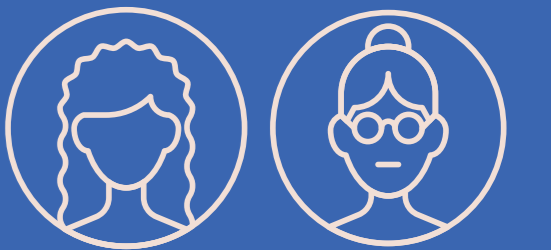


# HEALTH INEQUALITIES: COMPARISON OF DENMARK AND LIBERIA



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**Introduction:** “Health inequalities are systematic differences in the health status of different population groups”. It is the unfair avoidable differences in health across the population, and between different groups within the society. The social determinants of health include income and social protection, education, unemployment, work life conditions etc.

**Objectives:** Comparison of health status and health inequalities in Denmark and in Liberia.

**Materials and methods:** Analysis of documents and making of categories of national health.

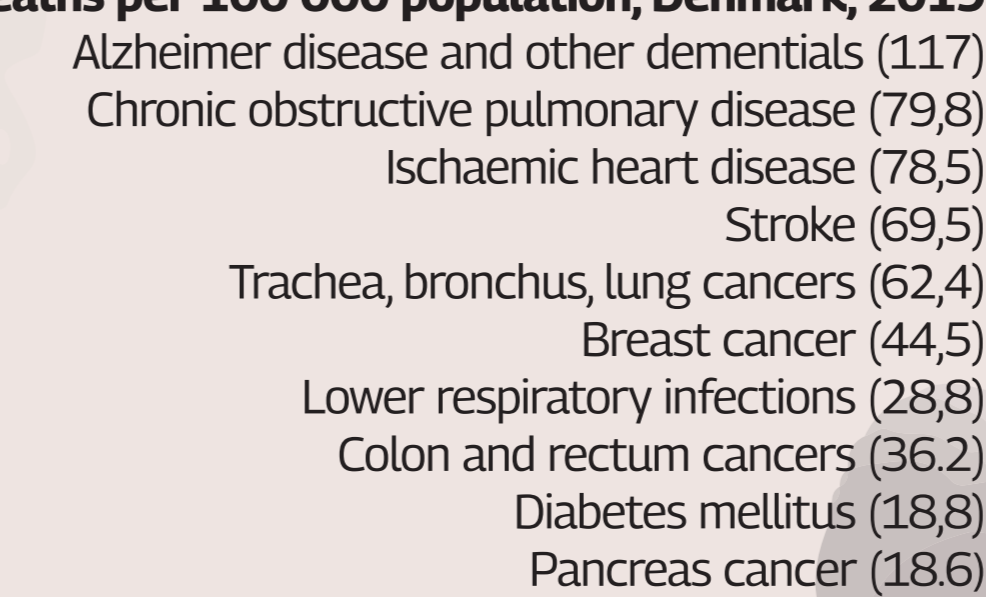
**Results:** Denmark is a Scandinavian country at the north of Europe with 5.9 million people. The Danish healthcare system is primarily overseen by the central government. Life expectancy in 2020 was said to be 81.6 years, women lived approximately 83.6 years and men 79.6 years. In 2019 Danes consumed on average 9.5 litres of alcohol per person aged 15 and over – more than their Nordic peers (6.1–8.2 litres) but less than the EU average (9.9 litres). The main causes of death include Alzheimer’s and COPD for females and ischemic heart disease and COPD for males. There has been a decrease in maternal mortality in Denmark from 1985–2017. Fertility rate is 1.55 children per woman.

Liberia is a country on the coast of West Africa, with 5.5 million people. It is the only Black state in Africa that was never under colonial rule. Between 1989–2003 Liberia suffered through a civil war, as a result the standard of living was greatly affected. The current health system in Liberia is composed of a centralised system, public and private sectors, but Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and international organisations play a crucial role in supplementing healthcare services, especially in rural areas.

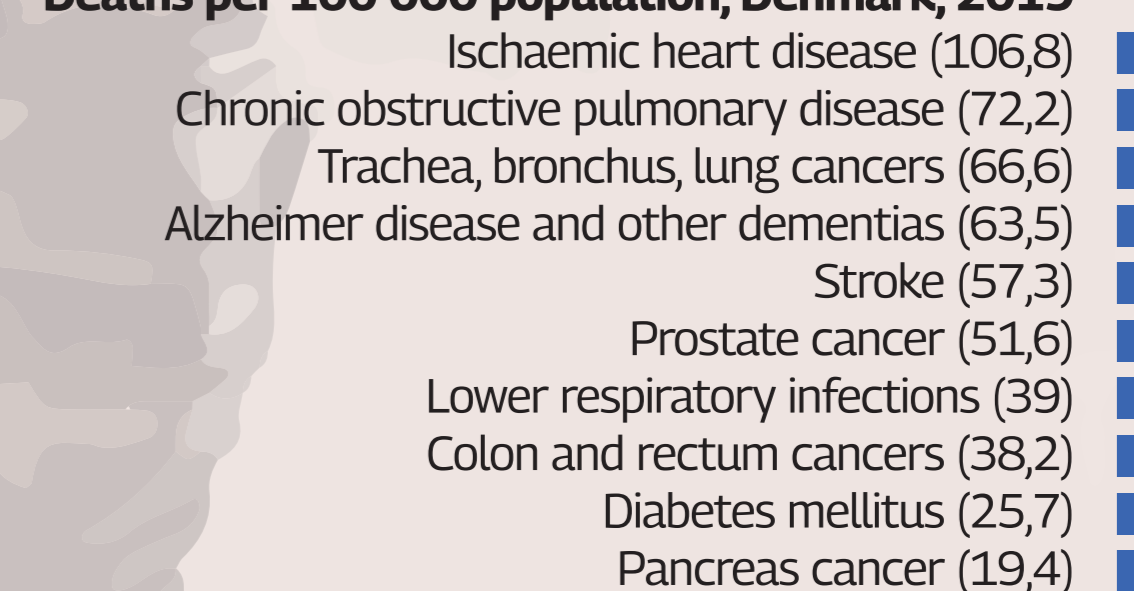
Life expectancy at birth from 2011–2021 has increased for both men and women. In 2011, Life expectancy at birth for women was 60.8 while for men it was 58.37. In 2021, for women is value was 62.07 and men 59.41. Liberia’s maternal mortality rates are amongst the highest in the world at 1,072 deaths per 100,000 live births. This has continued to increase since 2000. The Major cause of death in Liberia are Neonatal conditions, measles, TB, HIV. Fertility rate is 4.09 children per woman.

**Conclusion:** The reasons for these differences are due to the structure of the healthcare system which affects both maternal and neonatal mortality which are the main differences between Denmark and Liberia. Denmark is a prosperous country free of war and infectious diseases. Good quality healthcare is provided from neonates to the elderly. they have the best healthcare policies which reflect in their neonatal mortality and maternal mortality rates. The main causes of death here are a result of dementia and alcoholism. Which have nothing to do with the health care systems but on the individuals directly. Liberia on the other hand is a country with unstable economy, inadequate healthcare, and a long history of war. The state of the country has left its citizens without adequate healthcare, education, and basic life amenities as a result we see low life expectancies and significantly high mortality and neonatal rates. Main causes of death here include neonatal deaths, measles, TB, and HIV.

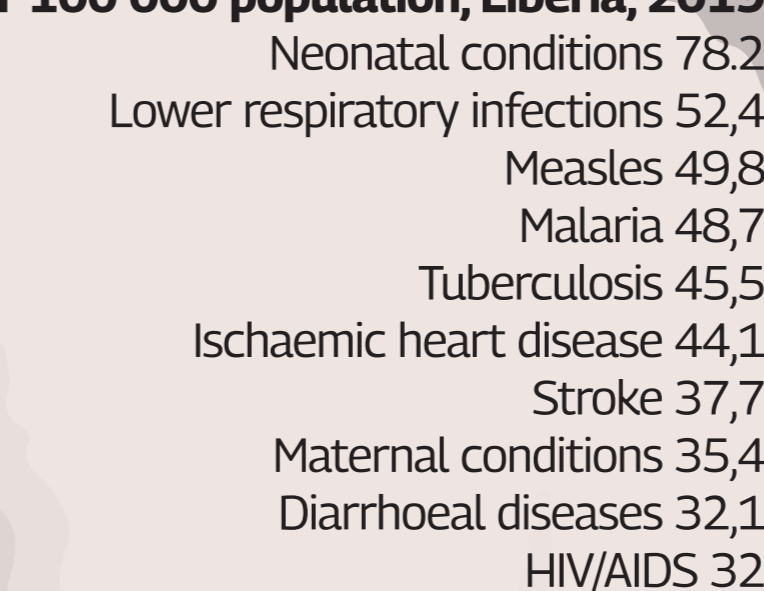
### Top causes of death for females Deaths per 100 000 population, Denmark, 2019



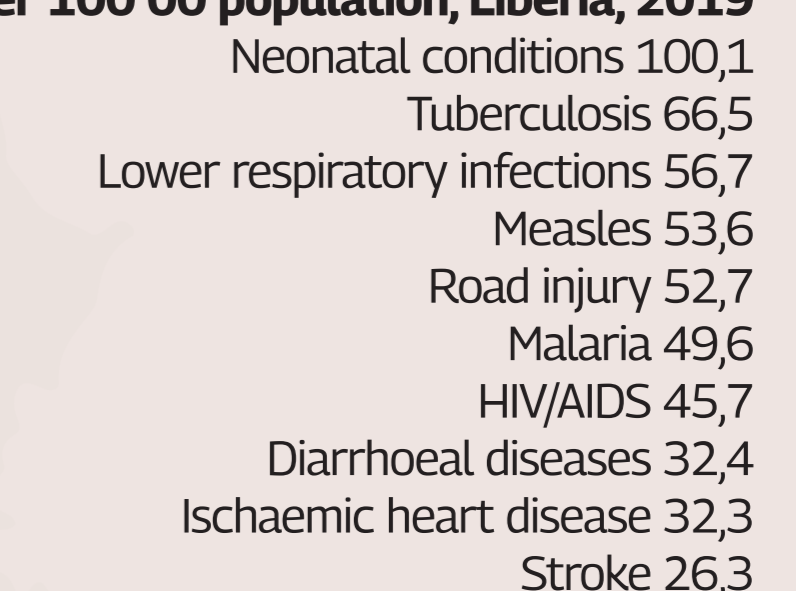
### Top causes of death for males Deaths per 100 000 population, Denmark, 2019



### Top causes of death for females Deaths per 100 000 population, Liberia, 2019

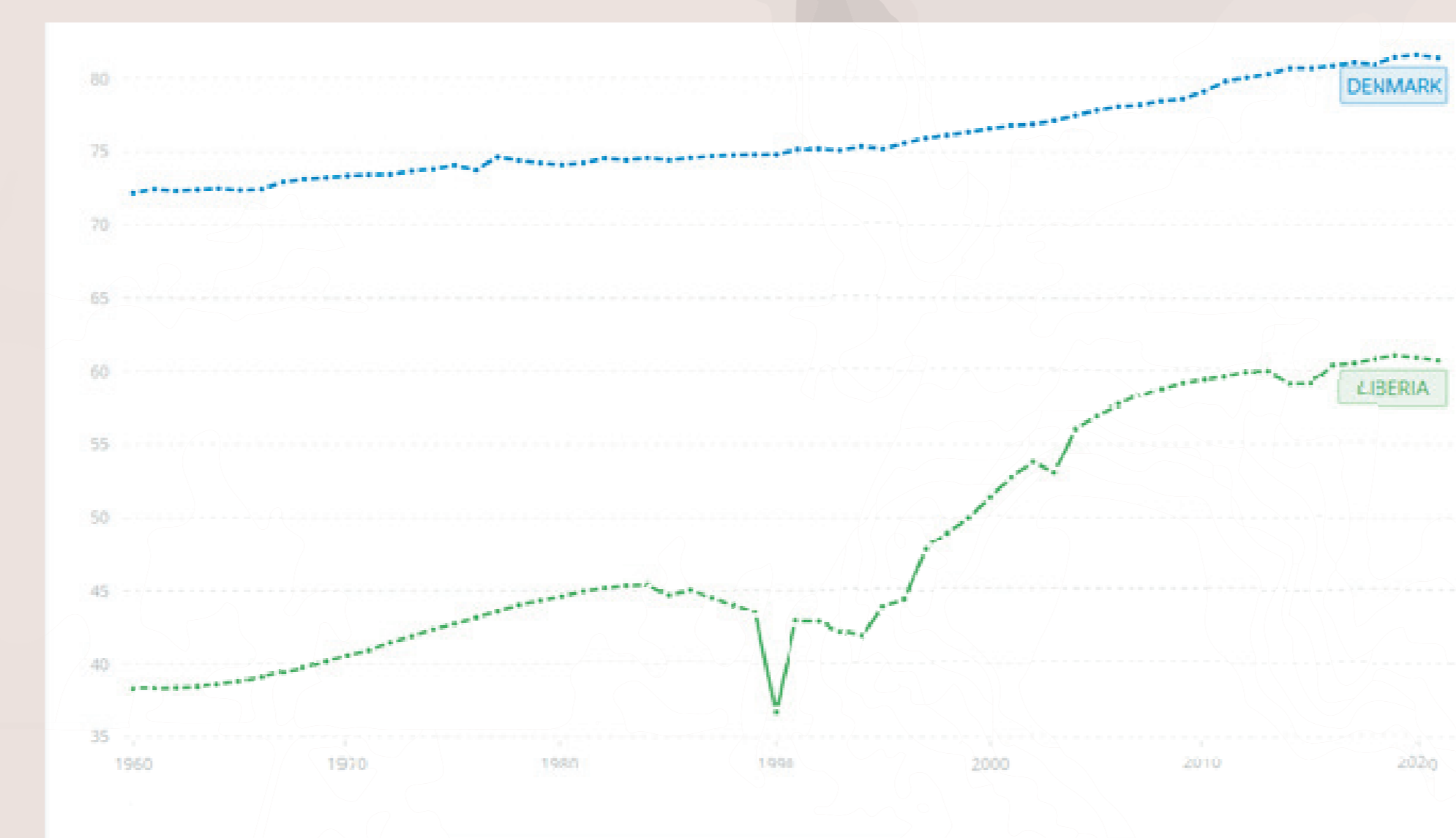


### Top causes of death for males Deaths per 100 000 population, Liberia, 2019



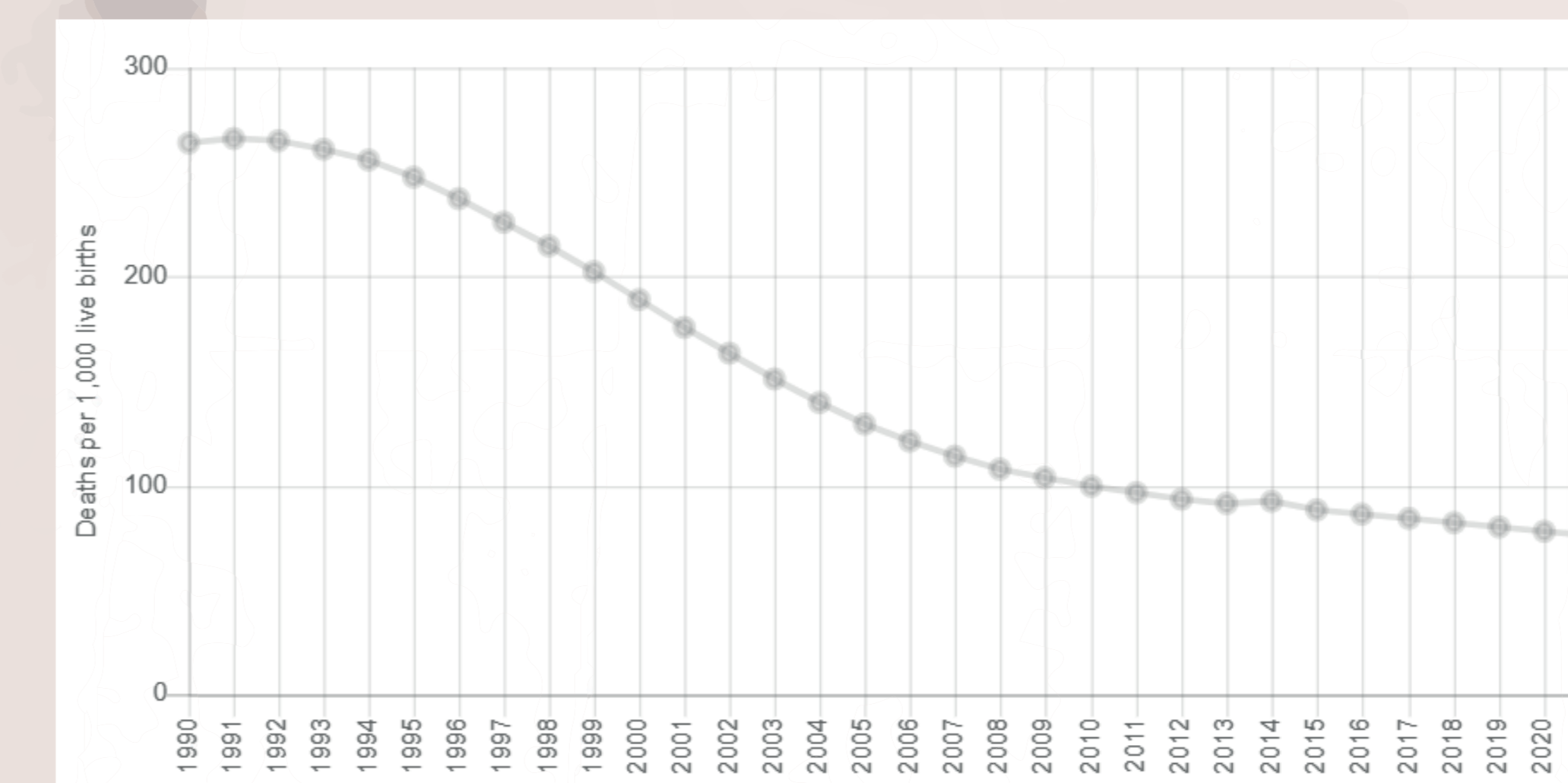
Bar chart demonstrating the top causes of death for Females and Males. The main three causes of death for women are Alzheimer/dementia, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and ischemic heart disease. The main three causes of death for men are Ischemic heart disease, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and Trachea, bronchus, lung cancers (Alzheimer's/Dementia) is the fourth most common cause. In Liberia there is a different and difficult situation. The main cause of death in both genders are Neonatal conditions. The other main causes of death in males are tuberculosis and lower respiratory infections. While in females, they are lower respiratory infections. Both have problems with measles and malaria.

<https://data.who.int/countries/208>



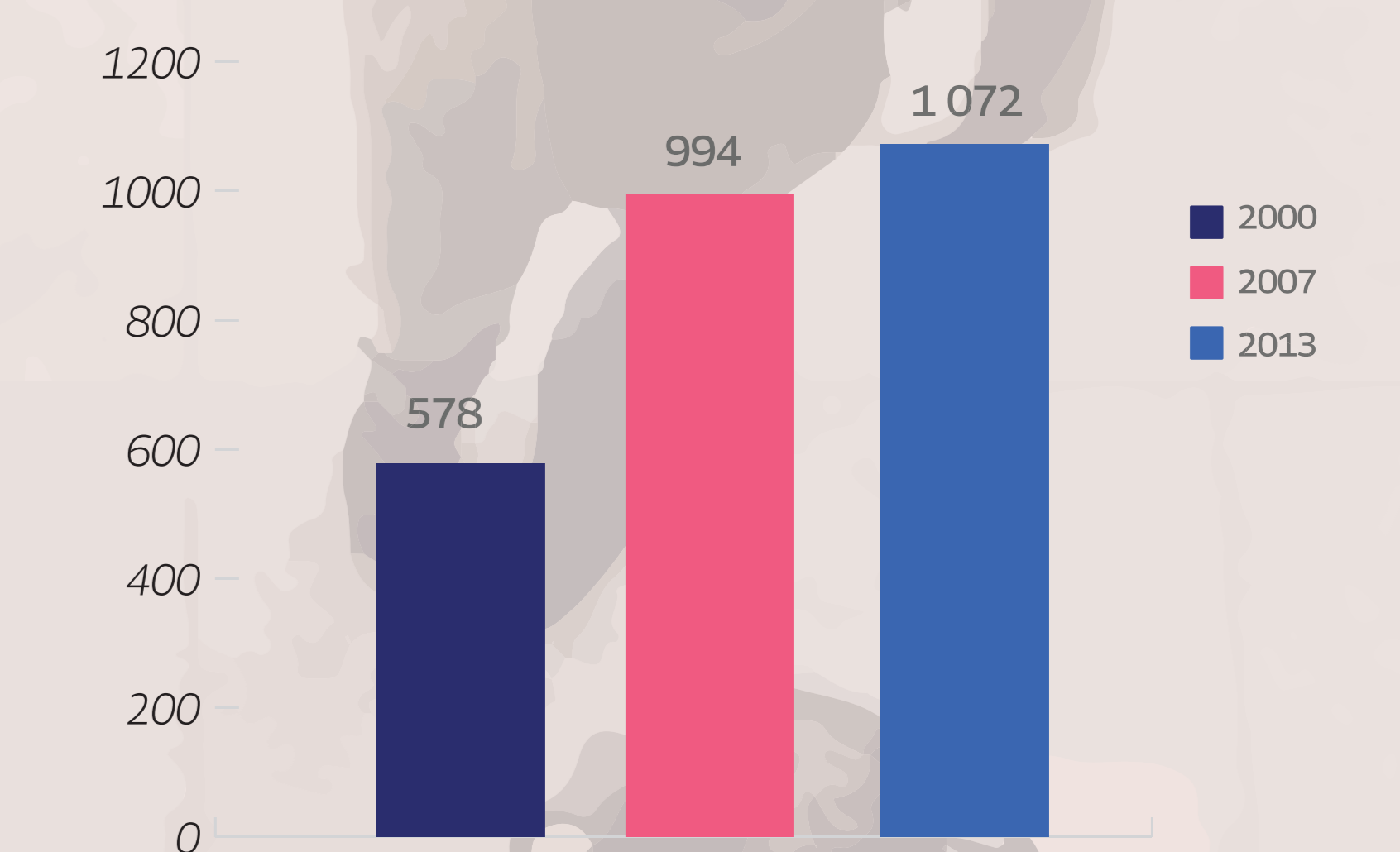
Graph demonstrating the Life expectancy in Liberia vs Denmark from 1960–2020.

[www.data.worldbank.com](http://www.data.worldbank.com)



Graph demonstrating the trend of under-five mortality rate in Liberia. It shows that from 1990–2021 there has been a steady decline.

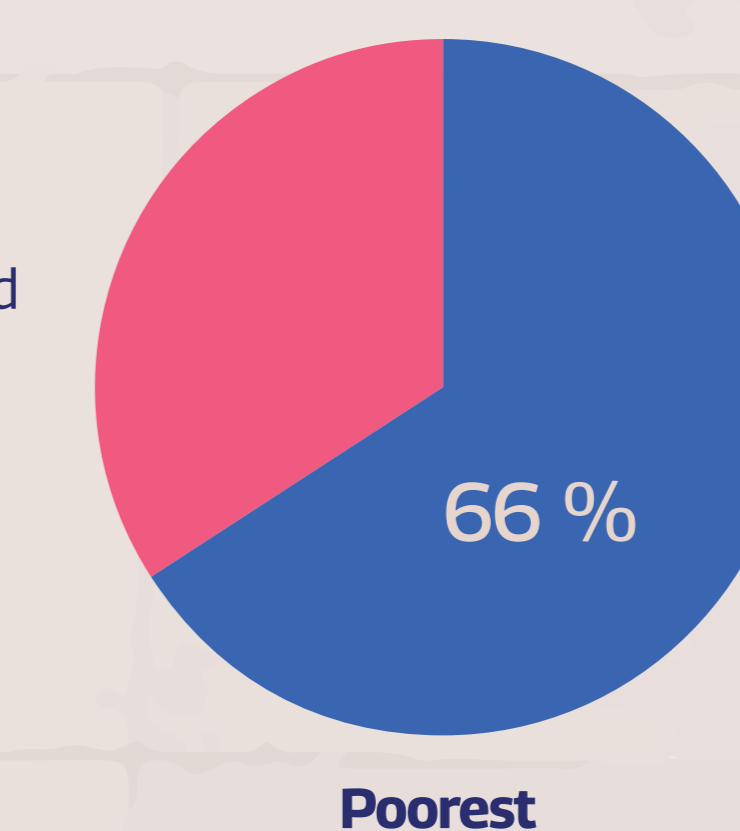
<https://data.unicef.org/country/lbr>



Graph demonstrating trends of Maternal mortality-deaths per 1,000 live births

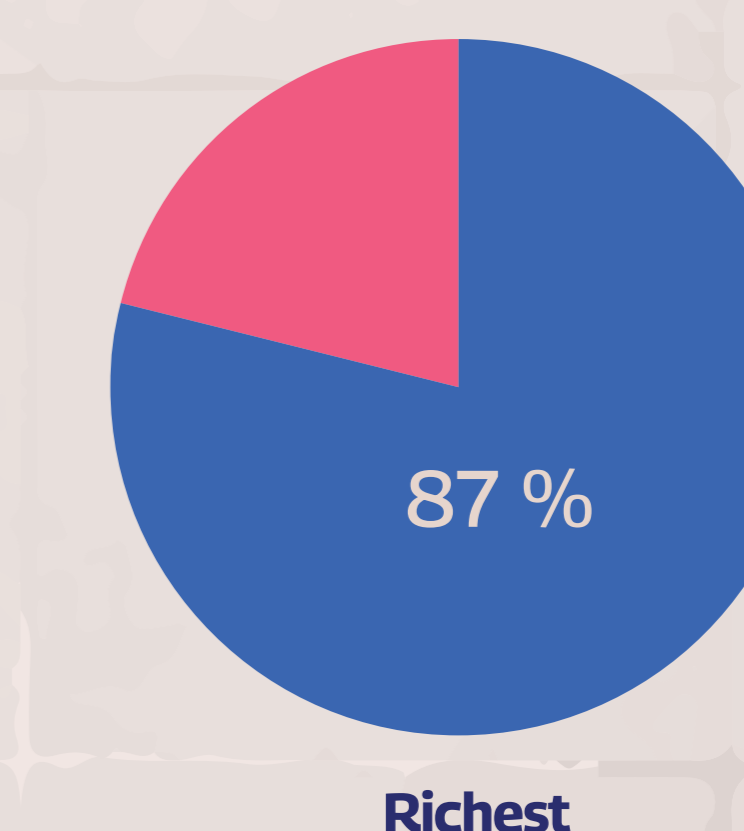
<https://platform.who.int>

Only **66%** of mothers in the poorest household have **4 antenatal care visit** compared to...



Poorest

**87%** of mothers in the richest households.



Richest

Maternal and Newborn Health  
Disparities Liberia - WHO

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- 2 OECD/European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (2021). Denmark: Country Health Profile 2021, State of Health in the EU, OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/2dce8636-en>.
- 3 OECD/European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (2021). Denmark: Country Health Profile 2021, State of Health in the EU. OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/2dce8636-en>.
- 4 Jones, A.B. (2019). Liberia | History, Map, Flag, Population, & Facts. In: Encyclopaedia Britannica. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Liberia>.
- 5 Statista. (2024). Liberia: Life expectancy at birth from 2011 to 2021, by gender. [online] Available at: [#:-text=Comparing%20the%20wo%20different%20gender](https://www.statista.com/statistics/970863/life-expectancy-at-birth-in-liberia-by-gender/?fbclid=IwAR2Fardwq7WfUjUdufv2jzWVWd-xQtjuaSKDktsa91GurYeuZnOOLKQ)
- 6 REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA INVESTMENT CASE. (n.d.). Available at: <https://platform.who.int/docs/default-source/mca-documents/poicy-documents/plan-strategy/lbr-cc-10-01-plan-strategy-2016-eng-mncah-investment-case-2016-2020.pdf>