

# Guinea

## Geography

Location: Western Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone

Area:

total area: 245,860 sq km

land area: 245,860 sq km

Land boundaries: total 3,399 km, Guinea-Bissau 386 km, Cote d'Ivoire 610 km, Liberia 563 km, Mali 858 km, Senegal 330 km, Sierra Leone 652 km

Coastline: 320 km

Maritime claims:

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: generally hot and humid; monsoonal-type rainy season (June to November) with southwesterly winds; dry season (December to May) with northeasterly harmattan winds

Terrain: generally flat coastal plain, hilly to mountainous interior

Natural resources: bauxite, iron ore, diamonds, gold, uranium, hydropower, fish

Land use:

arable land: 6%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 12%

forest and woodland: 42%

other: 40%

Irrigated land: 240 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: deforestation; inadequate supplies of potable water; desertification; soil contamination and erosion; overfishing

natural hazards: hot, dry, dusty harmattan haze may reduce visibility during dry season

# People

Population: 6,549,336 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 44% (female 1,450,501; male 1,448,164)

15-64 years: 53% (female 1,784,420; male 1,691,502)

65 years and over: 3% (female 102,735; male 72,014) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 2.43% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 43.43 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 19.13 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 136.6 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 44.6 years

male: 42.31 years  
female: 46.95 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 5.79 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:  
noun: Guinean(s)  
adjective: Guinean

Ethnic divisions: Peuhl 40%, Malinke 30%, Soussou 20%, smaller tribes 10%

Religions: Muslim 85%, Christian 8%, indigenous beliefs 7%

Languages: French (official); each tribe has its own language

Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1990 est.)  
total population: 24%  
male: 35%  
female: 13%

## Government

Names:

conventional long form: Republic of Guinea

conventional short form: Guinea

local long form: Republique de Guinee

local short form: Guinee

former: French Guinea

Capital: Conakry

Independence: 2 October 1958 (from France)

National holiday: Anniversary of the Second Republic, 3 April  
(1984)

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Flag: three equal vertical bands of red (hoist side), yellow, and green; uses the popular pan-African colors of Ethiopia; similar to the flag of Rwanda, which has a large black letter R centered in the yellow band

# Economy

Overview: Although possessing major mineral and hydropower resources and considerable potential for agricultural development, Guinea remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Long-run improvements in literacy, financial institutions, and the legal framework are needed if the country is to move out of poverty. Except in the bauxite industry, foreign investment remains minimal.

Industries: mining - bauxite, gold, diamonds; alumina refining; light manufacturing and agricultural processing industries

Agriculture: accounts for 40% of GDP (includes fishing and forestry); mostly subsistence farming; principal products - rice, coffee, pineapples, palm kernels, cassava, bananas, sweet potatoes, timber; livestock - cattle, sheep and goats; not self-sufficient in food grains

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 1,048 km

Highways:

total: 30,100 km

Inland waterways: 1,295 km navigable by shallow-draft native craft

Ports: Boke, Conakry, Kamsar

Airports:

total: 15

Defence Forces

Branches: Army, Navy (acts primarily as a coast guard), Air Force, Republican Guard, Presidential Guard, paramilitary National Gendarmerie, National Police Force (Surete National)