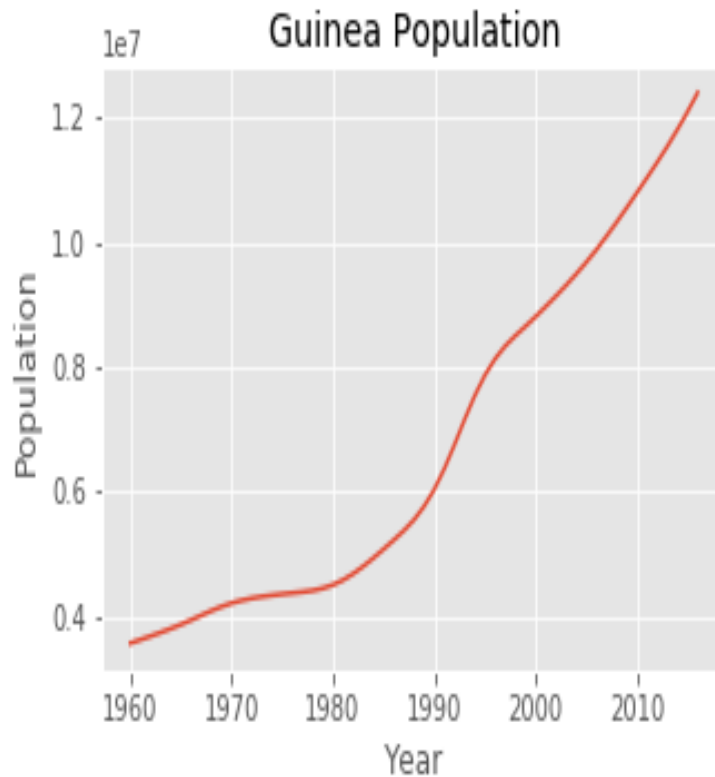


# Guinea



Guinea ( [listen](#))), officially the Republic of Guinea (French: République de Guinée), is a country on the western coast of Africa. Formerly known as French Guinea (French: Guinée française), the modern country is sometimes referred to as Guinea-Conakry in order to distinguish it from other countries with "Guinea" in the name and the eponymous region, such as Guinea-Bissau and Equatorial Guinea. Guinea has a population of 12.4 million and an area of 245,860 square kilometres (94,927 sq mi). Guinea is a republic. The president is directly elected by the people and is head of state and head of government. The unicameral Guinean National Assembly is the legislative body of the country, and its members are also directly elected by the people. The judicial branch is led by the Guinea Supreme Court, the highest and final court of appeal in the country. The country is named after the Guinea region. Guinea is a traditional name for the region of Africa that lies along the Gulf of Guinea. It stretches north through the forested tropical regions and ends at the Sahel. The English term Guinea comes directly from the Portuguese word Guiné, which emerged in the mid-15th century to refer to the lands inhabited by the Guineus, a generic term for the black African peoples below the Senegal River, as opposed to the 'tawny' Zenaga Berbers, above it, whom they called Azenegues or Moors. Guinea is a predominantly Islamic country, with Muslims representing 85 percent of the population. Guinea's people belong to twenty-four ethnic groups. French, the official language of Guinea, is the main language of communication in schools, in government administration, and the media, but more than twenty-four indigenous languages are also spoken. Guinea's economy is largely dependent on agriculture and mineral production. It is the world's second largest producer of bauxite, and has rich deposits of diamonds and gold. The country was at the core of the 2014 Ebola outbreak. Human rights in Guinea remain a controversial issue. In 2011 the United States government claimed that torture by security forces, and abuse of women and children (e.g. female genital mutilation) were ongoing abuses of human rights. == History == The land that is now Guinea belonged to a series of African empires until France colonized it in the 1890s, and made it part of French West Africa. Guinea declared its independence from France on 2 October 1958. From independence until the presidential election of

2010, Guinea was governed by a number of autocratic rulers. For the origin of the name "Guinea" see Guinea (region) § Etymology. === West African empires and Kingdoms in Guinea === What is now Guinea was on the fringes of the major West African empires. The Ghana Empire is believed to have been the earliest of these which grew on trade but contracted and ultimately fell due to the hostile influence of the Almoravids. It was in this period that Islam first arrived in the region. The Sosso kingdom (12th to 13th centuries) briefly flourished in the resulting void but the Islamic Manding Mali Empire came to prominence when Soundiata Kéïta defeated the Sosso ruler Soumangourou Kanté at the semi-historical Battle of Kirina in c. 1235. The Mali Empire was ruled by Mansa (Emperors), the most famous being Kankou Moussa, who made a famous hajj to Mecca in 1324. Shortly after his reign the Mali Empire began to decline and was ultimately supplanted by its vassal states in the 15th century. The most successful of these was the Songhai Empire, which expanded its power from about 1460 and eventually surpassed the Mali Empire in both territory and wealth. It continued to prosper until a civil war over succession followed the death of Askia Daoud in 1582. The weakened empire fell to invaders from Morocco at the Battle of Tondibi just three years later. The Moroccans proved unable to rule the kingdom effectively, however, and it split into many small kingdoms. After the fall of the major West African empires, various kingdoms existed in what is now Guinea. Fulani Muslims migrated to Futa Jallon in Central Guinea and established an Islamic state from 1735 to 1898 with a written constitution and alternate rulers. The Wassoulou or Wassulu empire was a short-lived (1878–1898) empire, led by Samori Touré in the predominantly Malinké area of what is now upper Guinea and southwestern Mali (Wassoulou). It moved to Ivory Coast before being conquered by the French. === Colonial era === The slave trade came to the coastal region of Guinea with European traders in the 16th century. Slaves were exported to work elsewhere in the triangular trade. Guinea's colonial period began with French military penetration into the area in the mid-19th century. French domination was assured by the defeat in 1898 of the armies of Samori Touré, Mansa (or Emperor) of the Ouassoulou state and leader of Malinké descent, which gave France control of what today is Guinea and adjacent areas. France negotiated Guinea's present boundaries in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with the British for Sierra Leone, the Portuguese for their Guinea colony (now Guinea-Bissau), and Liberia. Under the French, the country formed the Territory of Guinea within French West Africa, administered by a governor general resident in Dakar. Lieutenant governors administered the individual colonies, including Guinea. === Independence and post-colonial rule (1958–2008) === In 1958, the French Fourth Republic collapsed due to political instability and its failures in dealing with its colonies, especially Indochina and Algeria. The founding of a Fifth Republic was supported by the French people, while French President Charles de Gaulle made it clear on 8 August 1958 that France's colonies were to be given a stark choice between more autonomy in a new French Community or immediate independence in the referendum to be held on 28 September 1958. The other colonies chose the former but Guinea — under the leadership of Ahmed Sékou Touré whose Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG) had won 56 of 60 seats in 1957 territorial elections — voted overwhelmingly for independence. The French withdrew quickly, and on 2 October 1958, Guinea proclaimed itself a sovereign and independent republic, with Sékou Touré as president. France's withdrawal resulted in punitive economic reprisals, including the end of all French aid and investment. Guinea subsequently quickly aligned itself with the Soviet Union and adopted socialist policies. This alliance was short-lived, however, as Guinea moved towards a Chinese model of socialism. Despite this, however, the country continued to receive aid and investment from capitalist countries such as the United States. By 1960, Touré had declared the PDG the country's only legal political party and for the next 24 years, the government and the PDG were one. Touré was reelected unopposed to four seven-year terms as president, and every five years voters were presented with a single list of PDG candidates for the National Assembly. Advocating a hybrid African Socialism domestically and Pan-Africanism abroad, Touré quickly became a polarising leader, and his government became intolerant of dissent, imprisoning thousands and stifling the press. Throughout the 1960s the Guinean government nationalised land, removed French-appointed and traditional chiefs from power, and had strained ties with the French government and French companies. Touré's government relied on the Soviet Union and China for infrastructure aid and development but much of this was used for political and not economic purposes (such as the building of large stadiums to hold political rallies). Meanwhile, the country's roads, railways and other infrastructure languished and the economy stagnated. On 22 November 1970, Portuguese forces from neighboring Portuguese Guinea staged Operation Green Sea, a raid on Conakry by several hundred exiled Guinean opposition forces. Among their goals, the Portuguese military wanted to kill or capture Sekou Toure due his support of the PAIGC, an

independence movement and rebel group that carried out attacks inside Portuguese Guinea from their bases in Guinea. After fierce fighting, the Portuguese-backed forces retreated, having freed several dozen Portuguese prisoners of war that were being held by the PAIGC in Conakry but without having ousted Touré. In the years after the raid, massive purges were carried out by the Touré government and at least 50,000 people (1% of Guinea's entire population) was killed. Countless others were imprisoned, faced torture, or, often in the case of foreigners, were forced to leave the country (sometimes after having had their Guinean spouse arrested and their children placed into state custody). A declining economy, mass killings, a stifling political atmosphere, and a ban on all private economic transactions led in 1977 to the "Market Women's Revolt," anti-government riots that were started by women working in Conakry's Madina Market. This caused Touré to make major reforms. Touré vacillated from supporting the Soviet Union to supporting the United States. The late 1970s and early 1980s saw some economic reforms but Touré's centralized control of the state remained. Even the relationship with France improved; after the election of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing as French president, trade increased and the two countries exchanged diplomatic visits. Sékou Touré died on 26 March 1984 after a heart operation in the United States, and was replaced by Prime Minister Louis Lansana Beavogui, who was to serve as interim president pending new elections. The PDG was due to elect a new leader on 3 April 1984. Under the constitution, that person would have been the only candidate for president. However, hours before that meeting, Colonels Lansana Conté and Diarra Traoré seized power in a bloodless coup. Conté assumed the role of president, with Traoré serving as prime minister until December. Conté immediately denounced the previous regime's record on human rights, released 250 political prisoners and encouraged approximately 200,000 more to return from exile. He also made explicit the turn away from socialism, but this did little to alleviate poverty and the country showed no immediate signs of moving towards democracy. In 1992, Conté announced a return to civilian rule, with a presidential poll in 1993 followed by elections to parliament in 1995 (in which his party – the Party of Unity and Progress – won 71 of 114 seats.) Despite his stated commitment to democracy, Conté's grip on power remained tight. In September 2001, the opposition leader Alpha Condé was imprisoned for endangering state security, though he was pardoned 8 months later. He subsequently spent a period of exile in France. In 2001, Conté organized and won a referendum to lengthen the presidential term and in 2003 begun his third term after elections were boycotted by the opposition. In January 2005, Conté survived a suspected assassination attempt while making a rare public appearance in the capital Conakry. His opponents claimed that he was a "tired dictator" whose departure was inevitable, whereas his supporters believed that he was winning a battle with dissidents. Guinea still faces very real problems and according to Foreign Policy is in danger of becoming a failed state. In 2000, Guinea became embroiled in the instability which had long blighted the rest of West Africa as rebels crossed the borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone and it seemed for a time that the country was headed for civil war. Conté blamed neighbouring leaders for coveting Guinea's natural resources, though these claims were strenuously denied. In 2003, Guinea agreed to plans with her neighbours to tackle the insurgents. In 2007, there were big protests against the government, resulting in the appointment of a new prime minister. === Recent history === Conté remained in power until his death on 23 December 2008 and several hours following his death, Moussa Dadis Camara seized control in a coup, declaring himself head of a military junta. Protests against the coup became violent and 157 people were killed when, on 28 September 2009, the junta ordered its soldiers to attack people who had gathered to protest against Camara's attempt to become president. The soldiers went on a rampage of rape, mutilation, and murder which caused many foreign governments to withdraw their support for the new regime. On 3 December 2009, an aide shot Camara during a dispute over the rampage in September. Camara went to Morocco for medical care. Vice-President (and defense minister) Sékouba Konaté flew back from Lebanon to run the country in Camara's absence. After meeting in Ouagadougou on 13 and 14 January 2010, Camara, Konaté and Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso, produced a formal statement of twelve principles promising a return of Guinea to civilian rule within six months. The presidential election was held on 27 June, with a second election held on 7 November due to allegations of electoral fraud. Voter turnout was high, and the elections went relatively smoothly. Alpha Condé, leader of the opposition party Rally of the Guinean People (RGP), won the election promising to reform the security sector and review mining contracts. In late February 2013, political violence erupted in Guinea after protesters took to the streets to voice their concerns over the transparency of the upcoming May 2013 elections. The demonstrations were fueled by the opposition coalition's decision to step down from the electoral process in protest at the lack of transparency in the preparations for elections. Nine people were killed during the protests, and around

220 were injured. Many of the deaths and injuries were caused by security forces using live ammunition on protesters. The political violence also led to inter-ethnic clashes between the Fula and Malinke, the base of support for President Condé. The former mainly supported the opposition. On 26 March 2013, the opposition party backed out of the negotiations with the government over the upcoming 12 May election. The opposition said that the government had not respected them, and had not kept any promises they agreed to. On 25 March 2014, the World Health Organization said that Guinea's Ministry of Health had reported an outbreak of Ebola virus disease in Guinea. This initial outbreak had a total of 86 cases, including 59 deaths. By 28 May, there were 281 cases, with 186 deaths. It is believed that the first case was Emile Ouamouno, a 2-year-old boy who lived in the village of Meliandou. He fell ill on 2 December 2013 and died on 6 December. On 18 September 2014, eight members of an Ebola education health care team were murdered by villagers in the town of Womey. As of 1 November 2015, there have been 3,810 cases and 2,536 deaths in Guinea.

== Government and politics ==

The country is a republic. The president is directly elected by the people and is head of state and head of government. The unicameral National Assembly is the legislative body of the country, and its members are directly elected by the people. The judicial branch is led by the Guinea Supreme Court, the highest and final court of appeal in the country. Guinea is a member of many international organizations including the African Union, Agency for the French-Speaking Community, African Development Bank, Economic Community of West African States, World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, IMF, and the United Nations.

=== Political culture ===

President Alpha Conde derives support from Guinea's second-largest ethnic group, the Malinke. Guinea's opposition is backed by the Fula ethnic group, also known as Peul, who account for around 40 percent of the population.

=== Executive branch ===

The president of Guinea is normally elected by popular vote for a five-year term; the winning candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast to be elected president. The president governs Guinea, assisted by a council of 25 civilian ministers appointed by him. The government administers the country through eight regions, 33 prefectures, over 100 subprefectures, and many districts (known as communes in Conakry and other large cities and villages or "quartiers" in the interior). District-level leaders are elected; the president appoints officials to all other levels of the highly centralized administration. Since the 2010 presidential elections, the head of state has been Alpha Condé.

=== Legislative branch ===

The National Assembly of Guinea, the country's legislative body, has not met since 2008 when it was dissolved after the military coup in December. Elections have been postponed many times since 2007. In April 2012, President Condé postponed the elections indefinitely, citing the need to ensure that they were "transparent and democratic". The 2013 Guinean legislative election were held on 24 September 2013. President Alpha Condé's party, the Rally of the Guinean People (RPG), won a plurality of seats in the National Assembly of Guinea, with 53 out of 114 seats. The opposition parties won a total of 53 seats, and opposition leaders denounced the official results as fraudulent.

=== Foreign relations ===

Guinea's foreign relations, including those with its West African neighbors, have improved steadily since 1985.

=== Military ===

Guinea's armed forces are divided into five branches – army, navy, air force, the paramilitary National Gendarmerie and the Republican Guard – whose chiefs report to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who is subordinate to the Minister of Defense. In addition, regime security forces include the National Police Force (Sûreté National). The Gendarmerie, responsible for internal security, has a strength of several thousand. The army, with about 15,000 personnel, is by far the largest branch of the armed forces. It is mainly responsible for protecting the state borders, the security of administered territories, and defending Guinea's national interests. Air force personnel total about 700. The force's equipment includes several Russian-supplied fighter planes and transports. The navy has about 900 personnel and operates several small patrol craft and barges.

== Geography ==

Guinea shares its northern border with Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, and Mali, and its southern border with Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Ivory Coast. The nation forms a crescent as it curves from its western border on the Atlantic Ocean toward the east and the south. The sources of the Niger River, Gambia River, and Senegal River are all found in the Guinea Highlands. At 245,857 km<sup>2</sup> (94,926 sq mi), Guinea is roughly the size of the United Kingdom. There are 320 km (200 mi) of coastline and a total land border of 3,400 km (2,100 mi). Its neighbours are Ivory Coast (Côte d'Ivoire), Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone. It lies mostly between latitudes 7° and 13°N, and longitudes 7° and 15°W (a small area is west of 15°). Guinea is divided into four main regions: Maritime Guinea, also known as Lower Guinea or the Basse-Côté lowlands, populated mainly by the Susu ethnic group; the cooler, mountainous Fouta Djallon that run roughly north-south through the middle of the country, populated by Fulas, the Sahelian Haute-Guinea to the northeast, populated by Malinké, and the forested jungle regions in the southeast, with several ethnic groups. Guinea's mountains are the source for the Niger,

the Gambia, and Senegal Rivers, as well as the numerous rivers flowing to the sea on the west side of the range in Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast. The highest point in Guinea is Mount Nimba at 1,752 m (5,748 ft). Although the Guinean and Ivorian sides of the Nimba Massif are a UNESCO Strict Nature Reserve, the portion of the so-called Guinean Backbone continues into Liberia, where it has been mined for decades; the damage is quite evident in the Nzérékoré Region at 7°32'17"N 8°29'50"W. === Regions and prefectures === The Republic of Guinea covers 245,857 square kilometres (94,926 sq mi) of West Africa, about 10 degrees north of the equator. Guinea is divided into four natural regions with distinct human, geographic, and climatic characteristics: Maritime Guinea (La Guinée Maritime) covers 18% of the country. Middle Guinea (La Moyenne-Guinée) covers 20% of the country. Upper Guinea (La Haute-Guinée) covers 38% of the country. Forested Guinea (Guinée forestière) covers 23% of the country, and is both forested and mountainous. Guinea is divided into eight administrative regions and subdivided into thirty-three prefectures. Conakry is Guinea's capital, largest city, and economic centre. Nzérékoré, located in the Guinée forestière region in Southern Guinea, is the second largest city. Other major cities in the country with a population above 100,000 include Kankan, Kindia, Labe, Guéckédou, Boke, Mamou and Kissidougou. The capital Conakry with a population of 1,667,864 ranks as a special zone. == Wildlife == The wildlife of Guinea is very diverse due to the wide variety of different habitats. The southern part of the country lies within Guinean Forests of West Africa Biodiversity Hotspot, while the north-east is characterized by dry savanna woodlands. Unfortunately, declining populations of large animals are restricted to uninhabited distant parts of parks and reserves. === Taxonomy === Species found in Guinea include the following: Amphibians : Hemisus guineensis, Phrynobatrachus guineensis Reptiles : Acanthodactylus guineensis, Mochlus guineensis Arachnids: Malloneta guineensis, Dictyna guineensis Insects : Zorotypus guineensis, Euchromia guineensis Birds: Melaniparus guineensis == Economy == === Natural resources === Guinea has abundant natural resources including 25% or more of the world's known bauxite reserves. Guinea also has diamonds, gold, and other metals. The country has great potential for hydroelectric power. Bauxite and alumina are currently the only major exports. Other industries include processing plants for beer, juices, soft drinks and tobacco. Agriculture employs 80% of the nation's labor force. Under French rule, and at the beginning of independence, Guinea was a major exporter of bananas, pineapples, coffee, peanuts, and palm oil. Guinea has considerable potential for growth in agricultural and fishing sectors. Soil, water, and climatic conditions provide opportunities for large-scale irrigated farming and agro industry. === Mining === Guinea possesses over 25 billion tonnes (metric tons) of bauxite – and perhaps up to one-half of the world's reserves. In addition, Guinea's mineral wealth includes more than 4-billion tonnes of high-grade iron ore, significant diamond and gold deposits, and undetermined quantities of uranium. Possibilities for investment and commercial activities exist in all these areas, but Guinea's poorly developed infrastructure and rampant corruption continue to present obstacles to large-scale investment projects. Joint venture bauxite mining and alumina operations in northwest Guinea historically provide about 80% of Guinea's foreign exchange. Bauxite is refined into alumina, which is later smelted into aluminium. The Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinea (CBG), which exports about 14 million tonnes of high-grade bauxite annually, is the main player in the bauxite industry. CBG is a joint venture, 49% owned by the Guinean government and 51% by an international consortium known as Halco Mining Inc., itself a joint venture controlled by aluminium producer Alcoa (AA), global miner Rio Tinto Group and Dadco Investments. CBG has exclusive rights to bauxite reserves and resources in north-western Guinea through 2038. In 2008 protesters upset about poor electrical services blocked the tracks CBG uses. Guinea often includes a proviso in its agreements with international oil companies requiring its partners to generate power for nearby communities. The Compagnie des Bauxites de Kindia (CBK), a joint venture between the government of Guinea and RUSAL, produces some 2.5 million tonnes annually, nearly all of which is exported to Russia and Eastern Europe. Dian Dian, a Guinean/Ukrainian joint bauxite venture, has a projected production rate of 1,000,000 t (1,102,311 short tons; 984,207 long tons) per year, but is not expected to begin operation for several years. The Alumina Compagnie de Guinée (ACG), which took over the former Friguia Consortium, produced about 2.4 million tonnes in 2004 as raw material for its alumina refinery. The refinery exports about 750,000 tonnes of alumina. Both Global Alumina and Alcoa-Alcan have signed conventions with the government of Guinea to build large alumina refineries with a combined capacity of about 4 million tonnes per year. Diamonds and gold also are mined and exported on a large scale. The bulk of diamonds are mined artisanally. The largest gold mining operation in Guinea is a joint venture between the government and Ashanti Goldfields of Ghana. AREDOR, a joint diamond-mining venture between the Guinean Government (50%) and an Australian, British, and Swiss consortium, began production in 1984 and mined diamonds

that were 90% gem quality. Production stopped from 1993 until 1996, when First City Mining of Canada purchased the international portion of the consortium. Société Minière de Dinguiraye (SMD) also has a large gold mining facility in Lero, near the Malian border. === Oil === Guinea signed a production sharing agreement with Hyperdynamics Corporation of Houston in 2006 to explore a large offshore tract, and was recently in partnership with Dana Petroleum PLC (Aberdeen, United Kingdom). The initial well, the Sabu-1, was scheduled to begin drilling in October 2011 at a site in approximately 700 meters of water. The Sabu-1 targeted a four-way anticline prospect with upper Cretaceous sands and was anticipated to be drilled to a total depth of 3,600 meters. Following the completion of exploratory drilling in 2012, the Sabu-1 well was not deemed commercially viable. In November 2012, Hyperdynamics subsidiary SCS reached an agreement for a sale of 40% of the concession to Tullow Oil, bringing ownership shares in the Guinea offshore tract to 37% Hyperdynamics, 40% Tullow Oil, and 23% Dana Petroleum. Hyperdynamics will have until September 2016 under the current agreement to begin drilling its next selected site, the Fatala Cenomanian turbidite fan prospect. === Agriculture === The majority of Guineans work in the agriculture sector, which employs approximately 75% of the country. The rice is cultivated in the flooded zones between streams and rivers. However, the local production of rice is not sufficient to feed the country, so rice is imported from Asia. The agriculture sector of Guinea cultivates coffee beans, pineapples, peaches, nectarines, mangoes, oranges, bananas, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, pepper, and many other types of produce. Guinea is one of the emerging regional producers of apples and pears. There are many plantations of grapes, pomegranates, and recent years have seen the development of strawberry plantations based on the vertical hydroponic system. === Tourism === Due to its diverse geography, Guinea presents some interesting tourist sites. Among the top attractions are the waterfalls found mostly in the Basse Guinée (Lower Guinea) and Moyenne Guinée (Middle Guinea) regions. The Soumba cascade at the foot of Mount Kakoulima in Kindia, Voile de la Mariée (bride's veil) in Dubreka, Kinkon cascades of about 80 m high on the Kokoula river in the prefecture of Pita, the Kambadaga falls on the same river that can reach 100 m high during the raining season, the Ditinn & Mitty waterfalls in Dalaba, Fotoré waterfalls and the stone bridge in the region of Labe are among the well known water-related tourist sites. == Problems and reforms == In 2002, the IMF suspended Guinea's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) because the government failed to meet key performance criteria. In reviews of the PRGF, the World Bank noted that Guinea had met its spending goals in targeted social priority sectors. However, spending in other areas, primarily defense, contributed to a significant fiscal deficit. The loss of IMF funds forced the government to finance its debts through Central Bank advances. The pursuit of unsound economic policies has resulted in imbalances that are proving hard to correct. Under then-Prime Minister Diallo, the government began a rigorous reform agenda in December 2004 designed to return Guinea to a PRGF with the IMF. Exchange rates have been allowed to float, price controls on gasoline have been loosened, and government spending has been reduced while tax collection has been improved. These reforms have not reduced inflation, which hit 27% in 2004 and 30% in 2005. Currency depreciation is also a concern. The Guinea franc was trading at 2550 to the dollar in January 2005. It hit 5554 to the dollar by October 2006. In August 2016 that number had reached 9089. Despite the opening in 2005 of a new road connecting Guinea and Mali, most major roadways remain in poor repair, slowing the delivery of goods to local markets. Electricity and water shortages are frequent and sustained, and many businesses are forced to use expensive power generators and fuel to stay open. Even though there are many problems plaguing Guinea's economy, not all foreign investors are reluctant to come to Guinea. Global Alumina's proposed alumina refinery has a price tag above \$2 billion. Alcoa and Alcan are proposing a slightly smaller refinery worth about \$1.5 billion. Taken together, they represent the largest private investment in sub-Saharan Africa since the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline. Also, Hyperdynamics Corporation, an American oil company, signed an agreement in 2006 to develop Guinea's offshore Senegal Basin oil deposits in a concession of 31,000 square miles (80,000 km<sup>2</sup>); it is pursuing seismic exploration. On 13 October 2009, Guinean Mines Minister Mahmoud Thiam announced that the China International Fund would invest more than \$7bn (£4.5bn) in infrastructure. In return, he said the firm would be a "strategic partner" in all mining projects in the mineral-rich nation. He said the firm would help build ports, railway lines, power plants, low-cost housing and even a new administrative centre in the capital, Conakry. In September 2011, Mohamed Lamine Fofana, the Mines Minister following the 2010 election, said that the government had overturned the agreement by the ex-military junta. Youth unemployment remains a large problem. Guinea needs an adequate policy to address the concerns of urban youth. One problem is the disparity between their life and what they see on television. For youth who cannot find jobs, seeing the economic

power and consumerism of richer countries only serves to frustrate them further. === Mining controversies === Guinea has large reserves of the steel-making raw material, iron ore. Rio Tinto Group was the majority owner of the \$6 billion Simandou iron ore project, which it had called the world's best unexploited resource. This project is said to be of the same magnitude as the Pilbara in Western Australia. In 2017, Och-Ziff Capital Management Group pled guilty to a multi-year bribery scheme, after an investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) led to a trial in the United States and a fine of \$412 million. Following this, the SEC also filed a lawsuit in the US against head of Och-Ziff European operations, Michael Cohen, for his role in a bribery scheme in the region. In 2009 the government of Guinea gave the northern half of Simandou to BSGR for an \$165 million investment in the project and a pledge to spend \$1 billion on railways, saying that Rio Tinto wasn't moving into production fast enough. The US Justice Department investigated allegations that BSGR had bribed President Conté's wife to get him the concession, and so did the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the next elected President of Guinea, Alpha Condé, and an assortment of other national and international entities. In April 2014 the Guinean government cancelled the company's mining rights in Simandou. BSGR has denied any wrongdoing, and in May 2014 sought arbitration over the government of Guinea's decision to expropriate its mining rights. In 2010 Rio Tinto signed a binding agreement with Aluminum Corporation of China Limited. to establish a joint venture for the Simandou iron ore project. In November 2016, Rio Tinto admitted paying \$10.5 million to a close adviser of President Alpha Condé to obtain rights on Simandou. Conde said he knew nothing about the bribe and denied any wrongdoing. However, according to recordings obtained by FRANCE 24, Guinean authorities were aware of the Simandou bribes. In July 2017, the UK-based anti-fraud regulator, the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and the Australian Federal Police launched an investigation into Rio Tinto's business practices in Guinea. Further, In November 2016, the former mining minister of Guinea, Mahmoud Thiam, accused head of Rio Tinto's Guinea operation department of offering him a bribe in 2010 to regain Rio Tinto's control over half of the undeveloped Simandou project. In September 2011, Guinea adopted a new mining code. The law set up a commission to review government deals struck during the chaotic days between the end of dictatorship in 2008 and Condé coming to power. In September 2015, the French Financial Public Prosecutor's Office launched an investigation into President Alpha Conde's son, Mohamed Alpha Condé. He was charged with embezzlement of public funds and receiving financial and other benefits from French companies that were interested in the Guinean mining industry. In August 2016, son of a former Prime Minister of Gabon, who worked for Och-Ziff's Africa Management Ltd, a subsidiary of the U.S. hedge fund Och-Ziff, was arrested in the US and charged with bribing officials in Guinea, Chad and Niger on behalf of the company in order to secure mining concessions and gain access to relevant confidential information. The investigation also revealed that he was involved in rewriting Guinea's mining law during President Conde's rule. In December 2016, the US Department of Justice announced that the man pleaded guilty to conspiring to make corrupt payments to government officials in Africa. According to a Global Witness report, Sable Mining sought iron ore explorations rights to Mount Nimba in Guinea by getting close to Conde towards the 2010 elections, backing his campaign for presidency and bribing his son. These allegations have not been verified yet but in March 2016 Guinean authorities ordered an investigation into the matter. The Conde government investigated two other contracts as well, one which left Hyperdynamic with a third of Guinea's offshore lease allocations as well as Rusal's purchase of the Friguia Aluminum refinery, in which it said that Rusal greatly underpaid. === Minority and women's rights === Homosexuality is illegal in Guinea. Same sex relations are considered a strong taboo, and the prime minister declared in 2010 that he doesn't consider sexual orientation a legitimate human right. According to Anastasia Gage, an associate professor at Tulane University, and Ronan van Rossem, an associate professor at Ghent University, female genital mutilation in Guinea had been performed on more than 98% of women as of 2009. In Guinea almost all cultures, religions, and ethnicities practice female genital mutilation. The 2005 Demographic and Health Survey reported that 96% of women have gone through the operation. Prosecutions of its practitioners are nonexistent. == Transport infrastructure == The railway from Conakry to Kankan ceased operating in the mid-1980s. Domestic air services are intermittent. Most vehicles in Guinea are 20+ years old, and cabs are any four-door vehicle which the owner has designated as being for hire. Locals, nearly entirely without vehicles of their own, rely upon these taxis (which charge per seat) and small buses to take them around town and across the country. There is some river traffic on the Niger and Milo rivers. Horses and donkeys pull carts, primarily to transport construction materials. Mining operations are expected to start at Simandou before the end of 2015. Rio Tinto Limited plans to build a 650 km railway to transport iron ore from the mine to the coast, near

Matakong, for export. Much of the Simandou iron ore is expected to be shipped to China for steel production. Conakry International Airport is the largest airport in the country, with flights to other cities in Africa as well as to Europe. === Major roads === The major roads of Guinea are the following: N1 connects Conakry, Coyah, Kindia, Mamou, Dabola, Kouroussa, and Kankan. N2 connects Mamou, Faranah, Kissidougou, Guékédou, Macenta, Nzérékoré, and Lola. N4 connects Coyah, Forécariah, and, Farmoreya. N5 connects Mamou, Dalaba, Pita, and Labé. N6 connects Kissidougou, Kankan, and Siguiri. N20 connects Kamsar, Kolaboui, and Boké. == Demography == The population of Guinea is estimated at 12.4 million. Conakry, the capital and largest city, is the hub of Guinea's economy, commerce, education, and culture. In 2014, the total fertility rate (TFR) of Guinea was estimated at 4.93 children born per woman. === Urbanization === Languages === The official language of Guinea is French. Other significant languages spoken are Pular (Fulfulde or Fulani), Maninka (Malinke), Susu, Kissi, Kpelle, and Loma. === Ethnic groups === The population of Guinea comprises about 24 ethnic groups. The Mandinka, also known as Mandingo or Malinké, comprise 29.8% of the population and are mostly found in eastern Guinea concentrated around the Kankan and Kissidougou prefectures. The Fulas or Fulani (French: Peuls; Fula: Fulɓe), comprise 32.1% of the population and are mostly found in the Futa Djallon region. The Soussou, comprising 19.8% of the population, are predominantly in western areas around the capital Conakry, Forécariah, and Kindia. Smaller ethnic groups make up the remaining 18.3% of the population, including Kpelle, Kissi, Zialo, Toma and others. Approximately 10,000 non-Africans live in Guinea, predominantly Lebanese, French, and other Europeans. === Religion === The population of Guinea is approximately 85 percent Muslim, 8 percent Christian, with 7 percent adhering to indigenous religious beliefs. Much of the population, both Muslim and Christian, also incorporate indigenous African beliefs into their outlook. The vast majority of Guinean Muslims are adherent to the Sunni tradition of Islam, of Maliki school of jurisprudence, influenced with Sufism, with many Ahmadiyya; there are relatively few Shi'a in Guinea. Christian groups include Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, and Evangelical groups. Jehovah's Witnesses are active in the country and recognized by the Government. There is a small Baha'i community. There are small numbers of Hindus, Buddhists, and traditional Chinese religious groups among the expatriate community. There were three days of ethno-religious fighting in the city of Nzerekore in July 2013. Fighting between ethnic Kpelle, who are Christian or animist, and ethnic Konianke, who are Muslims and close to the larger Malinke ethnic group, left at least 54 dead. The dead included people who were killed with machetes and burned alive. The violence ended after the Guinea military imposed a curfew, and President Conde made a televised appeal for calm. == Education == The literacy rate of Guinea is one of the lowest in the world: in 2010 it was estimated that only 41% of adults were literate (52% of males and 30% of females). Primary education is compulsory for 6 years, but most children do not attend for so long, and many do not go to school at all. In 1999, primary school attendance was 40 percent. Children, particularly girls, are kept out of school in order to assist their parents with domestic work or agriculture, or to be married: Guinea has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world. == Health == === Ebola === In 2014, there was an outbreak of the Ebola virus in Guinea. In response, the health ministry banned the sale and consumption of bats, thought to be carriers of the disease. Despite this measure, the virus eventually spread from rural areas to Conakry, and by late June 2014 had spread to neighboring countries Sierra Leone and Liberia. In early August 2014 Guinea closed its borders to Sierra Leone and Liberia to help contain the spreading of the virus, as more new cases of the disease were being reported in those countries than in Guinea. The outbreak began in early December, in a village called Meliandou, southeastern Guinea, not far from the borders with both Liberia and Sierra Leone. The first known case was a two-year-old child who died, after fever and vomiting and passing black stool, on December 6. The child's mother died a week later, then a sister and a grandmother, all with symptoms that included fever, vomiting, and diarrhea. Then, by way of caregiving visits or attendance at funerals, the outbreak spread to other villages. Unsafe burials remained one of the primary sources of the transmission of the disease. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that the inability to engage with local communities hindered the ability of health workers to trace the origins and strains of the virus. While WHO terminated the Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on 29 March 2016, the Ebola Situation Report released on 30 March confirmed 5 more cases in the preceding two weeks, with viral sequencing relating one of the cases to the November 2014 outbreak. The epidemic also affected the treatment of other diseases in Guinea. There was a decline in healthcare visits by the population due to fear of being infected and mistrust in the health care system, and a decrease in the system's ability to provide routine health care and HIV/AIDS treatments due to the Ebola outbreak. === Maternal and child healthcare === The 2010



maternal mortality rate per 100,000 births for Guinea is 680. This is compared with 859.9 in 2008 and 964.7 in 1990. The under 5 mortality rate, per 1,000 births is 146 and the neonatal mortality as a percentage of under 5's mortality is 29. In Guinea the number of midwives per 1,000 live births is 1 and the lifetime risk of death for pregnant women is 1 in 26. Guinea has the second highest prevalence of female genital mutilation in the world. === HIV/AIDS === An estimated 170,000 adults and children were infected at the end of 2004. Surveillance surveys conducted in 2001 and 2002 show higher rates of HIV in urban areas than in rural areas. Prevalence was highest in Conakry (5%) and in the cities of the Forest Guinea region (7%) bordering Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. HIV is spread primarily through multiple-partner heterosexual intercourse. Men and women are at nearly equal risk for HIV, with young people aged 15 to 24 most vulnerable. Surveillance figures from 2001–2002 show high rates among commercial sex workers (42%), active military personnel (6.6%), truck drivers and bush taxi drivers (7.3%), miners (4.7%), and adults with tuberculosis (8.6%). Several factors are fueling the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Guinea. They include unprotected sex, multiple sexual partners, illiteracy, endemic poverty, unstable borders, refugee migration, lack of civic responsibility, and scarce medical care and public services. === Malnutrition === Malnutrition is a serious problem for Guinea. A 2012 study reported high chronic malnutrition rates, with levels ranging from 34% to 40% by region, as well as acute malnutrition rates above 10% in Upper Guinea's mining zones. The survey showed that 139,200 children suffer from acute malnutrition, 609,696 from chronic malnutrition and further 1,592,892 suffer from anemia. Degradation of care practices, limited access to medical services, inadequate hygiene practices and a lack of food diversity explain these levels. === Malaria === Malaria is prevalent in Guinea. It is transmitted year-round, with peak transmission from July through October. Malaria is one of the top causes of disability in Guinea. == Culture == === Polygamy === Polygamy is generally prohibited by law in Guinea, however, there are exceptions. UNICEF reports that 53.4% of Guinean women aged 15–49 are in polygamous marriages. === Music === Like other West African countries, Guinea has a rich musical tradition. The group Bambaya Jazz became popular in the 1960s after Guinean independence. === Cuisine === Guinean cuisine varies by region with rice as the most common staple. Cassava is also widely consumed. Part of West African cuisine, the foods of Guinea include jollof rice, maafe, and tapalapa bread. In rural areas, food is eaten from a large serving dish and eaten by hand outside of homes. == See also == Outline of Guinea Index of Guinea-related articles Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative List of Guineans Agriculture in Guinea == References == == External links == Official website (in French) "Guinea". The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency. Guinea from UCB Libraries GovPubs Guinea at Curlie (based on DMOZ) Guinea profile from the BBC News Wikimedia Atlas of Guinea Guinea 2008 Summary Trade Statistics