

Guinea-Bissau

Country name	Guinea-Bissau
State title	Republic of Guinea-Bissau
Name of citizen	Citizen of Guinea-Bissau
Official language	Portuguese (<i>por</i>) ¹
Country name in official language	Guiné-Bissau
State title in official language	República de Guiné-Bissau
Script	Roman script
Romanization System	Not required
ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)	GW/GNB
Capital	Bissau
Area / Population	36,125km ² / 2,078,820 (2023 est.) ²

Introduction

Guinea-Bissau gained independence from Portugal in 1974, and has experienced considerable upheaval with a number of both successful and attempted military coups, most recently a failed attempt to overthrow the President in 2022.

Guinea-Bissau shares land boundaries with Guinea and Senegal and is characterised by its indented estuarine coastline rising to savanna in the east. Offshore, the territory includes the Arquipélago dos Bijagós consisting of 18 main islands and many small islets.

Geographical names policy

For HMG use, geographical names should be taken from official sources, such as those produced by the national mapping agency, the Direcção Geral de Geografia e Cadastro, which will be written in Roman script in a Portuguese style. All diacritical marks, apostrophes and hyphens should be retained.

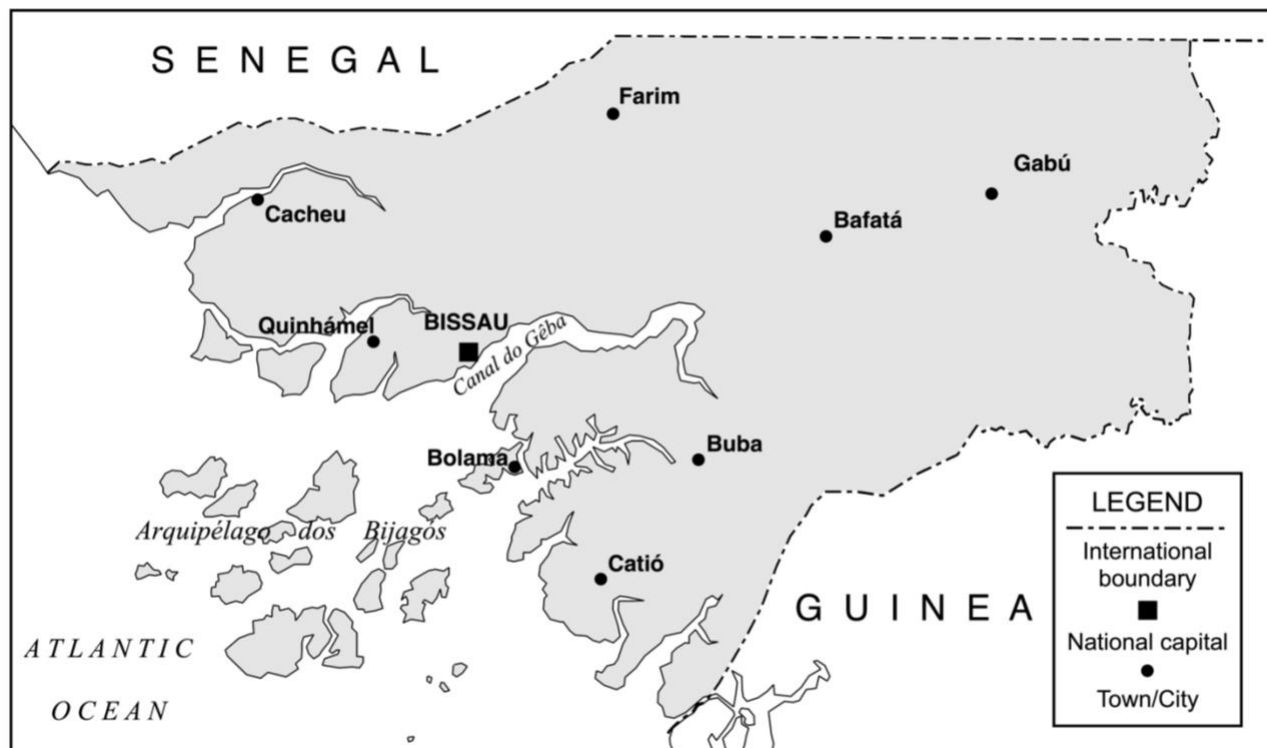
There is no known digital access to official sources, however, and in their absence, the US Board on Geographic Names (BGN) [Geographic Names Server](https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/guinea-bissau/) can be used as a source for names in Guinea-Bissau. Additionally, the [Africa Geoportal](#) may be used as a helpful source of geospatial data and names³.

¹ ISO 639 codes are given for languages mentioned in this Factfile.

² <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/guinea-bissau/>

³ This is a source collated from multiple sources, including Esri, organisations working in Africa and crowdsourced information. It should be used as a supplementary source.

Map of Guinea-Bissau



Map produced by PCGN for illustrative purposes only, and is not to be taken necessarily as representing the views of the UK government on boundaries or political status.

Administrative structure

Guinea-Bissau is divided into 8 regions (*região*) and 1 autonomous sector (*sector autónomo*) at the first-order administrative level.

These divisions are sometimes grouped into 3 over-arching provinces: Norte, Leste and Sul, as indicated in the ISO Online Browsing Platform entry for Guinea-Bissau: [GW - Guinea-Bissau \(iso.org\)](https://iso.org).

The regions are sub-divided into 39 sectors at the ADM2 level. A listing of these is available at the UN Second Administrative Level Boundaries project [Guinea-Bissau | Second Administrative Level Boundaries](#) as supplied by the Direcção Geral de Geografia e Cadastro of Guinea-Bissau.

Administrative division	ISO 3166-2 code	Administrative centre	Location of administrative centre
Bafatá	GW-BA	Bafatá	12°09'57"N 14°39'42"W
Biombo	GW-BM	Quinhámel	11°53'13"N 15°51'20"W
Bissau	GW-BS	Bissau	11°51'30"N 15°35'30"W
Bolama / Bijagós ⁸	GW-BL	Bolama	11°34'37"N 15°28'34"W
Cacheu	GW-CA	Cacheu	12°16'28"N 16°09'55"W
Gabú	GW-GA	Gabú	12°16'48"N 14°13'20"W
Oio	GW-OI	Farim	12°29'02"N 15°13'18"W
Quinara	GW-QU	Buba	11°35'20"N 14°59'45"W
Tombali	GW-TO	Catió	11°16'57"N 15°15'17"W

Other Significant Locations

PCGN Recommended Name	Location	Feature Type
Arquipélago dos Bijagós	11°15'00"N 16°05'00"W	Archipelago
Canal do Gêba	11°40'00"N 15°45'00"W	Marine channel
Dongol Rondè	11°41'00"N 13°54'00"W	Hill (high point of Guinea-Bissau 277m)
Rio Cacheu	12°10'04"N 16°21'00"W	Estuary
Rio Cacine	11°00'00"N 15°09'00"W	Estuary
Rio Gêba	11°45'00"N 15°35'00"W	River
Rio Grande de Buba	11°32'00"N 15°35'00"W	Estuary
Rio Mansôa	11°45'30"N 16°00'00"W	Estuary

⁸ Sometimes Bolama-Bijagos.

Useful references

- BBC Country Profile: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13443186>
- CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/guinea-bissau/>
- Ethnologue: www.ethnologue.com (for information on languages)
- FCDO Geographical Names Index (GNI):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/geographical-names-and-information>
- FCDO Travel Advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/guinea-bissau>
- ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP) entry for Guinea-Bissau: [GW - Guinea-Bissau \(iso.org\)](http://www.iso.org)
- Omniglot: www.omniglot.com (for information on languages and scripts)
- PCGN Country Names list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/country-names>
- Unicode: www.unicode.org
- UN SALB data for Guinea-Bissau: [Guinea-Bissau | Second Administrative Level Boundaries](#)
- US Board on Geographic Names GEOnet Names Server: [GNS Search & Download WebApp \(nga.mil\)](#)

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