



Africa :: Guinea-Bissau

Introduction :: Guinea-Bissau

Background:

Since independence from Portugal in 1974, Guinea-Bissau has experienced considerable political and military upheaval. In 1980, a military coup established authoritarian dictator Joao Bernardo 'Nino' VIEIRA as president. Despite setting a path to a market economy and multiparty system, VIEIRA's regime was characterized by the suppression of political opposition and the purging of political rivals. Several coup attempts through the 1980s and early 1990s failed to unseat him. In 1994 VIEIRA was elected president in the country's first free elections. A military mutiny and resulting civil war in 1998 eventually led to VIEIRA's ouster in May 1999. In February 2000, a transitional government turned over power to opposition leader Kumba YALA after he was elected president in transparent polling. In September 2003, after only three years in office, YALA was overthrown in a bloodless military coup, and businessman Henrique ROSA was sworn in as interim president. In 2005, former President VIEIRA was re-elected president pledging to pursue economic development and national reconciliation; he was assassinated in March 2009. Malam Bacai SANHA was elected in an emergency election held in June 2009, but he passed away in January 2012 from an existing illness. A military coup in April 2012 prevented Guinea-Bissau's second-round presidential election - to determine SANHA's successor - from taking place.

Geography :: Guinea-Bissau

Location:

Western Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Guinea and Senegal

Geographic coordinates:

12 00 N, 15 00 W

Map references:

Africa

Area:

total: 36,125 sq km

country comparison to the world: 138

land: 28,120 sq km

water: 8,005 sq km

Area - comparative:

slightly less than three times the size of Connecticut

Land boundaries:

total: 724 km

border countries: Guinea 386 km, Senegal 338 km

Coastline:

350 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

Climate:

tropical; generally hot and humid; monsoonal-type rainy season (June to November) with southwesterly winds; dry season (December to May) with northeasterly harmattan winds

Terrain:

mostly low coastal plain rising to savanna in east

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Atlantic Ocean 0 m

highest point: unnamed elevation in the eastern part of the country 300 m

Natural resources:

fish, timber, phosphates, bauxite, clay, granite, limestone, unexploited deposits of petroleum

Land use:

arable land: 8.3%

permanent crops: 6.92%

other: 84.78% (2011)

Irrigated land:

225.6 sq km (2003)

Total renewable water resources:

31 cu km (2011)

Freshwater withdrawal (domestic/industrial/agricultural):

total: 0.18 cu km/yr (18%/6%/76%)

per capita: 135.7 cu m/yr (2005)

Natural hazards:

hot, dry, dusty harmattan haze may reduce visibility during dry season; brush fires

Environment - current issues:

deforestation; soil erosion; overgrazing; overfishing

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Wetlands

signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:

this small country is swampy along its western coast and low-lying inland

People and Society :: Guinea-Bissau

Nationality:

noun: Bissau-Guinean(s)

adjective: Bissau-Guinean

Ethnic groups:

African 99% (includes Balanta 30%, Fula 20%, Manjaca 14%, Mandinga 13%, Papel 7%), European and mulatto less than 1%

Languages:

Portuguese (official), Crioulo, African languages

Religions:

Muslim 50%, indigenous beliefs 40%, Christian 10%

Population:

1,660,870 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 153

Age structure:

0-14 years: 40% (male 331,406/female 332,662)

15-24 years: 20.2% (male 166,339/female 168,906)

25-54 years: 31.9% (male 263,190/female 266,963)

55-64 years: 4.7% (male 28,333/female 49,322)

65 years and over: 3.2% (male 20,807/female 32,942) (2013 est.)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 79.7 %

youth dependency ratio: 74.5 %

elderly dependency ratio: 5.2 %

potential support ratio: 19.3 (2013)

Median age:

total: 19.7 years

male: 19.1 years

female: 20.2 years (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

1.95% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 57

Birth rate:

34.28 births/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 31

Death rate:

14.77 deaths/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 5

Net migration rate:

0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 100

Urbanization:

urban population: 43.9% of total population (2011)

rate of urbanization: 3.59% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

BISSAU (capital) 302,000 (2009)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.03 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 0.99 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 0.98 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 0.58 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.64 male(s)/female

total population: 0.95 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

790 deaths/100,000 live births (2010)

country comparison to the world: 7

Infant mortality rate:

total: 92.66 deaths/1,000 live births

country comparison to the world: 5

male: 102.42 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 82.61 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 49.5 years

country comparison to the world: 221

male: 47.53 years

female: 51.52 years (2013 est.)

Total fertility rate:

4.37 children born/woman (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 32

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

14% (2010)

Health expenditures:

8.5% of GDP (2010)

country comparison to the world: 52

Physicians density:

0.05 physicians/1,000 population (2008)

Hospital bed density:

0.96 beds/1,000 population (2009)

Drinking water source:

improved:

urban: 91% of population

rural: 53% of population

total: 64% of population

unimproved:

urban: 9% of population

rural: 47% of population

total: 36% of population (2010 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 44% of population

rural: 9% of population

total: 20% of population

unimproved:

urban: 56% of population

rural: 91% of population

total: 80% of population (2010 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

2.5% (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 27

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

22,000 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 75

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

1,200 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 64

Major infectious diseases:

degree of risk: very high

food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever

vectorborne diseases: malaria, dengue fever, and yellow fever

water contact disease: schistosomiasis

animal contact disease: rabies (2013)

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

4.9% (2008)

country comparison to the world: 159

Children under the age of 5 years underweight:

17.2% (2008)

country comparison to the world: 43

Education expenditures:

NA

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 55.3%

male: 68.9%

female: 42.1% (2011 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 9.5 years (2006)

Child labor - children ages 5-14:

total number: 226,316

percentage: 57 % (2010 est.)

Government:: Guinea-Bissau

Country name:

conventional long form: Republic of Guinea-Bissau

conventional short form: Guinea-Bissau

local long form: Republica da Guine-Bissau

local short form: Guine-Bissau

former: Portuguese Guinea

Government type:

republic

Capital:

name: Bissau

geographic coordinates: 11 51 N, 15 35 W

time difference: UTC 0 (5 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:

9 regions (regioes, singular - regioa); Bafata, Biombo, Bissau, Bolama, Cacheu, Gabu, Oio, Quinara, Tombali; note - Bolama may have been renamed Bolama-Bijagos

Independence:

24 September 1973 (declared); 10 September 1974 (from Portugal)

National holiday:

Independence Day, 24 September (1973)

Constitution:

16 May 1984; amended several times

Legal system:

mixed legal system of civil law (influenced by the early French Civil Code) and customary law

International law organization participation:

accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction; non-party state to the ICCt

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: [Transitional] President Manuel Serifo NHAMADJO (since 11 May 2012)

note: in the aftermath of the April 2012 coup that deposed the government, an agreement was reached between ECOWAS mediators and the military junta to name NHAMADJO as transitional president with a one-year term; the transitional government has scheduled a presidential election for 24 November 2013

head of government: [Transitional] Prime Minister Rui Duarte BARROS (since 16 May 2012)

cabinet: NA

(For more information visit the [World Leaders website](#) [ⓘ])

elections: president elected by popular vote for a five-year term (no term limits); election last held on 18 March 2012 with a runoff between the two leading candidates scheduled for 22 April 2012; prime minister appointed by the president after consultation with party leaders in the legislature

election results: with no candidate receiving a minimum 50% of the vote in the first round, a runoff between the two leading candidates was scheduled for 22 April 2012; percent of vote (first round) - Carlos GOMES Junior 49.0%, Kumba YALA 23.4%, others 27.6%

Legislative branch:

unicameral National People's Assembly or Assembleia Nacional Popular (100 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms)

elections: last held on 16 November 2008 (legislative elections scheduled for 24 November 2013)

election results: percent of vote by party - PAIGC 49.8%, PRS 25.3%, PRID 7.5%, PND 2.4%, AD 1.4%, other parties 13.6%; seats by party - PAIGC 67, PRS 28, PRID 3, PND 1, AD 1

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Supreme Court of Justice (consists of 9 judges and organized into Civil, Criminal, and Social and Administrative Disputes Chambers)

note - the Supreme Court has both appellate and constitutional jurisdiction

judge selection and term of office: judges nominated by the Higher Council of the Magistrate, a major government organ responsible for judge appointments, dismissals, and discipline of the judiciary; judges appointed by the president with tenure for life

subordinate courts: Appeal Court; regional (first instance) courts; military court

Political parties and leaders:

African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde or PAIGC [Rui Dia de SOUSA]

Democratic Alliance or AD [Victor MANDINGA]

New Democracy Party or PND

Party for Social Renewal or PRS [Sory DJALO]

Republican Party for Independence and Development or PRID [Aristides GOMES]

Political pressure groups and leaders:

NA

International organization participation:

ACP, AfDB, AOSIS, AU (suspended), CPLP, ECOWAS, FAO, FZ, G-77, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), MIGA, NAM, OIC, OIF, OPCW, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, Union Latina, UNWTO, UPU, WADB (regional), WAEMU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: none; **note** - Guinea-Bissau does not have official representation in Washington, DC

Diplomatic representation from the US:

the US Embassy suspended operations on 14 June 1998 in the midst of violent conflict between forces loyal to then President VIEIRA and military-led junta; the US Ambassador to Senegal is accredited to Guinea-Bissau

Flag description:

two equal horizontal bands of yellow (top) and green with a vertical red band on the hoist side; there is a black five-pointed star centered in the red band; yellow symbolizes the sun; green denotes hope; red represents blood shed during the struggle for independence; the black star stands for African unity

note: uses the popular Pan-African colors of Ethiopia; the flag design was heavily influenced by the Ghanaian flag

National anthem:

name: "Esta e a Nossa Patria Bem Amada" (This Is Our Beloved Country)

[▶ PLAY ANTHEM](#)

lyrics/music: Amilcar Lopes CABRAL/XIAO He

note: adopted 1974; a delegation from Portuguese Guinea visited China in 1963 and heard music by XIAO He; Amilcar Lopes CABRA, the leader of Guinea-Bissau's independence movement, asked the composer to create a piece that would inspire his people to struggle for independence

Economy :: Guinea-Bissau

Economy - overview:

One of the poorest countries in the world, Guinea-Bissau's legal economy depends mainly on farming and fishing, but trafficking in narcotics is probably the most lucrative trade. The combination of limited economic prospects, a weak and faction-ridden government, and favorable geography have made this West African country a way station for drugs bound for Europe. Cashew crops have increased remarkably in recent years; low rainfall hindered cereals and other crops in 2011. Guinea-Bissau exports fish and seafood along with small amounts of peanuts, palm kernels, and timber. Rice is the major crop and staple food. However, intermittent fighting between Senegalese-backed government troops and a military junta destroyed much of the country's infrastructure and caused widespread damage to the economy in 1998; the civil war led to a 28% drop in GDP that year, with partial recovery in 1999-2002. In December 2003, the World Bank, IMF, and UNDP were forced to step in to provide emergency budgetary support in the amount of \$107 million for 2004, representing over 80% of the total national budget. The government is successfully implementing a three-year \$33 million extended credit arrangement with the IMF that runs through 2012. In December 2010 the World Bank and IMF announced support for \$1.2 billion worth of debt relief. Guinea-Bissau made progress with debt relief in 2011 when members of the Paris Club opted to write-off much of the country's obligations.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$1.963 billion (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 193

\$1.992 billion (2011 est.)

\$1.891 billion (2010 est.)

note: data are in 2012 US dollars

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$870 million (2012 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

-1.5% (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 203

5.3% (2011 est.)

3.5% (2010 est.)

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$1,200 (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 212

\$1,300 (2011 est.)

\$1,200 (2010 est.)

note: data are in 2012 US dollars

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 86.3%

government consumption: 12.9%

investment in fixed capital: 12.9%

investment in inventories: 0%

exports of goods and services: 21.9%

imports of goods and services: -33.9%
(2012 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 55.7%

industry: 13.2%

services: 31% (2012 est.)

Agriculture - products:

rice, corn, beans, cassava (manioc), cashew nuts, peanuts, palm kernels, cotton; timber; fish

Industries:

agricultural products processing, beer, soft drinks

Industrial production growth rate:

0.2% (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 132

Labor force:

632,700 (2007)

country comparison to the world: 153

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 82%

industry and services: 18% (2000 est.)

Unemployment rate:

NA%

Population below poverty line:

NA%

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 2.9%

highest 10%: 28% (2002)

Budget:

revenues: \$129.1 million

expenditures: \$153.4 million (2012 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

14.8% of GDP (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 194

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

-2.8% of GDP (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 107

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

2.4% (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 59

5% (2011 est.)

Central bank discount rate:

4.25% (31 December 2009)

country comparison to the world: 79

4.75% (31 December 2008)

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

15% (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 42

15% (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of narrow money:

\$266.1 million (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 170

\$308.7 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of broad money:

\$414.3 million (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 180

\$364.5 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of domestic credit:

\$170.2 million (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 183

\$122.4 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$NA

Current account balance:

-\$151.4 million (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 72

-\$95.9 million (2011 est.)

Exports:

\$139.8 million (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 186

\$244.6 million (2011 est.)

Exports - commodities:

fish, shrimp; cashew nuts, peanuts, palm kernels, sawn lumber

Exports - partners:

India 56%, Nigeria 28.4%, Togo 6.6% (2012)

Imports:

\$237 million (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 203

\$327.6 million (2011 est.)

Imports - commodities:

foodstuffs, machinery and transport equipment, petroleum products

Imports - partners:

Portugal 27.8%, Senegal 16.8%, US 7.1%, China 4.8%, Cuba 4.2% (2012)

Debt - external:

\$1.095 billion (31 December 2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 159

\$941.5 million (31 December 2000 est.)

Exchange rates:

Communaute Financiere Africaine francs (XOF) per US dollar -

510.53 (2012 est.)

471.87 (2011 est.)

495.28 (2010 est.)

472.19 (2009)

447.81 (2008)

Energy :: Guinea-Bissau

Electricity - production:

65 million kWh (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 201

Electricity - consumption:

60.45 million kWh (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 202

Electricity - exports:

0 kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 119

Electricity - imports:

0 kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 121

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

21,000 kW (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 195

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

100% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 31

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 163

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 190

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 175

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 178

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 170

Crude oil - imports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 112

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 177

Refined petroleum products - production:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 124

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

2,922 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 181

Refined petroleum products - exports:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 125

Refined petroleum products - imports:

2,578 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 173

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 181

Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 186

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 164

Natural gas - imports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 118

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 184

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

461,700 Mt (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 179

Communications :: Guinea-Bissau

Telephones - main lines in use:

5,000 (2010)

country comparison to the world: 210

Telephones - mobile cellular:

869,100 (2011)

country comparison to the world: 157

Telephone system:

general assessment: small system including a combination of microwave radio relay, open-wire lines, radiotelephone, and mobile-cellular communications

domestic: fixed-line teledensity less than 1 per 100 persons; mobile-cellular teledensity is roughly 50 per 100 persons

international: country code - 245 (2011)

Broadcast media:

1 state-owned TV station and a second station, Radio e Televisao de Portugal (RTP) Africa, is operated by Portuguese public broadcaster (RTP); 1 state-owned radio station, several private radio stations, and some community radio stations; multiple international broadcasters are available (2007)

Internet country code:

.gw

Internet hosts:

90 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 211

Internet users:

37,100 (2009)

country comparison to the world: 177

Transportation :: Guinea-Bissau

Airports:

8 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 161

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 2

over 3,047 m: 1

1,524 to 2,437 m: 1 (2013)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 6

1,524 to 2,437 m: 1

914 to 1,523 m: 2

under 914 m:

3 (2013)

Roadways:

total: 3,455 km

country comparison to the world: 161

paved: 965 km

unpaved: 2,490 km (2002)

Waterways:

(rivers are navigable for some distance; many inlets and creeks give shallow-water access to much of interior) (2012)

Ports and terminals:

major seaport(s): Bissau, Buba, Cacheu, Farim

Military :: Guinea-Bissau

Military branches:

People's Revolutionary Armed Force (FARP): Army, Navy, National Air Force (Forca Aerea Nacional); Presidential Guard (2012)

Military service age and obligation:

18-25 years of age for selective compulsory military service (Air Force service is voluntary); 16 years of age or younger, with parental consent, for voluntary service (2013)

Manpower available for military service:

males age 16-49: 370,790

females age 16-49: 372,171 (2010 est.)

Manpower fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 205,460

females age 16-49: 212,277 (2010 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:

male: 17,639

female: 17,865 (2010 est.)

Military expenditures:

4.3% of GDP (2011)

country comparison to the world: 22

Disputes - international:

in 2006, political instability within Senegal's Casamance region resulted in thousands of Senegalese refugees, cross-border raids, and arms smuggling into Guinea-Bissau

Refugees and internally displaced persons:

refugees (country of origin): 7,700 (Senegal) (2012)

Trafficking in persons:

current situation: Guinea-Bissau is a country of origin and destination for children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking; the scope of the problem of trafficking women or men for forced labor or forced prostitution is unknown; boys reportedly are transported to southern Senegal for forced manual and agricultural labor; girls may be subjected to forced domestic service and child prostitution in Senegal and Guinea; both boys and girls are forced to work as street vendors in cities in Guinea-Bissau and Senegal

tier rating: Tier 3 - the government of Guinea-Bissau does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so; despite enacting an anti-trafficking law and finalizing and adopting a national action plan in 2011, authorities have not conducted any investigations or prosecutions of trafficking offenses; the government has not provided adequate protection to identified trafficking victims, conducted any tangible prevention activities in 2012, or made progress on the implementation of its national action plan (2013)

Illicit drugs:

increasingly important transit country for South American cocaine en route to Europe; enabling environment for trafficker operations thanks to pervasive corruption; archipelago-like geography around the capital facilitates drug smuggling