

# Lesotho

## Information for applicants

### Lesotho

The Kingdom of Lesotho covers an area of around 30,000 km<sup>2</sup>, making it just slightly larger than the German federal state of Brandenburg. This mountainous country is located in Southern Africa. An enclave, it is surrounded on all sides by the Republic of South Africa without any access to the sea.

### Climate and sights

Lesotho's climate ranges from alpine to a temperate continental climate. In winter – from June to August – it can snow in the mountains and temperatures can drop to below -15°C overnight. In the summer months, temperatures can reach above 30°C. Most rain falls in summer (October to April), whereas the winter is dry.

Lesotho is criss-crossed with rivers and mountains, including Thabana Ntlenyana mountain whose peak commands a height of 3,482 metres. On the Thaba Bosiu Plateau, close to the capital of Maseru, lie the 19th century ruins established by King Moshoeshoe 1st. From Thaba Bosiu, the view extends to the striking rock pinnacle Mount Qiloane, which is an important symbol for the indigenous Basotho people.

Popular leisure activities include hiking, riding and mountain biking.

### Medical care

Medical care is accessible in Maseru but many foreigners prefer to go to South Africa, e.g. to private practices or hospitals in Ladybrand or Bloemfontein, which offer European standards.

### Accommodation and quality of life

Houses and apartments have virtually no insulation, which means that rooms have to be heated constantly in winter. As a rule, modern homes have a fireplace in the living room. In addition, mobile heating appliances, like gas heaters, are often used. A gas heater can easily heat up a larger-sized room, but a slight smell of gas is unavoidable.

The housing market for foreigners in Maseru is very limited, but spacious houses can be rented for around EUR 1,000 to 1,200.

### Shopping and services

Maseru has a good supply situation. The shopping centres and supermarkets there sell all staple foods and other daily commodities. Most of the food products come from neighbouring South Africa and are sold by South African supermarket chains at roughly the same price. Furthermore, there are many individual – often Chinese-run – shops in the cities.

Lesotho's currency is the loti (plural: maloti). There is a currency union with South Africa (Common Monetary Area – CMA). The rand to loti exchange rate is 1:1. It is possible to pay with the South African rand everywhere in Lesotho.

Cash can easily be withdrawn from an ATM in Maseru using an EC card or credit card. Many businesses and restaurants in Maseru also accept most major credit cards. With its 19 branch offices and over 80 ATMs, the Standard Bank Lesotho is the most prevalent.

## Accompanying partners and children

**Schools:** There are three international educational establishments in Maseru. Maseru Prep School is for children aged three to eleven. Machabeng College is for secondary level. While these two schools follow British curricula, the American International School of Lesotho (AISL) is based on the US American school system. AISL is considered the best school, but it only goes up to grade 6, which means that families with teenage children have a more limited choice.

**Childcare:** As in all African countries, families are very important in Lesotho. This is a particularly ideal situation for families with small children, as child-care and supervision are available round the clock.

The proximity to South Africa and the healthcare services there make for adequate medical security, also to European standards.

Everything required for babies and small children can be bought in Maseru.

## Find out more

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/lesotho-node>

<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/344.html>

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