

# Equatorial Guinea

## Geography

Location: Western Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Cameroon and Gabon

Area:

total area: 28,050 sq km

land area: 28,050 sq km

Land boundaries: total 539 km, Cameroon 189 km, Gabon 350 km

Coastline: 296 km

Maritime claims:

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: tropical; always hot, humid

Terrain: coastal plains rise to interior hills; islands are volcanic

Natural resources: timber, petroleum, small unexploited deposits of gold, manganese, uranium

Land use:

arable land: 8%

permanent crops: 4%

meadows and pastures: 4%

forest and woodland: 51%

other: 33%

Irrigated land: NA sq km

Environment:

current issues: tap water is not potable; desertification

natural hazards: violent windstorms

Note: insular and continental regions rather widely separated

## People

Population: 420,293 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 43% (female 90,404; male 90,997)

15-64 years: 53% (female 117,124; male 105,724)

65 years and over: 4% (female 8,969; male 7,075) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 2.59% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 40.22 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 14.36 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: 0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 100.2 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 52.56 years

male: 50.39 years

female: 54.79 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 5.23 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Equatorial Guinean(s) or Equatoguinean(s)

adjective: Equatorial Guinean or Equatoguinean

Ethnic divisions: Bioko (primarily Bubi, some Fernandinos), Rio Muni (primarily Fang), Europeans less than 1,000, mostly Spanish

Religions: nominally Christian and predominantly Roman Catholic, pagan practices

Languages: Spanish (official), pidgin English, Fang, Bubi, Ibo

Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1983)

total population: 62%

male: 77%

female: 48%

## Government

Names:

conventional long form: Republic of Equatorial Guinea

conventional short form: Equatorial Guinea

local long form: Republica de Guinea Ecuatorial

local short form: Guinea Ecuatorial

former: Spanish Guinea

Type: republic in transition to multiparty democracy

Capital: Malabo

Independence: 12 October 1968 (from Spain)

National holiday: Independence Day, 12 October (1968)

Constitution: new constitution 17 November 1991

Legal system: partly based on Spanish civil law and tribal custom

Suffrage: universal adult at age NA

Flag: three equal horizontal bands of green (top), white, and red with a blue isosceles triangle based on the hoist side and the coat of arms centered in the white band; the coat of arms has six yellow six-pointed stars (representing the mainland and five offshore islands) above a gray shield bearing a silk-cotton tree and below which is a scroll with the motto UNIDAD, PAZ, JUSTICIA (Unity, Peace, Justice)

# Economy

Overview: Agriculture, forestry, and fishing account for about half of GDP and nearly all exports. Subsistence farming predominates. Although pre-independence Equatorial Guinea counted on cocoa production for hard currency earnings, the deterioration of the rural economy under successive brutal regimes has diminished potential for agriculture-led growth. A number of aid programs sponsored by the World Bank and the international donor community have failed to revitalize export agriculture. Businesses for the most part are owned by government officials and their family members. Commerce accounts for about 8% of GDP and the construction, public works, and service sectors for about 38%. Undeveloped natural resources include titanium, iron ore, manganese, uranium, and alluvial gold. Oil exploration, taking place under concessions offered to US, French, and Spanish firms, has been moderately successful.

Industries: fishing, sawmilling

Agriculture: accounts for almost 50% of GDP, cash crops - timber and coffee from Rio Muni, cocoa from Bioko; food crops - rice, yams, cassava, bananas, oil palm nuts, manioc, livestock

## Transportation

Railroads:  
total: 0 km

Highways:  
total: 2,760 km (2,460 km on Rio Muni and 300 km on Bioko)

Ports: Bata, Luba, Malabo

Airports:  
total: 3

## Defence Forces

Branches: Army, Navy, Air Force, Rapid Intervention Force, National Police