

Guinea

Country name	Guinea ¹
State title	Republic of Guinea
Name of citizen	Guinean
Official language	French [<i>fra</i>] ²
Country name in official language	Guinée
State title in official language	République de Guinée
Script	Roman script
Romanization System	<i>Not required</i>
ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)	GN/GIN
Capital	Conakry
Area / Population	245,857km ² / 13,986,179 (2024 est.) ³

Introduction

Guinea lies on the Atlantic coast of Africa and shares land boundaries with Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone. It features a varied terrain that includes coastal plains, forested hills, and mountainous regions; this diverse topography plays a significant role in shaping Guinea's climate, ecosystems, and agriculture.

Guinea became independent from France in 1958, and has experienced periods of instability, including coups and contested elections. Following a 2021 coup, the country remains under military rule.

Geographical names policy

For HMG use, geographical names should be taken from official sources, such as the national mapping agency the *Institut Géographique National*, also known as the *Institut de topographie et de cartographie de Guinée*. PCGN has no available sources from this body, however, so appropriate sources include those produced by other areas of the Guinean Government. All diacritical marks, apostrophes and hyphens should be retained.

¹ Sometimes informally referred to as *Guinea-Conakry* to disambiguate from neighbouring Guinea-Bissau.

² ISO 639 codes are given for languages mentioned in this Factfile.

³ <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/guinea/>

There is no known digital access to official sources, and in their absence, the US Board on Geographic Names (BGN) [Geographic Names Server](#) can be used as a source for names in Guinea. Additionally, the [Africa Geoportal](#) may be used as a helpful source of geospatial data and names⁴.

Languages

French is the sole official language in Guinea and functions as the *lingua franca* and the language of government, though it is not widely spoken as a first language. The principal Indigenous languages, each having the status of ‘national language’, are Fula (*ful*)⁵, and Maninka (also seen as Malinké) [*man*]⁶ Susu [*sus*], Kissi [*kqs*], Kpelle [*gkp*] and Toma [*tod*].

These languages are usually written with the Roman script, but there are a number of additional writing systems, some quite recently developed. An alphabet known as N’Ko⁷ was developed for some Mande languages, including Maninka, in 1949, and its use is reportedly growing, with inclusion into Google Translate in 2024. Fula languages are sometimes written in an Arabic script (known as Ajami) or the Adlam script⁸, developed in the 1990s. It is unlikely that these writing systems will be encountered on official geospatial products or sources.

Inventory of Characters (and their Unicode encodings)⁹

French (and consequently Guinean toponyms) contains the following letter-diacritic combinations in addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman script¹⁰:

Upper-case	Unicode encoding	Lower-case	Unicode encoding
À	00C0	à	00E0
Â	00C2	â	00E2
Ç	00C7	ç	00E7
È	00C8	è	00E8
É	00C9	é	00E9
Ê	00CA	ê	00EA
Ë	00CB	ë	00EB
Î	00CE	î	00EE
Ï	00CF	ï	00EF

⁴ 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.

⁵ Spoken by the Fulani people, also Peul or Pular.

⁶ This is the code for the wider Manding language group; the dialectal forms as spoken in Guinea have separate ISO 639 codes.

⁷ To illustrate, Guinea is written 𞤄𞤲𞤲𞤳 ‘Jine’ (from right to left) in N’Ko.

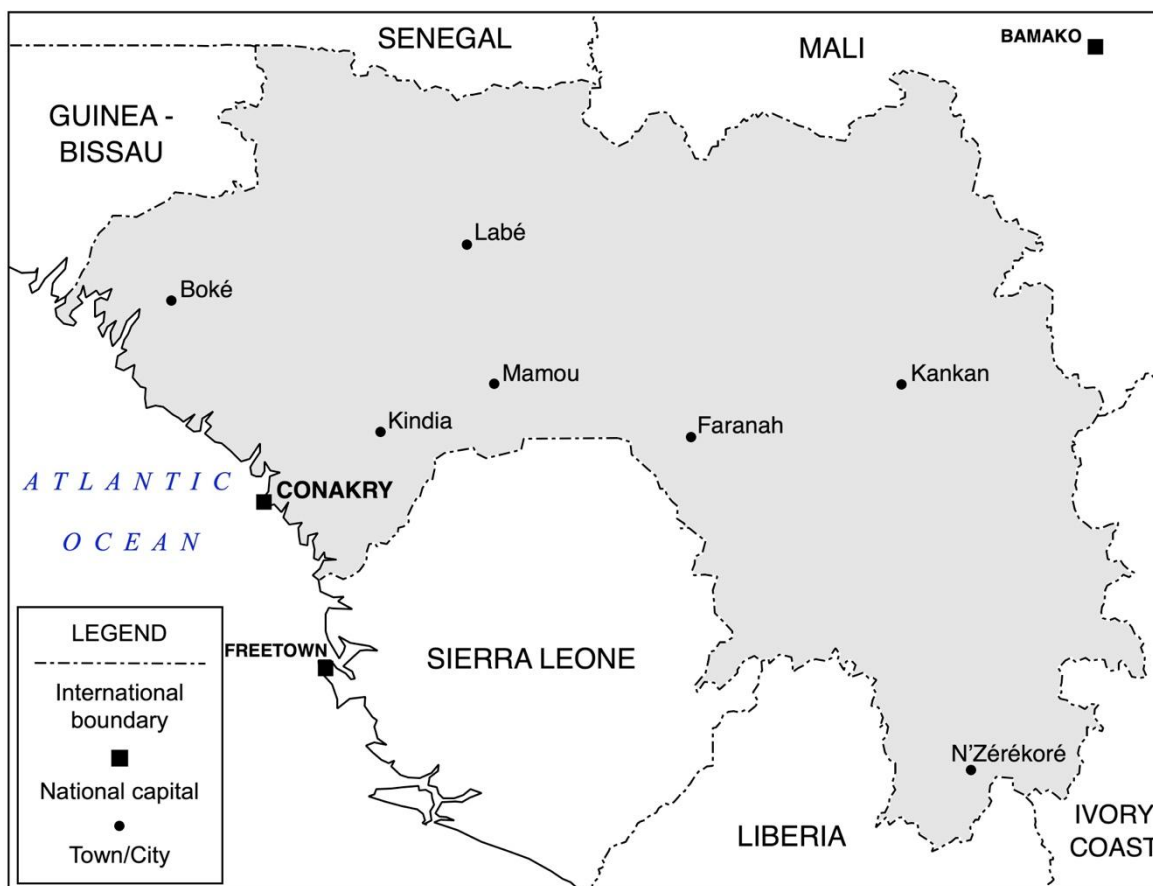
⁸ To illustrate, Guinea is written 𞤄𞤲𞤲𞤳 ‘Gine’ (from right to left) in Adlam

⁹ See www.unicode.org

¹⁰ Characters can be manually input into Microsoft word documents by typing in these character codes and then holding down the ALT key and pressing /x/. The code will change to the required character. The letter can be copied and pasted into other programmes if required. Alternatively, the ‘Insert – Symbol’ command can be used; the code can be entered into the ‘Character code’ box which will show the corresponding letter. A GeoNames Soft-Copy Keyboard can be downloaded from the NGA website and used to enter the required letter-diacritic combinations for a particular region: http://geonames.nga.mil/gns/html/gns_services.html.

Upper-case	Unicode encoding	Lower-case	Unicode encoding
Ô	00D4	ô	00F4
Œ	0152	œ	0153
Ù	00D9	ù	00F9
Û	00DB	û	00FB
Ü	00DC	ü	00FC
Ÿ ¹¹	0178	ÿ	00FF

Map of Guinea



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.

¹¹ Rarely encountered.

Administrative structure

Guinea is divided into 1 *gouvernorat* (governorate) [Conakry] and 7 *région administrative* (administrative region) at the first-order level. Below this structure, there are 33 *préfecture*. The prefectures, with their parent administrative regions, are shown in the table below. Each region is named after its capital, e.g. Boké is the centre of both region and prefecture. The governorate of Conakry is subdivided into *communes urbaines*, while the prefectures are subdivided into *sous-préfectures*.

Additionally, though they are not administrative, Guinea is also divided into 4 *régions naturelles*: Guinée maritime, Guinée forestière, Haute-Guinée and Moyenne-Guinée: <https://www.stat-guinee.org/>

Administrative Region/Governorate	Region ISO 3166-2 code	Prefecture	Prefecture ISO 3166-2 code	Administrative centre	Location of administrative centre
Boké	GN-B	Boffa	GN-BF	Boffa	10°10'00"N 14°02'00"W
		Boké	GN-BK	Boké	10°56'00"N 14°18'00"W
		Fria	GN-FR	Fria	10°27'00"N 13°32'00"W
		Gaoual	GN-GA	Gaoual	11°45'00"N 13°12'00"W
		Koundara	GN-KN	Koundara	12°29'00"N 13°18'00"W
Conakry	GN-C	-	-	Conakry	09°30'33"N 13°42'44"W
Faranah	GN-F	Dabola	GN-DB	Dabola	10°45'00"N 11°07'00"W
		Dinguiraye	GN-DI	Dinguiraye	11°18'00"N 10°43'00"W
		Faranah	GN-FA	Faranah	10°02'00"N 10°44'00"W
		Kissidougou	GN-KS	Kissidougou	09°11'00"N 10°06'00"W

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Administrative Region/Governorate	Region ISO 3166-2 code	Prefecture	Prefecture ISO 3166-2 code	Administrative centre	Location of administrative centre
Kankan	GN-K	Kankan	GN-KA	Kankan	10°23'00"N 09°18'00"W
		Kérouané	GN-KE	Kérouané	09°16'00"N 09°01'00"W
		Kouroussa	GN-KO	Kouroussa	10°39'00"N 09°53'00"W
		Mandiana	GN-MD	Mandiana	10°38'00"N 08°41'00"W
		Siguiri	GN-SI	Siguiri	11°25'00"N 09°10'00"W
Kindia	GN-D	Coyah	GN-CO	Coyah	09°42'20"N 13°22'37"W
		Dubréka	GN-DU	Dubréka	09°47'28"N 13°31'24"W
		Forécariah	GN-FO	Forécariah	09°25'50"N 13°05'17"W
		Kindia	GN-KD	Kindia	10°04'00"N 12°51'00"W
		Télimélé	GN-TE	Télimélé	10°54'00"N 13°02'00"W
Labé	GN-L	Koubia	GN-KB	Koubia	11°35'00"N 11°54'00"W
		Labé	GN-LA	Labé	11°19'00"N 12°17'00"W
		Lélouma	GN-LE	Lélouma	11°11'00"N 12°56'00"W
		Mali	GN-ML	Mali	12°04'44"N 12°17'54"W
		Tougué	GN-TO	Tougué	11°27'00"N 11°41'00"W
Mamou	GN-M	Dalaba	GN-DL	Dalaba	10°42'00"N 12°15'00"W
		Mamou	GN-MM	Mamou	10°23'00"N 12°05'00"W
		Pita	GN-PI	Pita	11°05'00"N 12°24'00"W

TOPONYMIC FACTFILE

Administrative Region/Governorate	Region ISO 3166-2 code	Prefecture	Prefecture ISO 3166-2 code	Administrative centre	Location of administrative centre
N'Zérékoré	GN-N	Beyla	GN-BE	Beyla	08°41'00"N 08°38'00"W
		Guékédou	GN-GU	Guékédou	08°33'45"N 10°07'57"W
		Lola	GN-LO	Lola	07°48'00"N 08°32'00"W
		Macenta	GN-MC	Macenta	08°32'46"N 09°28'10"W
		N'Zérékoré	GN-NZ	N'Zérékoré	07°44'50"N 08°49'26"W
		Yomou	GN-YO	Yomou	07°33'37"N 09°15'55"W

Other Significant Locations

PCGN recommended name	Location	Feature Type
Fouta Djallon	11°30'00"N 12°30'00"W	Highland region
Gambia – or Gambie if labelled in Guinea	13°28'32"N 16°34'03"W	River [Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea]
Guinée forestière	08°11'46"N 08°46'19"W	Rainforest region
Gulf of Guinea	02°00'00"N 02°30'00"E	Gulf in the Atlantic Ocean
Mont Nimba ¹²	07°37'00"N 08°25'00"W	Mountain (Guinea, Ivory Coast's high point 1,752m)
Niger	05°18'06"N 06°25'00"E	River [Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Niger, Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria]

Useful references

- Africa Geoportal: [Africa GeoPortal - powered by Esri](#)
- BBC Country Profile: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13442051>
- CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/guinea/>
- 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>
- Guinea Constitution, 2010: <http://aceproject.org/ero-en/regions/africa/GN/guinea-constitution-2010/view>
- Institut National de la Statistique (INS): <https://www.stat-guinee.org/>
- ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP) entry for Guinea:
<https://www.iso.org/obp/ui#iso:code:3166:GN>
- 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
- US Board on Geographic Names GEOnet Names Server: [GNS Search & Download WebApp \(nga.mil\)](https://www.nga.mil)

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www.gov.uk/pcgn
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¹² Also seen as Mont Richard-Molard