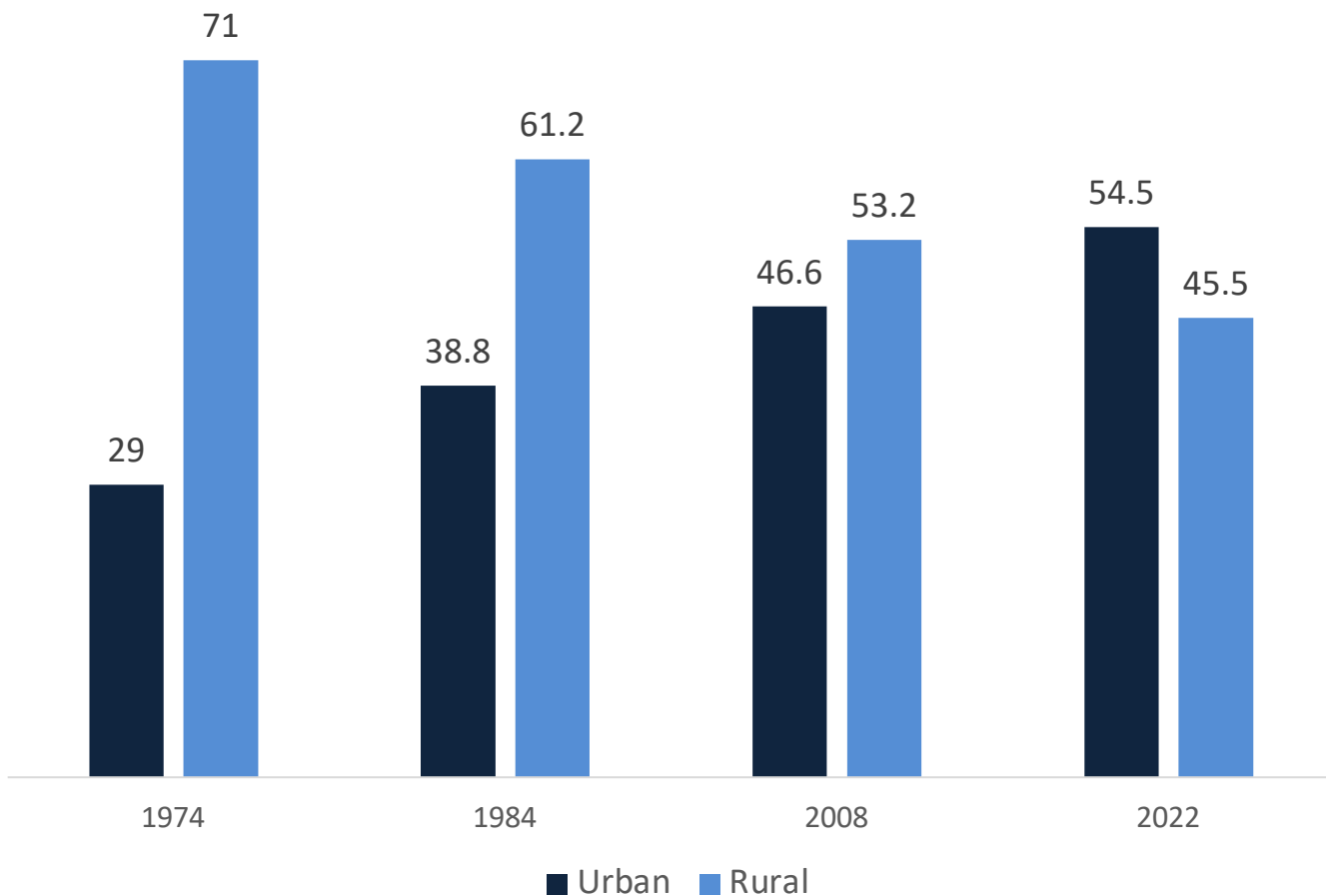
Spatial and Dispersion of the Population

County	Population	Area	Density	% Distribution Population	Area
Montserrado	1,920,965	737	2606.5	36.6	2.0
Margibi	304,946	1,010	301.9	5.8	2.7
Maryland	172,587	887	194.6	3.3	2.4
Bomi	133,705	750	178.3	2.5	2.0
Nimba	621,841	4,460	139.4	11.8	11.9
Bong	467,561	3,387	138.0	8.9	9.0
Grand Bassa	293,689	3,064	95.9	5.6	8.2
Lofa	367,376	3,854	95.3	7.0	10.3
Grand Cape Mount	178,867	1,993	89.7	3.4	5.3
Grand Kru	109,342	1,504	72.7	2.1	4.0
River Gee	124,653	1,974	63.1	2.4	5.3
Grand Gedeh	216,692	4,048	53.5	4.1	10.8
River Cess	90,819	2,160	42.0	1.7	5.8
Sinoe	151,149	3,914	38.6	2.9	10.4
Gbarpolu	95,995	3,741	25.7	1.8	10.0
Liberia	**5,250,187**	**37,482**	**140.1**	**100.0**	**100.0**

- About 37 percent of the population was resident in 2% of its territory in Montserrado

- Over 48 percent was settled on only 9 percent of national territory.

- Four counties (Montserrado, Margibi, Maryland and Bomi) account for nearly half (48.2%) of the population

- Covering only 9.1% of the total land size of Liberia.

Urban and Rural Population

Chart — Urban (dark) and Rural (light blue) population percentages:

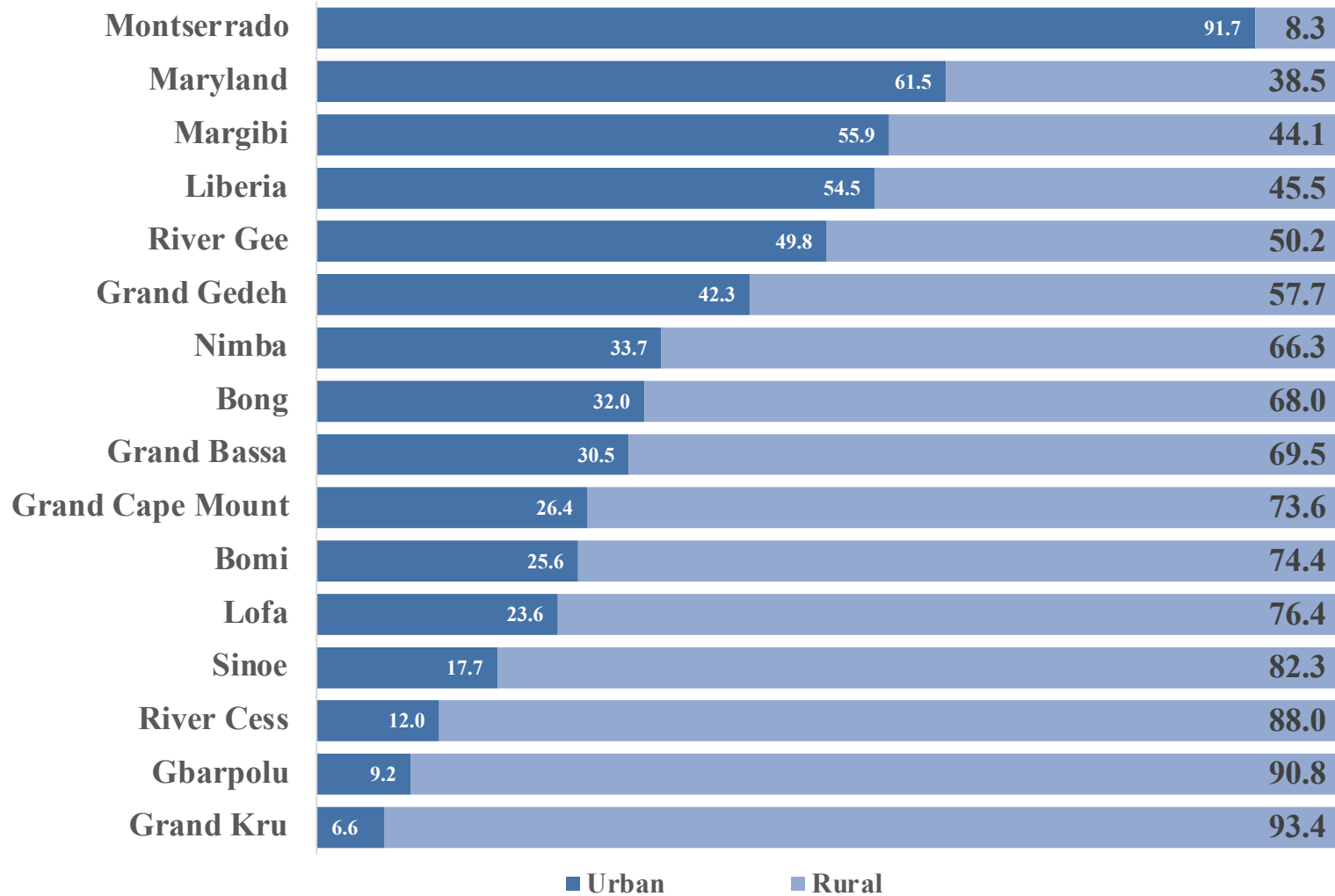| Year	Urban	Rural
1974	29	71
1984	38.8	61.2
2008	46.6	53.2
2022	54.5	45.5

- Currently, more than half (54.5%) of the country's population live in urban areas.

- The first time a higher proportion of the population living in urban areas.

- The intensification of the population growth in cities and urban areas is primarily rural to urban migration.
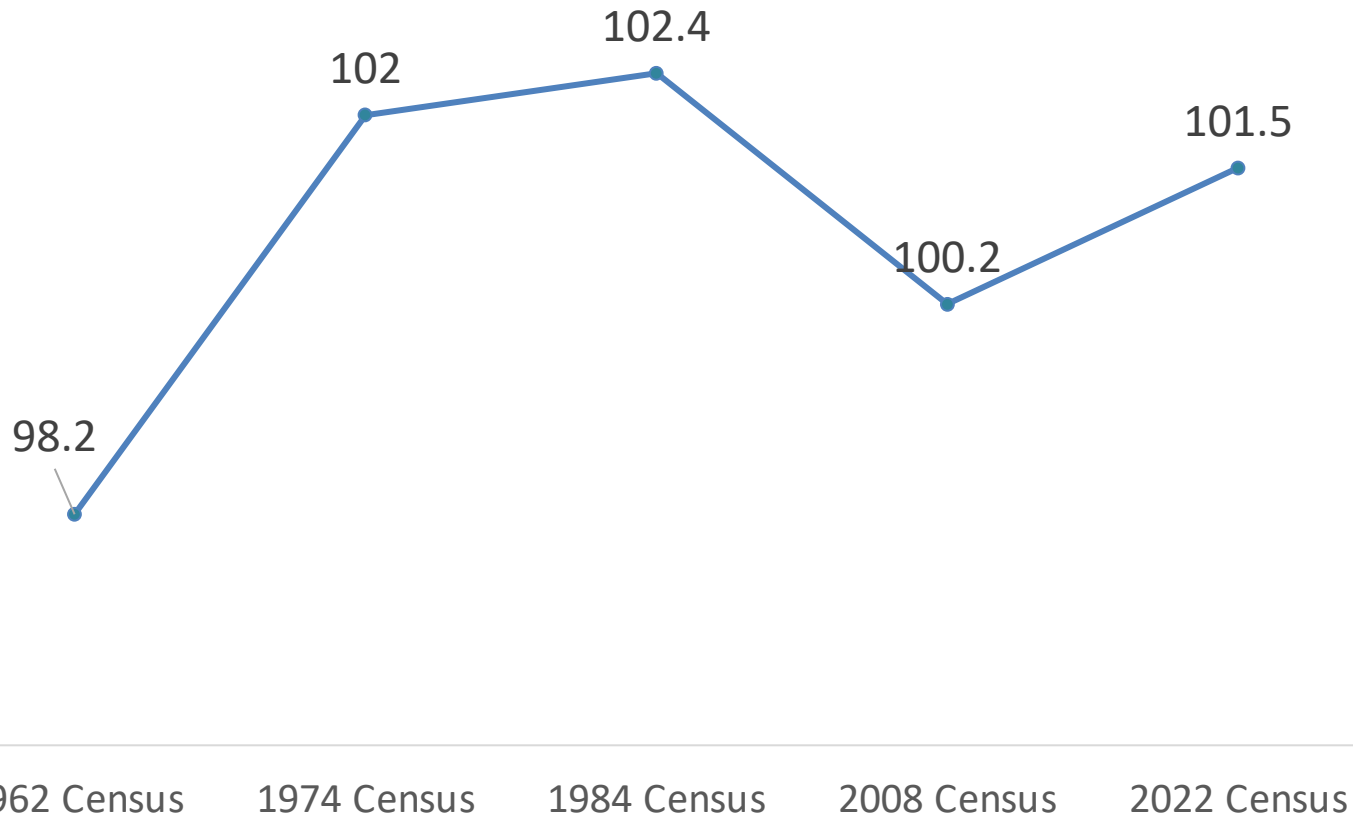
Regional Comparison

Urban and Rural Population by County

County	Urban	Rural
Montserrado	91.7	8.3
Maryland	61.5	38.5
Margibi	55.9	44.1
Liberia	54.5	45.5
River Gee	49.8	50.2
Grand Gedeh	42.3	57.7
Nimba	33.7	66.3
Bong	32.0	68.0
Grand Bassa	30.5	69.5
Grand Cape Mount	26.4	73.6
Bomi	25.6	74.4
Lofa	23.6	76.4
Sinoe	17.7	82.3
River Cess	12.0	88.0
Gbarpolu	9.2	90.8
Grand Kru	6.6	93.4

■ Urban ■ Rural

- Four counties - Montserrado (91.7%), Maryland (61.5%), Margibi (55.9%) and River Gee (49.8%) have about 50 percent or more of the population living in urban areas

- Five counties have less than a quarter of the populations living in urban areas

- Grand Kru (93.4%) and Gbarpolu (90.8%) as the highest occupancy for rural.

Sex Ratio

A Demographic measure that compares the number of males to the number of females in a given population. It is typically expressed as the number of males per 100 females.
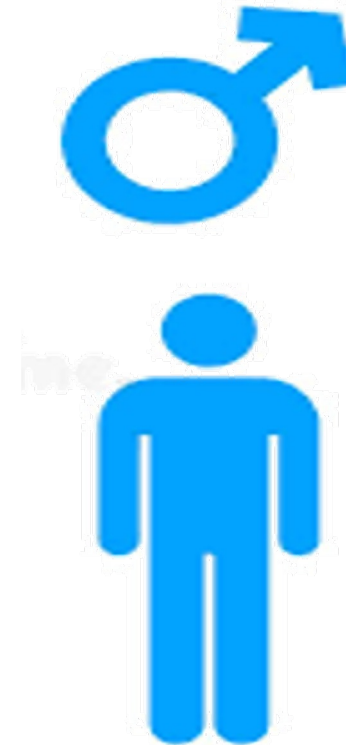
49.6%

50.4%

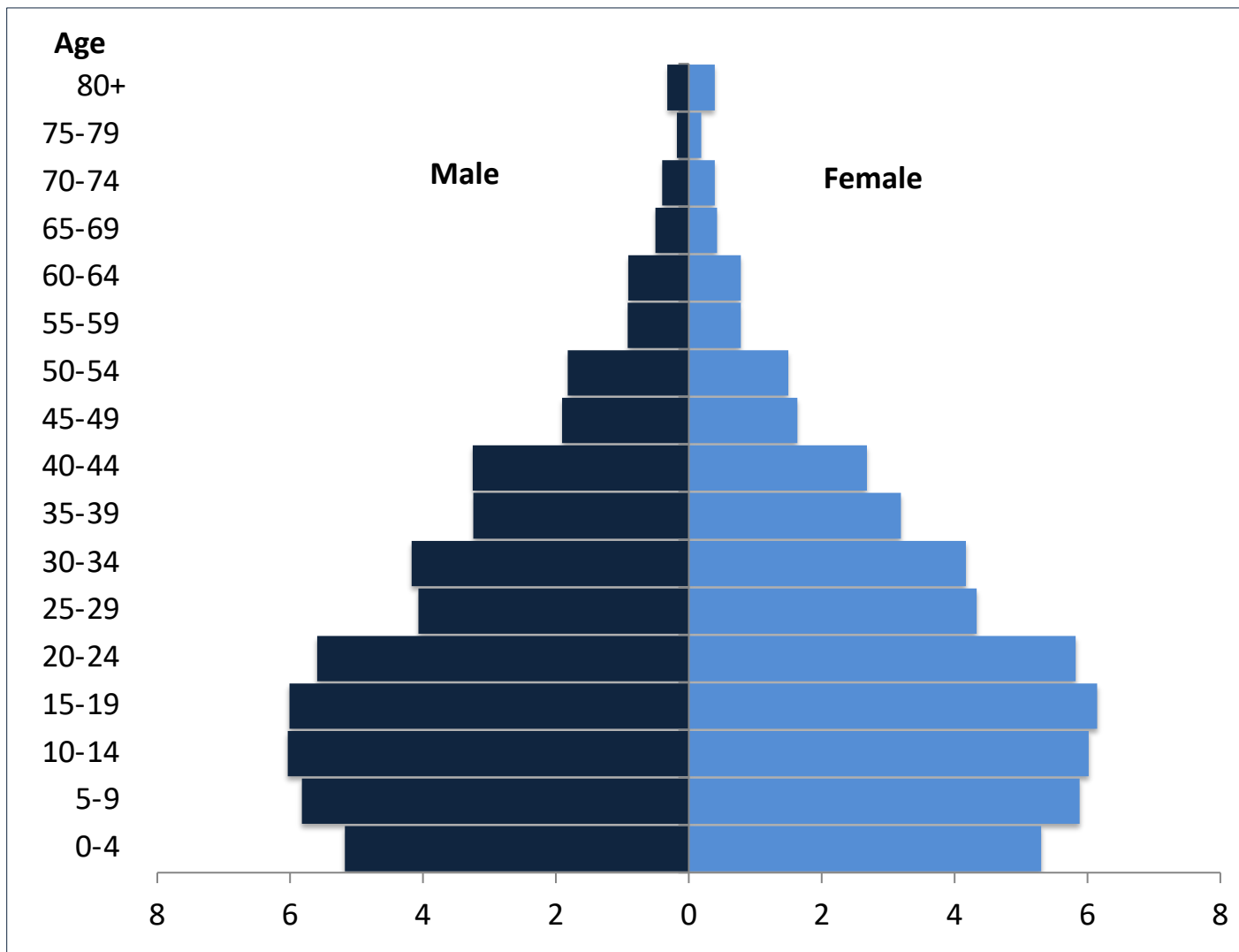Male reported 50.4% in Sex composition of population as compared to female 49.6%

This broad-based pyramid indicates a high number of young individuals. It suggests a high birth rate and a large proportion of children and adolescents in the population.

It implies a large dependent population (children and adolescents), which places a burden on the working-age population.
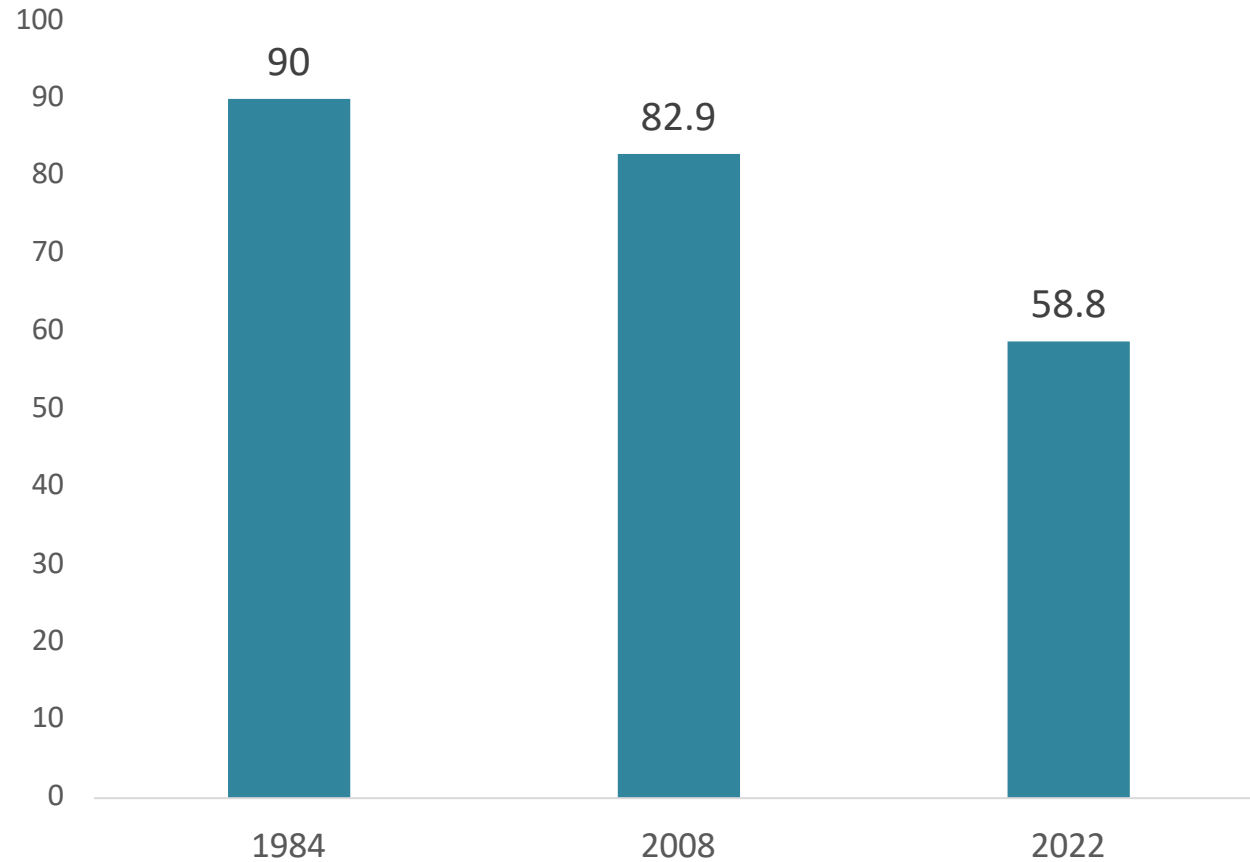
This may imply that a significant portion of resources should be allocated to childcare, education, and health services for the younger population.

~ ratio of the population 0-14 years and 65 years and older to the population 15-64 years.
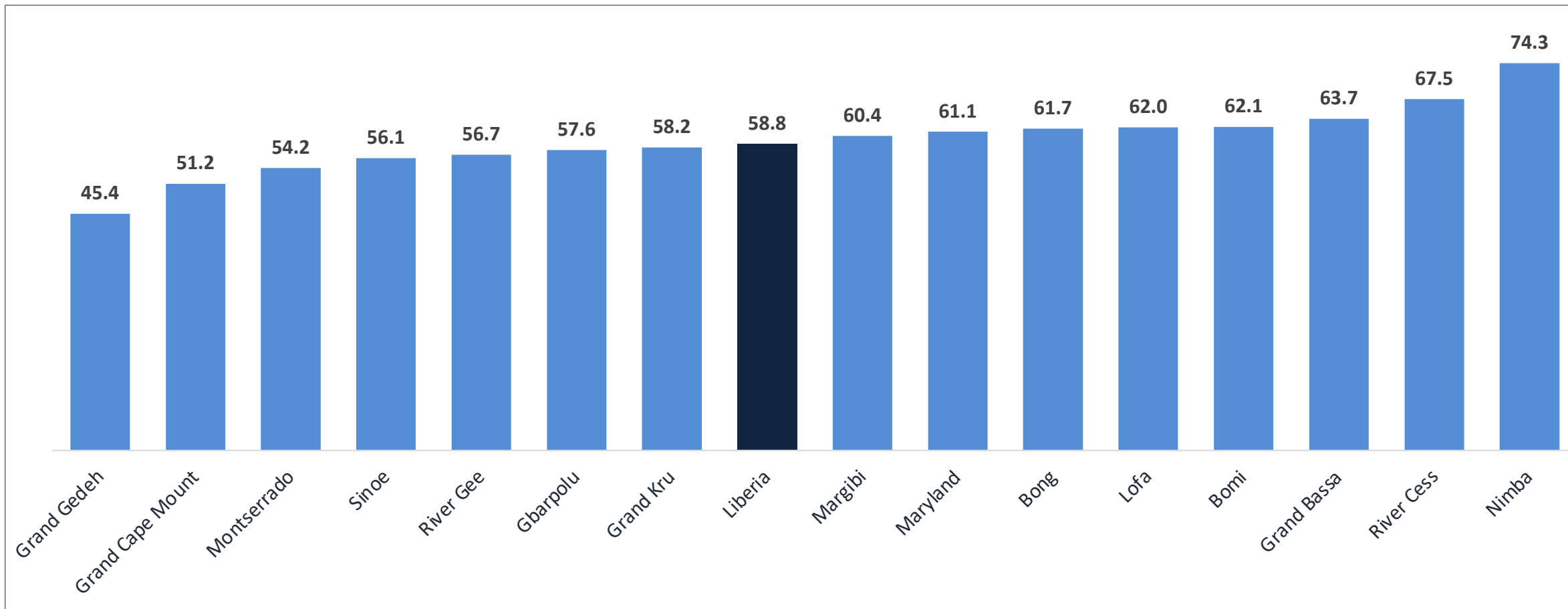
Dependency Ratio

- Age dependency ratio has reduced from 1984 (90.0), 2008 (82.9) to 58.8 in 2022.

- A steady decline in the total age dependency ratios from 90.0 in 1984 to 82.9 in 2008 and with a sharp decline to 58.8 by 2022.

- This low dependency ratio indicates a sufficient number of people in the working age group that can support the dependent population

Dependency Ratio - County

- In general, the pattern of the dependency across counties varies as some counties exhibit a much dependency ratio than others
- Dependency ratio for the Nimba County is 75.3, the highest.
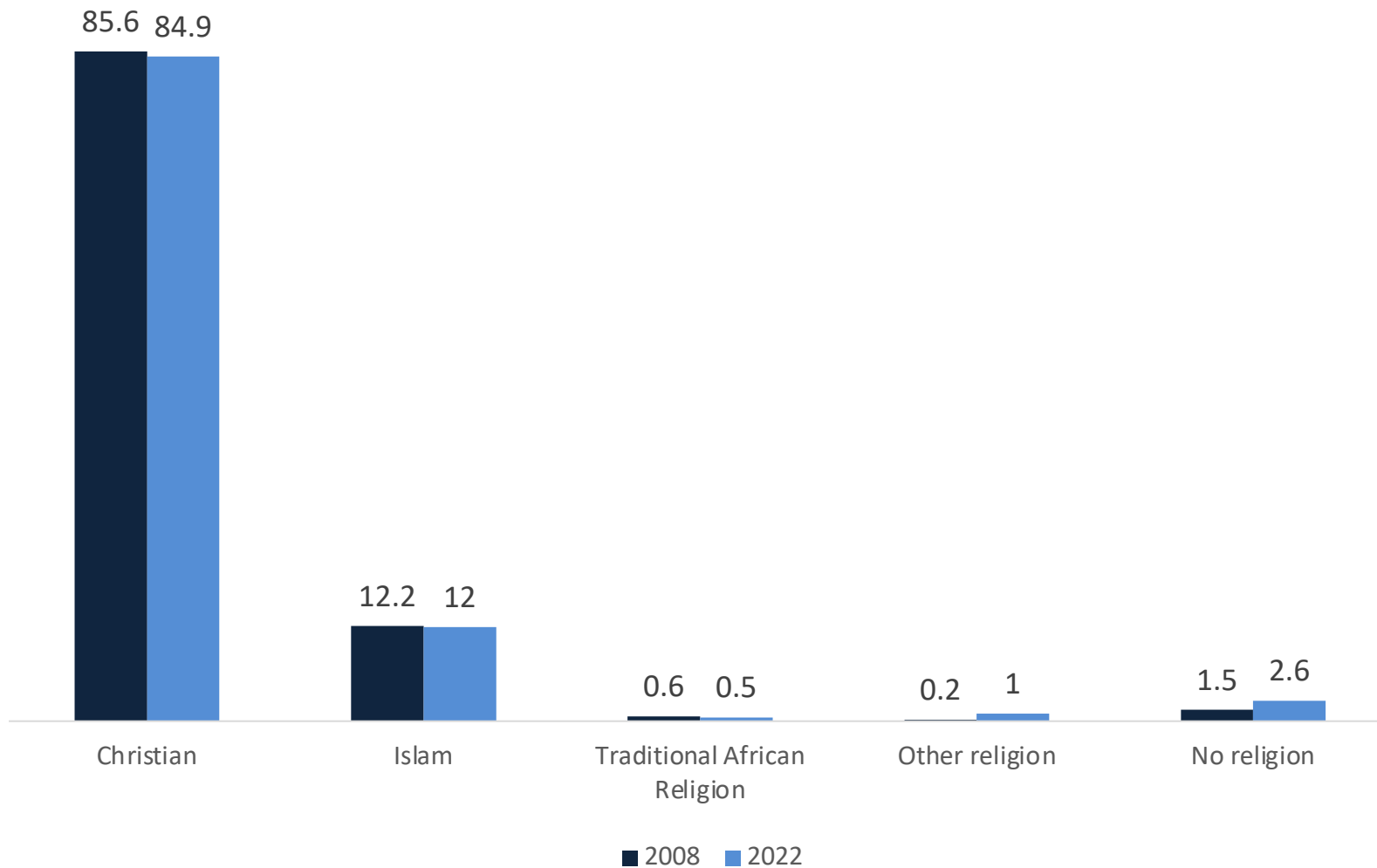- Grand Gedeh recorded the lowest dependency ratio of 45.4

Ethnic Composition

Ethnic group	2022		
	Urban	Rural	Total
Bassa	14.2	12.9	**13.6**
Belle	0.8	0.6	0.7
Dey	0.2	0.4	0.3
Gbandi	2.6	3.4	2.9
Gio	6.4	9.6	7.9
Gola	2.9	4.8	3.8
Grebo	10.8	8.8	**9.9**
Kpelle	17.7	23.3	**20.2**
Kissi	4.5	4.1	4.3
Krahn	4.1	5.1	4.5
Kru	6.3	4.5	5.5
Lorma	5.6	3.9	4.8
Mandingo	6.2	1.8	4.2
Mano	6.5	8.0	7.2
Mende	1.6	1.7	1.7
Sapo	0.7	1.4	1.0
Vai	4.3	3.3	3.8
Other Liberian ethnic group	0.5	0.3	0.4
Other African tribe	3.7	2.1	3.0
Non African	0.3	0.1	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

The Kpelle (20.2%) was the largest ethnic Group in Liberia, followed by Bassa (13.6%) and Grebo (9.9 %).

These tribes constitute about 44 percent of the total population.
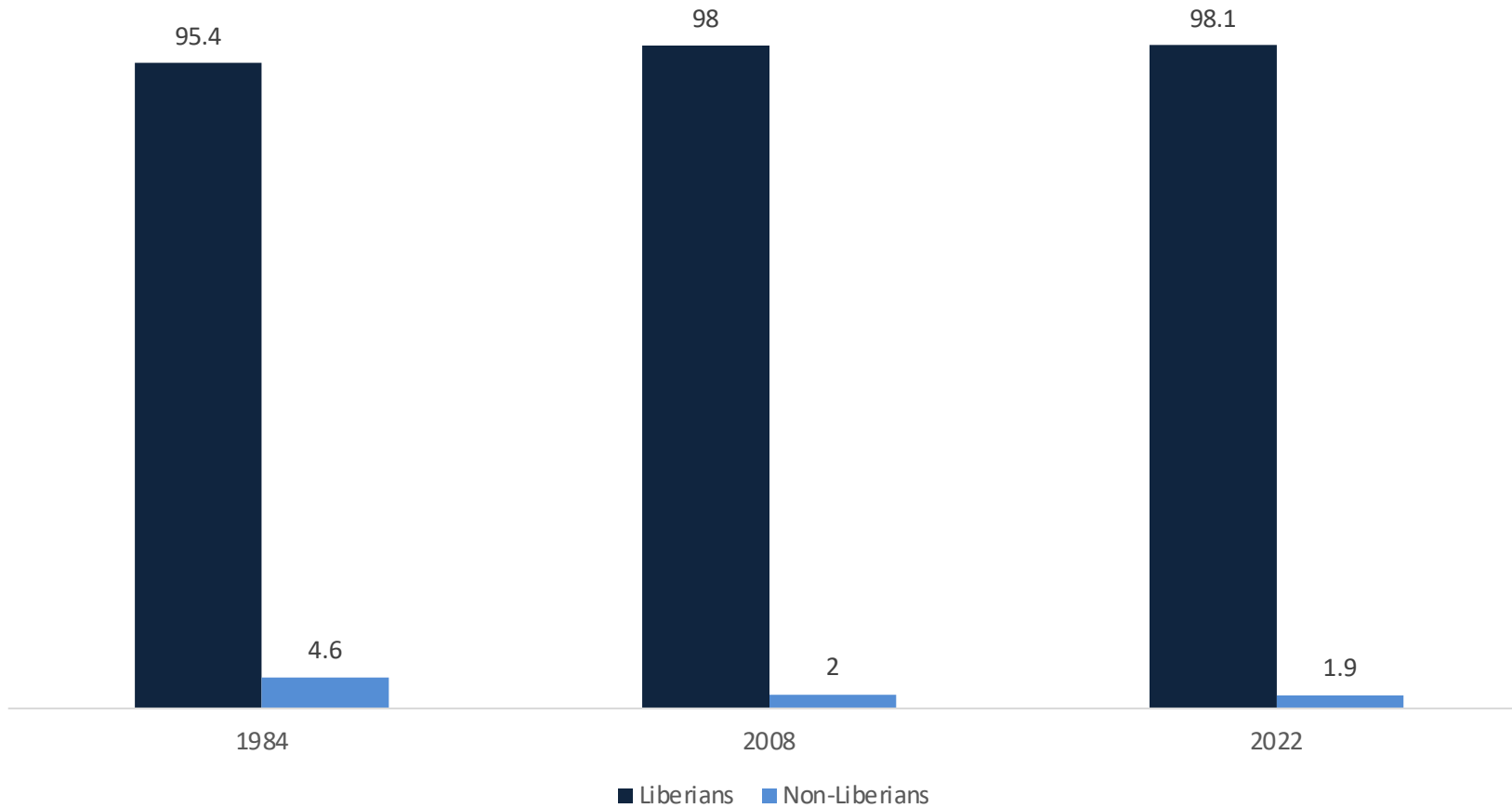
Religious Affiliation

The Christian religion is the most dominant religion in Liberia (85.% in 2008 and 84.9% in 2022

Islam is the second dominant religion in 2008 (12.2%) and 2022 (12.0%)

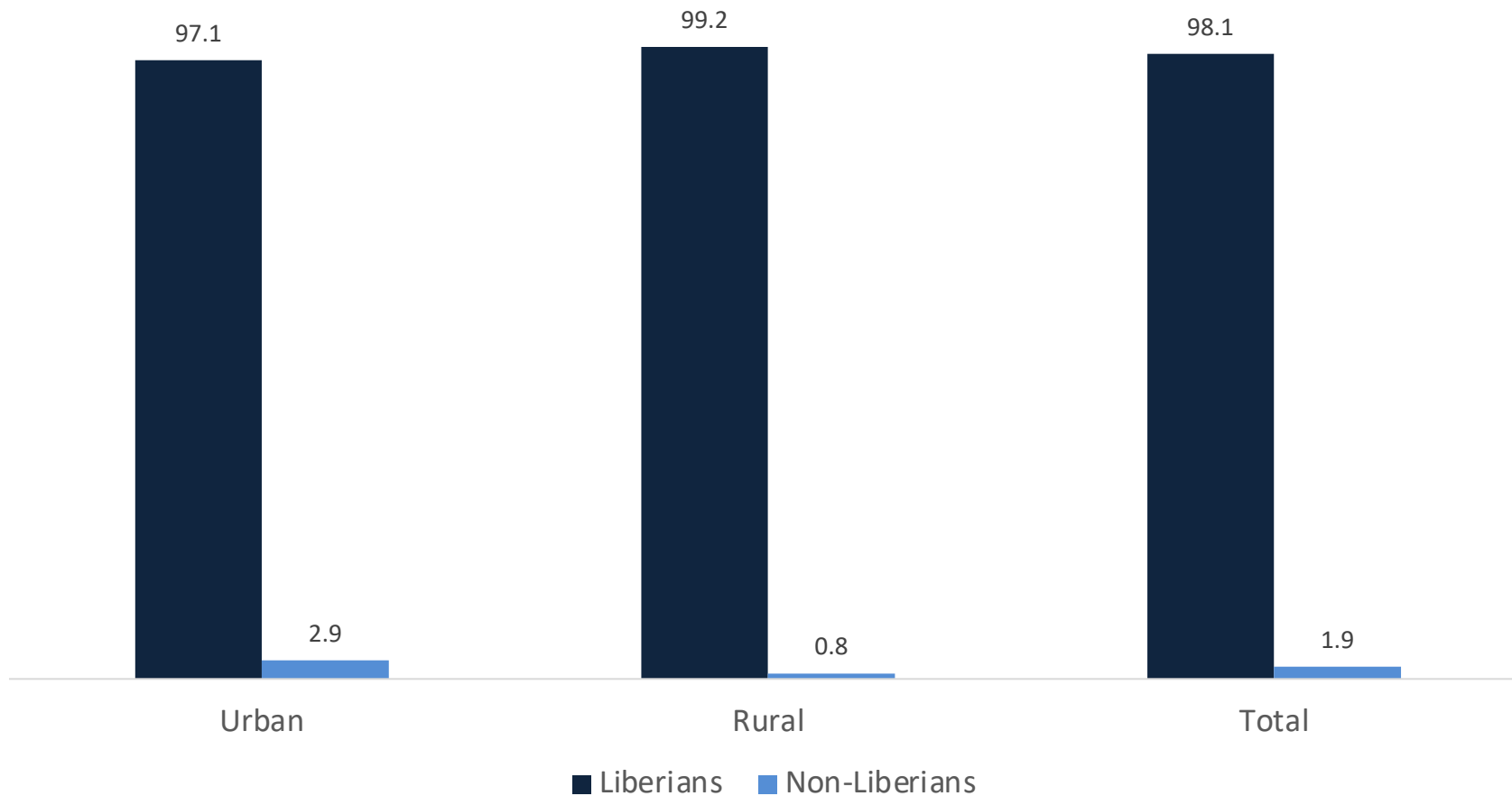|	2008	2022
Christian	85.6	84.9
Islam	12.2	12
Traditional African Religion	0.6	0.5
Other religion	0.2	1
No religion	1.5	2.6

■ 2008 ■ 2022

The proportion of Liberians increased:

- 95.4% in 1984

- 98.0% in 2008

- 98.1% in 2022

The proportion of the non-Liberians has declined by 2.7 percentage points between 1984 and 2022.

Nationality – Urban and Rural

The proportion of non-Liberians in urban areas (2.9%) is more than three times (3.2) higher than their counterparts in rural (0.8%).

Urban — 97.1 — 2.9
Rural — 99.2 — 0.8
Total — 98.1 — 1.9

■ Liberians ■ Non-Liberians

Population in Households and Non-Households

	Number			Percent	
	Total	Population in households	Population not in households	Population in households	Population not in households
All localities					
Male	2,644,027	2,599,721	44,306	98.3	1.7
Female	2,606,160	2,578,763	27,397	98.9	1.1
Total	5,250,187	5,178,484	71,703	98.6	1.4
Urban					
Male	1,409,188	1,377,991	31,197	97.8	2.2
Female	1,452,966	1,434,955	18,011	98.8	1.2
Total	2,862,154	2,812,946	49,208	98.3	1.7
Rural					
Male	1,234,839	1,221,730	13,109	98.9	1.1
Female	1,153,194	1,143,808	9,386	99.2	0.8
Total	2,388,033	2,365,538	22,495	99.1	0.9

Households Headship

Relationship	1984	2008	2022
Head	16.1	19.6	22.6
Spouse	10.6	11.1	9.8
Son/Daughter	41.5	44.0	46.8
Other Spouse	2.1	0.6	0.4
Parent	0.9	0.9	0.6
Grand Child	**	6.0	4.7
Servant	1.5	0.2	0.2
Ward	0.4	0.6	0.2
Other relative	16.9	14.6	11.9
Non-relative	10.1	2.5	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Liberia becoming more of nuclear family household.

The changes witnessed in the household composition over the years are indications of moving away from **extended family households** to **nuclear family structure**
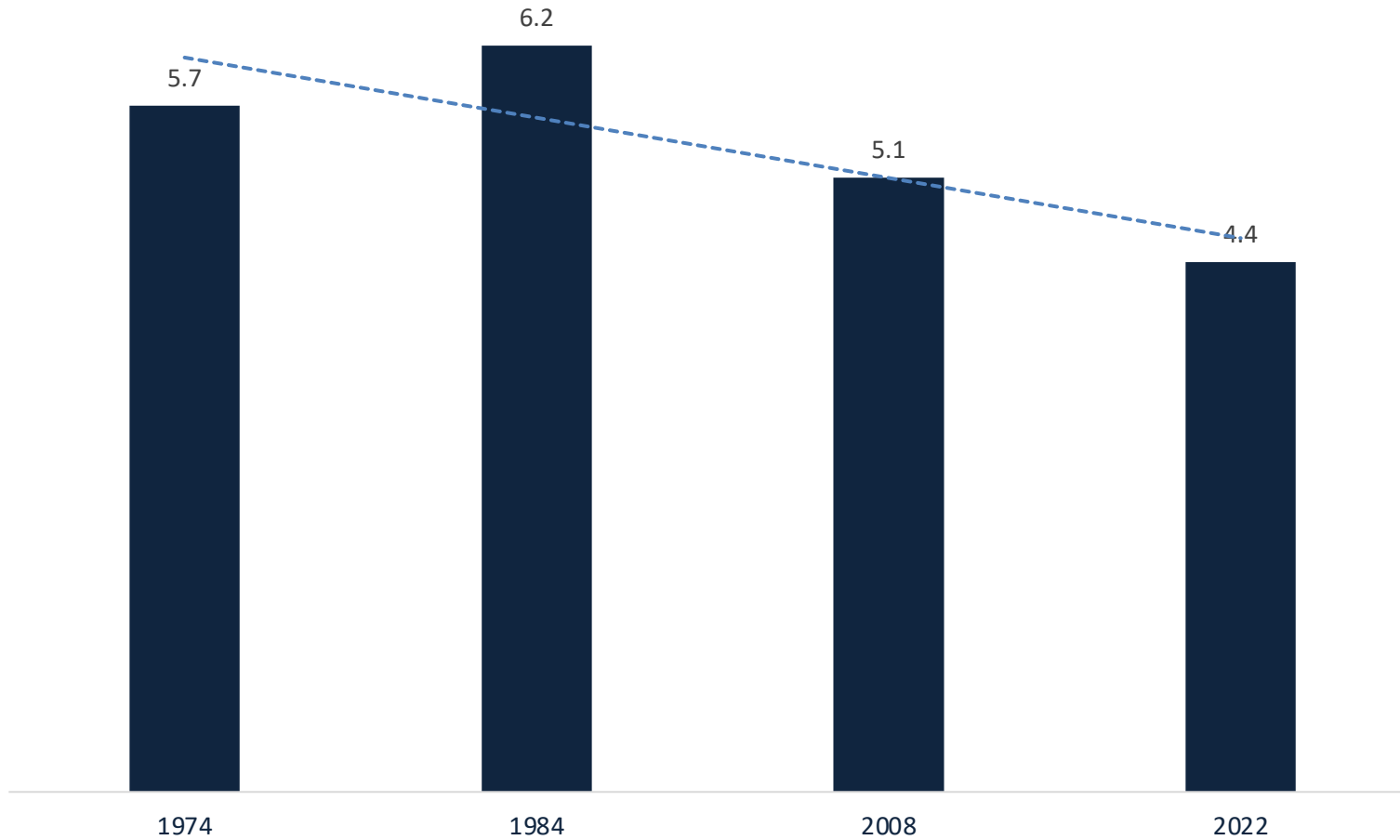
Households Headship -County

County	2008			2022		
	Households	**Household Heads**		Households	**Household Heads**	
		Male	Female		**Male**	**Female**
Total Country	670,295	72.9	27.1	764,922	**64.4**	**35.6**
Urban	327,022	69.7	30.3	398,619	**61.3**	**38.7**
Rural	343,273	76.1	23.9	366,303	**68.3**	**31.7**
Bomi	20,508	70.8	29.2	23,004	**59.6**	**40.4**
Bong	69,810	72.7	27.3	71,005	**64.5**	**35.5**
Gbarpolu	14,533	80.5	19.5	15,701	**70.1**	**29.9**
Grand Bassa	47,440	79.2	20.8	49,570	**71.5**	**28.5**
Grand Cape Mount	23,950	73.4	26.6	30,775	**68.1**	**31.9**
Grand Gedeh	18,143	75.2	24.8	30,425	**69.7**	**30.3**
Grand Kru	8,969	74.2	25.8	12,644	**61.3**	**38.7**
Lofa	49,642	67.0	33.0	44,658	**59.3**	**40.7**
Margibi	45,095	76.1	23.9	47,584	**65.8**	**34.2**
Maryland	19,254	73.9	26.1	21,975	**59.0**	**41.0**
Montserrado	232,585	71.1	28.9	283,623	**63.0**	**37.0**
Nimba	80,734	72.3	27.7	84,000	**65.6**	**34.4**
River Cess	13,981	79.5	20.5	15,186	**72.0**	**28.0**
River Gee	9,822	74.8	25.2	14,432	**60.4**	**39.6**
Sinoe	15,829	78.6	21.4	20,340	**68.1**	**31.9**

H/h headship in 2022 stood at 64.4% for male while female accounted for 35.6%.

- At the county level, Montserrado recorded 63.0% and 37.0%, respectively.

- Maryland recoded the closest headship to both sexes (59.0% for male and 41.0 for female)

Average Household Size

6.2

5.7

5.1

4.4

| 1974 | 1984 | 2008 | 2022 |

The trend of decreasing h/h sizes over the years, from 5.7 in 1974 to **4.4** in 2022, indicates a shift towards smaller family units.

This could be due to urbanization, increased access to family planning, and changes in social norms regarding family size.

Average Household Size - County

County	Urban	Rural	Total
Total Country	4.3	4.4	4.4
Bomi	3.9	3.3	3.4
Bong	4.5	4.1	4.2
Gbarpolu	4.8	4.2	4.2
Grand Bassa	4.5	4.1	4.2
Grand Cape Mount	3.6	4.0	3.9
Grand Gedeh	4.4	5.3	4.9
Grand Kru	5.0	5.3	5.3
Lofa	4.9	4.8	4.9
Margibi	4.3	4.0	4.2
Maryland	4.5	4.8	4.6
Montserrado	4.2	4.0	4.2
Nimba	4.9	4.8	4.8
River Cess	4.6	4.2	4.3
River Gee	5.2	5.2	5.2
Sinoe	4.7	5.1	5.0

Average h/h size across the country was 4.4

Grand Kru recorded the highest at 5.3

Bomi County recorded the lowest at 3.4

Policy Implications

- The high population size and densities will exert pressure on infrastructure, housing and public services. This will lead to inadequate access to health care, education, employment avenues.

- The changes in the age structure of the population, particularly the young population which had been attributed to age shifting and undercounting will lead to incorrect estimates or inferences made about the population

- Age dependency has sharply reduced, thus, reducing the burden of the working age population with the implication of promoting economic growth.

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- The changes in the age structure of the population, particularly the young population which had been attributed to age shifting and undercounting will lead to incorrect estimates or inferences made about the population

- Age dependency has sharply reduced, thus, reducing the burden of the working age population with the implication of promoting economic growth.

Recommendations

- Measures should be in place to contain the increase in the population growth rates. The need for a new population policy to set new targets as the 2005 Revised Edition of National Population Policy ended in 2020

- In developing data collection instruments for the next Population and Housing Census, questions on date of birth should be asked to serve as a check to question on age

- Training of Field Data Collection Officers based on data quality assurance framework (DQAF)

- Development of programs to take advantage of the reduction in the dependency ratio by creating more job opportunities and embarking on career training for the working age population.