



Image from: [Guinea in Philip's Encyclopedia](#)

Summary Article: **Guinea**  
From *Philip's Encyclopedia*

The Republic of Guinea, which faces the Atlantic Ocean in W Africa, can be divided into four regions: an alluvial coastal plain, which includes the capital, Conakry; the highland region of the Fouta Djallon, the source of one of Africa's longest rivers, the Niger; the NE savanna; and the SE Guinea Highlands, which rise to 1,752m [5,748ft] at Mount Nimba.

Mangrove swamps grow along parts of the coast. Inland, the Fouta Djallon is largely open grassland. NE Guinea is tropical savanna, with acacia and shea scattered across the grassland. Rainforests of ebony, mahogany, and teak grow in the Guinea Highlands.

### **Climate**

Guinea has a tropical climate. Conakry, on the coast, has heavy rains during its relatively cool season between May and November. Hot, dry harmattan winds blow SW from the Sahara in the dry season. The Fouta Djallon is cooler than the coast. The driest region is in the NE. This region and the SE highlands have greater temperature variations than on the coast.

### **History**

The NE Guinea plains formed part of the medieval Empire of Ghana. The Malinke formed the Mali Empire, which dominated the region in the 12th century. The Songhai Empire supplanted the Malinke in the 15th century. Portuguese explorers arrived in the mid-15th century, and the slave trade began soon afterwards. From the 17th century, other European nations' slave traders became active in Guinea. In the early 18th century, the Fulani embarked on a jihad (holy war) and gained control of the Fouta Djallon. Following a series of wars, France won control in the mid-19th century, later establishing the colony of French Guinea (1891). France exploited the nation's bauxite deposits, and mining unions developed.

In 1958, Guinea voted to become an independent republic and France severed all aid. Its first president, Sékou Touré (1958-84), adopted a Marxist programme of reform and embraced Pan-Africanism. Opposition parties were banned, and dissent brutally suppressed. In 1970, Portuguese Guinea (now Guinea-Bissau) invaded Guinea. Conakry later acted as the headquarters for independence movements in Guinea-Bissau. A military coup followed Touré's death in 1984, and Colonel Lansana Conté established the Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN). Conté improved relations with the West and introduced free enterprise policies.

### **Politics**

Civil unrest forced the introduction of a multiparty system in 1992. Elections in 1993 confirmed Conté as president, amid claims of voting fraud. In February 1996, Conté foiled an attempted military coup. He was re-elected in 1998.

By 2000, Guinea was home to about 500,000 refugees from the wars in neighbouring Sierra Leone and Liberia. In 2000, rebel incursions from these countries killed more than 1,000 people, caused massive population displacement, and threatened to destabilize Guinea. Conté was re-elected in

2003, although the poll was boycotted by the opposition. Despite his age and poor health Conté survived an assassination attempt in 2005. 2006 and 2007 saw mass riots in protest at his weak government and economic mismanagement.

## Economy

The World Bank classifies Guinea as a 'low-income' developing country. It is the world's second-largest producer of bauxite which accounts for 90% of its exports. Guinea has 25% of the world's known reserves of bauxite.

Other natural resources include diamonds, gold, iron ore and uranium. Due to the mining industry, the rail and road infrastructure is improving. Agriculture (mainly at subsistence level) employs 78% of the workforce. Major crops include bananas, cassava, coffee, palm kernels, pineapples, rice and sweet potatoes. Cattle and other livestock are raised in highland areas.

**area** 245,857sq km [94,925sq mi]

**population** 9,690,000

**capital (population)** Conakry (1,465,000)

**government** Multiparty republic

**ethnic groups** Peuhl 40%, Malinke 30%, Soussou 20%, others 10%

**languages** French (official)

**religions** Islam 85%, Christianity 8%, traditional beliefs 7%

**currency** Guinean franc = 100 cauris

## Guinea





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## APA

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## Harvard

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## MLA

"Guinea." *Philip's Encyclopedia*, Philip's, 1st edition, 2008. *Credo Reference*, <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/guinea>. Accessed 23 Oct. 2019.