

## Senegal

Country name	Senegal
State title	Republic of Senegal
Name of citizen	Senegalese
Official language	French (fra)
Country name in official language	Sénégal
State title in official language	République du Sénégal
Script	Roman
Romanization System	Not Required
ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)	SN/SEN
Capital in official language	Dakar
Population/Area	18,847,519 / 196,722 sq km <sup>1,2</sup>

### Introduction

Senegal is the westernmost country on the African continent, bordered by Mauritania to the north, Mali to the east, and Guinea and Guinea-Bissau to the south. Senegal also nearly surrounds The Gambia, a country which occupies a narrow strip of land along the Gambia River. The country of Senegal is named for the eponymous river that naturally forms the country's northern and eastern borders.

Senegal gained independence from France in 1960 and was briefly part of the Mali Federation with a few other west African states before withdrawing later the same year.<sup>2</sup>

### Geographical names policy

For HMG use, geographical names should be taken from official sources from Senegal, where these are available. Products from the *Agence Nationale de l'Aménagement du Territoire* (ANAT) are preferred over products from other sources. The ANAT has a minimal web presence but has supplied data to the UN Second Administrative Level Boundaries project; this includes a list of first- and second-order administrative divisions, which can be found here: <https://salb.un.org/en/data/sen>

If ANAT materials are unavailable, materials produced by *France's Institut national de l'information géographique et forestière* (formerly the IGN) are acceptable alternatives.

<sup>1</sup> <https://data.who.int/countries/686>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.int/senegal/senegal/country-facts>

## TOPONYMIC FACTFILE

### Language

According to the Constitution of Senegal, French is the country's sole official language. Wolof serves as a *lingua franca* and is the most widely spoken national language with nearly 90% of Senegalese adults claiming proficiency.<sup>3</sup>

Map sources from the ANAT are produced primarily in French, but some elements the Wolof language are reflected in the orthographic construction of geographical names in Senegal. For example, the digraph "di" often represents a "j" type sound in English. Therefore, the name Diourbel would be read as "Jourbel." Another prominent example is "th," which is pronounced as "ch" in English. Thiès, Senegal's third largest city by population, is pronounced as "chess."

*National Languages of Senegal*

Language	Language Classification	ISO 639-3 Language Code	Estimated Number of Speakers	Area where language is spoken
Jola	Niger-Congo	dyo	400,000	Casamance (South)
Malinké	Niger-Congo	man	900,000	East
Pular	Niger-Congo	fuf	2,000,000	Central/East
Serer	Niger-Congo	srr	1,200,000	West
Soninké	Niger-Congo	snk	200,000	Casamance (South)
Wolof	Niger-Congo	wol	8,200,000	Nationwide

### **Inventory of characters (and their Unicode encodings<sup>4</sup>):**

**French** contains the following letter-diacritic combinations in addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman script:

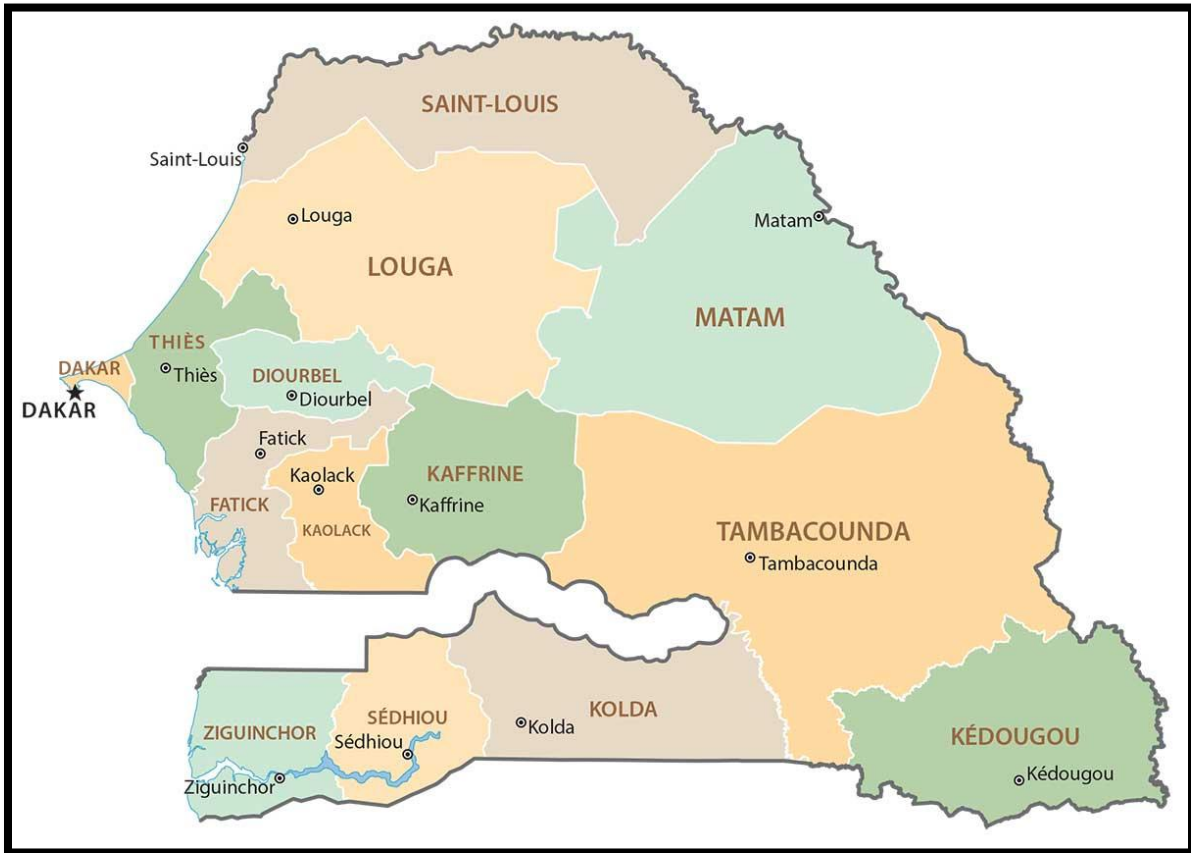
Uppercase character	Unicode encoding	Lowercase character	Unicode encoding
À	00C0	à	00E0
Â	00C2	â	00E2
Ç	00C7	ç	00E7
È	00C8	è	00E8
É	00C9	é	00E9
Ê	00CA	ê	00EA
Ë	00CB	ë	00EB
Î	00CE	î	00EE
Ï	00CF	ï	00EF
Ô	00D4	ô	00F4
Œ	0152	œ	0153
Ù	00D9	ù	00F9
Û	00DB	û	00FB
Ü	00DC	ü	00FC
ÿ	0178	ÿ	00FF

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Senegal/Languages>

<sup>4</sup> See [www.unicode.org](http://www.unicode.org)

# TOPONYMIC FACTFILE

Map of Senegal



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

## TOPONYMIC FACTFILE

### Administrative structure

Senegal is divided into 14 first-order administrative divisions, known as *régions*; each region is further subdivided into a total of 46 *départements*.

#### *Dakar*

Long form name	Région de Dakar
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-DK
Centre	Dakar <sup>5</sup> (14:43:25 N, 17:27:19 W)
Consists of 5 ADM2s	Dakar, Guédiawaye, Keur Massar, Pikine, Rufisque

#### *Diourbel*

Long form name	Région de Diourbel
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-DB
Centre	Diourbel (14:39:18 N, 16:13:50 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Bambey, Diourbel, Mbacké

#### *Fatick*

Long form name	Région de Fatick
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-FK
Centre	Fatick (14:19:56 N, 16:24:18 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Gossas, Fatick, Foundiougne

#### *Kaffrine*

Long form name	Région de Kaffrine
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-KA
Centre	Kaffrine (14:06:06 N, 15:32:48 W)
Consists of 4 ADM2s	Birkelane, Kaffrine, Kougheul, Malèm Hodar

#### *Kaolack*

Long form name	Région de Kaolack
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-KL
Centre	Kaolack (14:09:07 N, 16:04:21 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Guinguinéo, Kaolack, Nioro du Rip

#### *Kédougou*

Long form name	Région de Kédougou
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-KE
Centre	Kédougou (12:33:20 N, 12:10:51 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Kédougou, Salémata, Saraya

#### *Kolda*

Long form name	Région de Kolda
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<sup>5</sup> In addition to serving as the centre for Région de Dakar, Dakar is also the national capital (PPLC).

**TOPONYMIC FACTFILE**

ISO 3166-2 code	SN-KD
Centre	Kolda (12:53:38 N, 14:56:29 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Kolda, Médina-Yorofoula, Vélingara

*Louga*

Long form name	Région de Louga
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-LG
Centre	Louga (15:37:07 N, 16:13:28 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Kébémér, Linguère, Louga

*Matam*

Long form name	Région de Matam
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-MT
Centre	Matam (15:39:21 N, 13:15:20 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Kanel, Matam, Ranérou

*Saint-Louis*

Long form name	Région de Saint-Louis
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-SL
Centre	Saint-Louis (16:01:07 N, 16:29:26 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Dagana, Podor, Saint-Louis

*Sédhiou*

Long form name	Région de Sédhiou
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-SE
Centre	Sédhiou (12:42:29 N, 15:33:25 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Boukiling, Goudomp, Sédhiou

*Tambacounda*

Long form name	Région de Tambacounda
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-TC
Centre	Tambacounda (13:46:11 N, 13:40:15 W)
Consists of 4 ADM2s	Bakel, Goudiry, Koumpentoum, Tambacounda

*Thiès*

Long form name	Région de Thiès
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-TH
Centre	Thiès (14:47:22 N, 16:55:34 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Mbour, Thiès, Tivaouane

*Ziguinchor*

Long form name	Région de Ziguinchor
ISO 3166-2 code	SN-ZG
Centre	Ziguinchor (12:34:05 N, 16:16:24 W)
Consists of 3 ADM2s	Bignona, Oussouye, Ziguinchor

**TOPONYMIC FACTFILE****Other Significant Locations**

PCGN recommended name	Variant Names/Spellings	Location	Feature Type
Casamance		12:45:00 N, 15:30:00 W	Region
Casamance		12:33:22 N, 16:45:33 W	River
Fleuve Sénégal	Senegal River	15:54:30 N, 16:30:40 W	River
Foret Classé de Bandia	Resérve de Bandia, Bandia Game Reserve		Forest Reserve
Île de Gorée	Goree Island	14:42:48 N, 17:21:58 W	Island
Île de Ngor	Ngor Island	14:45:22 N, 17:30:49 W	Island
Lac Retba	Lac Rose	15:50:17 N, 17:13:29 W	Lake/Lagoon
Touba		14:51:44 N, 15:52:31 W	Populated Place

**Useful references**

- BBC country profile (no longer updated): <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14093674>
- Ethnologue: [www.ethnologue.com](http://www.ethnologue.com) (for information on languages)
- FCDO Country Profile: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/senegal>
- Government of Senegal: <https://primature.sn/>
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO): [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Senegal: <https://diplomatie.gouv.sn/>
- Omniglot: [www.omniglot.com](http://www.omniglot.com) (for information on languages and scripts)
- Unicode: [www.unicode.org](http://www.unicode.org)
- US Board on Geographic Names Geographic Names Server: <https://geonames.nga.mil/geonames/GNSHome/index.html>

Compiled by BGN and PCGN  
[www.gov.uk/pcgn](http://www.gov.uk/pcgn)  
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