



U.S. Country Commercial Guides



Guinea

2017

Table of Contents

<i>Doing Business in Guinea</i> _____	6
Market Overview _____	6
Market Challenges _____	8
Market Opportunities _____	9
Market Entry Strategy _____	11
<i>Political Environment</i> _____	12
<i>Selling US Products & Services</i> _____	15
Using an Agent to Sell US Products and Services _____	15
Establishing an Office _____	15
Franchising _____	17
Direct Marketing _____	17
Joint Ventures/Licensing _____	18
Selling to the Government _____	18
Distribution & Sales Channels _____	19
Express Delivery _____	19
Selling Factors & Techniques _____	19
eCommerce _____	20
Trade Promotion & Advertising _____	22
Pricing _____	25
Sales Service/Customer Support _____	25
Protecting Intellectual Property _____	25
Due Diligence _____	26
Local Professional Services _____	26
Principle Business Associations _____	27
Limitations on Selling US Products and Services _____	27
Web Resources _____	27
<i>Leading Sectors for US Exports & Investments</i> _____	28

Equipment and Machinery	28
Overview	28
Leading Sub-Sectors	28
Opportunities	29
Web Resources	29
Agricultural Sector	30
Overview	30
Leading Sub-Sectors	31
Web Resources	31
Oil and Gas	32
Overview	32
Leading Sub-Sectors	33
Opportunities	33
Web Resources	33
Construction and Semi-Finished Materials	34
Overview	34
Leading Sub-Sectors	34
Opportunities	35
Web Resources	35
Renewable Energy and Power Generation	36
Overview	36
Leading Sub-Sectors	36
Opportunities	36
Web Resources	37
Processed Foods	37
Overview	37
Leading Sub-Sectors	38
Opportunities	38
<i>Customs, Regulations & Standards</i>	39
Trade Barriers	39
Import Tariffs	39
Import Requirements & Documentation	40
U.S. Export Controls	40
Temporary Entry	40
Labeling/Marking Requirements	41
Prohibited & Restricted Imports	41
Customs Regulations	41
Standards for Trade	42

Trade Agreements	42
Licensing Requirements for Professional Services	43
Resources	43
<i>Investment Climate Statement</i>	44
Executive Summary	44
Openness to and Restrictions upon Foreign Investment	47
Policies Towards Foreign Direct Investment	47
Limits on Foreign Control and Right to Private Ownership and Establishment	48
Other Investment Policy Reviews	48
Business Facilitation	49
Outward Investment	49
Bilateral Investment Agreements and Taxation Treaties	49
Legal Regime	50
Transparency of the Regulatory System	50
International Regulatory Considerations	52
Legal System and Judicial Independence	52
Laws and Regulations on Foreign Direct Investment	53
Competition and Anti-Trust Laws	54
Expropriation and Compensation	54
Dispute Settlement	55
Bankruptcy Regulations	57
Industrial Policies	58
Investment Incentives	58
Foreign Trade Zones/Free Ports/Trade Facilitation	58
Performance and Data Localization Requirements	58
Protection of Property Rights	59
Real Property	59
Intellectual Property Rights	59
Financial Sector	60
Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment	60
Money and Banking System	61
Foreign Exchange and Remittances	62
Sovereign Wealth Funds	64
State-Owned Enterprises	64
Privatization Program	65
Responsible Business Conduct	66
Corruption	66
Political and Security Environment	69

Labor Policies and Practices	72
OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs	79
Foreign Direct Investment and Foreign Portfolio Investment Statistics	79
Contact for More Information on the Investment Climate Statement	81
<i>Trade & Project Financing</i>	82
Methods of Payment	82
Banking Systems	82
Foreign Exchange Controls	82
US Banks & Local Correspondent Banks	82
Project Financing	83
Web Resources	85
<i>Business Travel</i>	86
Business Customs	86
Travel Advisory	87
Visa Requirements	87
Currency	88
Telecommunications/Electric	88
Language	89
Health	89
Local Time, Business Hours and Holidays	91
Temporary Entry of Materials or Personal Belongings	93
Web Resources	93

Doing Business in Guinea

Market Overview

Despite persistent corruption and fiscal mismanagement, the long-term economic prognosis of Guinea remains promising, buoyed by strong endowments of natural resources, energy opportunities, arable land, and ample, reliable rainfall. Constrained by an austere budget, Guinea has increasingly looked to foreign investment to stimulate growth. China, Guinea's largest trading partner, has dramatically increased its role through investment agreements. Guinea is one of the world's poorest countries, with a GDP of only \$6.6 billion. Underdevelopment has limited its exposure to international trade. Guinea is not a major trading partner with the United States. In 2015, imports to and exports from the United States represented just 2% and 3%, respectively, of the total value of goods passing through Guinea's Port. Guinea's largest trading partner is China, although the European Union collectively accounts for over 40% of Guinea's imports.

Endowed with abundant mineral resources, Guinea has the potential to be an economic leader in extractive industry. Guinea is home to over half the world's reserves of bauxite (aluminum ore). Bauxite is the most active mining sector in Guinea, accounting for over half of Guinea's present exports. Guinea also possesses over four billion tons of untapped high-grade iron ore, significant gold and diamond reserves, undetermined amounts of uranium, as well as prospective off-shore oil reserves. In 2016, mineral resources, primarily gold and bauxite, accounted for 85% of Guinea's exports. Most of the country's bauxite is exported by Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinee (CBG) via a designated port in Kamsar or Chinese conglomerate SMB via the Rio Nunez River. CBG is a joint venture between the Government of Guinea, U.S. company Alcoa and Anglo-Australian firm Rio Tinto. New investment in CBG in addition to new market entries are expected to

significantly increase Guinea's bauxite output over the next five to ten years. Depressed commodities markets, however, have slowed mining development in other areas, particularly in iron, stalling other mining developments, including the once-promising iron ore deposit in Guinea's interior known as Simandou.

Guinea's abundant rainfall, sunny weather, and natural geography bode well for hydroelectric and renewable energy production. The most significant energy investment in Guinea is the 240MW Kaleta Dam project that began operating its first hydro turbine in May 2015. Built and financed (\$526 million) by China, Kaleta more than doubled Guinea's electricity supply and for the first time furnished Conakry with relatively dependable electricity. The government is seeking backing for even larger hydroelectricity projects and investing in distribution infrastructure to become an energy supplier in West Africa. A second major dam, Souapiti, is already under construction with Chinese backing. The government is also looking to invest in solar and other energy sources to compensate for lost hydroelectric production in Guinea's dry season.

Agriculture and fisheries are another area of opportunity and growth in Guinea. Already an exporter of fruits, vegetables, and palm oil to its immediate neighbors, Guinea is climatically well-suited for large-scale agricultural production. The sector has suffered from decades of neglect and mismanagement and was the sector hit hardest by the 2014-2015 Ebola crisis. Guinea also remains an importer of rice, its primary staple crop.

Guinea's macroeconomic and financial situation is weak but improved over the past two years. Ebola crippled Guinea's economic growth prospects in 2014 and 2015, leaving the government with few financial resources to support the Guinean economy. Decreased natural resource revenues and ill-

advised government loans strained an already sparse government budget. 6 – 7% growth returned to Guinea in 2016 and will likely be maintained into 2017, but the government is under pressure from segments of Guinean society to deliver tangible development progress. The demand for credit, particularly for small and medium sized enterprises, exceeds available supply. The government is increasingly looking to international investment to increase growth and job creation.

Guinea has recently updated its Investment Code and renewed efforts to attract international investors. Guinea's investment promotion agency rolled out a new website (invest.gov.gn) in 2016 to increase transparency and streamline investment. However, Guinea's capacity to enforce its more investor-friendly laws is compromised by a weak and unreliable legal system.

Market Challenges

Government bureaucracy and pervasive corruption severely hamper economic development in Guinea. As of 2017, the World Bank ranked Guinea 163rd out of 190 countries worldwide in its annual "Ease of Doing Business Index." Transparency International's 2016 "Corruption Perception Index" ranked Guinea as 142nd of 176 countries and territories listed. Guinea is also challenged by inadequate infrastructure, an inefficient bureaucracy, a lack of skilled workers, and political uncertainty.

Guinea lacks the infrastructure capabilities necessary to support advanced commercial activities, but conditions are improving. Electricity service has vastly improved throughout the capital city of Conakry since the completion of Kaleta Dam in summer of 2015, but power cuts are common in the dry months between February and May. Water service in the capital is intermittent, and largely unsafe for consumption. In the interior of the

country, access to electricity and water is largely unavailable. Transportation infrastructure, including roads, railroad, and the port system, is uneven, though the Government of Guinea has targeted infrastructure improvement as a high priority for the coming years. The road network in certain areas, such as the outskirts of Conakry, between Dabola and Kankan, and Beyla to N'Zerekore, have been upgraded with resources from either international donors or corporate partners in the mining sector. Telecommunication operating costs are high and service is slow and subject to “black outs” due to lack of equipment, but the ongoing installation of fiber optic networks is improving internet connectivity, though connections lag behind U.S. standards.

The risk of widespread political violence exists, but is remote in Guinea. Guinea has never been afflicted by a civil war. Historically, street protests have caused isolated looting and violence, particularly in Conakry, but such events have steadily decreased in relative severity since the 2010 democratic transition.

Market Opportunities

Guinea is richly endowed with natural resources, especially minerals. Guinea possesses over 25 billion metric tons of bauxite, thought to be up to one half of the world's reserves. In addition, Guinea also has over 4 billion tons of high-grade iron ore, significant gold and diamond reserves, and undetermined amounts of uranium and prospective oil reserves. The majority of these resources have yet to be extracted due to the lack of existing infrastructure. There is great potential for companies capable of contributing to Guinea's development of infrastructure including rails, ports, and roads. Owing to Guinea's favorable climate and geography, there is also considerable potential for growth in its agricultural and fishing sectors. Investment opportunities are growing in hydroelectricity projects, as

abundant rainfall and waterways have the potential to generate enough electricity to power both Guinea and its surrounding neighbors.

The return of political stability and the inauguration of a democratically elected president in 2010 facilitated international investment in Guinea. New mining projects, a port expansion, hotel construction, and other infrastructure projects have attracted new capital and boosted demand for goods and services across multiple sectors. In spite of tremendous potential for Guinea's iron ore exports, legal issues and, more recently, low global commodity prices, have greatly slowed progress and extended the timetable for development. Guinea was poised for an economic rebound in 2014, but after Ebola was identified in March 2014 the economy stalled. Guinea returned to growth in 2016, fueled largely by expanding bauxite exports and a robust agriculture sector.

Guinean consumers generally prefer products made in the United States, including services and technology; however, the high cost of U.S. products compared to cheaper imports from the Middle East and Asia inhibits the wide-scale purchase of U.S. goods. Appropriate pricing is important and low cost items will be more successful in Guinea, as the country's GNI per capita was approximately \$530 in 2015.

The government is seeking investment in all sectors of the economy, but economic growth will most likely be led by the energy, agriculture, and mining sectors. The government hopes to attract foreign investors to agriculture, construction, education, finance, and communication. Information concerning opportunities is disseminated via tenders listed in the Official Journal (Journal Officiel de la Republique) and in international newspapers when the government wishes to solicit international participation. Guinea's international investment promotion agency has

launched a new website www.invest.gov.gn to serve as a one stop shop for investors. Furthermore, high-level government officials travel to trade shows and international cities throughout the year promoting investment opportunities in Guinea. Guinean government officials meet with business executives throughout the year in Europe, the United States, China, and on the African continent.

Market Entry Strategy

The technical process of starting a business in Guinea is theoretically straightforward. According to Guinean regulations, the process is centralized at the Agency for the Promotion of Private Investment (APIP), the central business registration office. However, larger investments have recently been initiated directly through the Office of the President. As per the World Bank “Ease of Doing Business Index,” market entry in Guinea is slow, convoluted, variable, and littered with corruption. Although the new government is eager to attract foreign investment and has made efforts to improve the process, Guinea remains a difficult place to invest.

Successful ventures tend to be those that establish strong relationships with potential local partners. It is strongly encouraged that potential investors visit Guinea and establish these connections. Because of poor communications within the country and with the outside world, and also as a cultural practice, most business deals are conducted in person. The U.S. Embassy’s Economic/Commercial Section can assist potential investors in making these connections and offers Gold Key and International Partners programs.

Political Environment

U.S.–Guinea Relations

The United States maintained close relations with Guinea prior to the country's 2008 military coup d'état, which the U.S. condemned. Following Guinea's presidential elections in 2010, the United States reestablished strong diplomatic relations with the government. U.S. policy seeks to encourage Guinea's democratic reforms, its positive contribution to regional stability, and sustainable economic and social development.

The United States supported free, fair, peaceful, and inclusive legislative elections in 2013 and a second presidential election in 2015, marking positive advances in Guinea's democratic development. The U.S. also played a key role in Guinea's fight against the 2014–2015 Ebola epidemic and is now engaged in preventing and combating future epidemics in the country. The United States is committed to helping Guinea consolidate its democratic transition with the goal of fostering sustainable economic growth. The United States also continues to support Guinea's Security Sector Reform and Law and Justice Sector Reform, and assists Guinea to professionalize its military and security forces in an effort to promote democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights.

U.S. Assistance to Guinea

U.S. development assistance focuses on increasing the utilization of quality health services and strengthening democratic governance and economic growth. USAID carries out development activities in support of the President's Malaria Initiative and finances health programs designed to strengthen the health system and restore health services that have been adversely affected by the 2014–2016 Ebola epidemic. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health are both

also activity engaged in strengthening the country's health care system, in partnership with USAID. Democracy and governance programs focus on promoting local ownership and citizen participation into the decision-making process.

The United States Peace Corps works throughout the country in the secondary education, agro-forestry, and public health sectors. Examples of recent initiatives include malaria prevention, youth development, and food security.

The U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) continue to professionalize Guinea's military and security forces through an array of security assistance programs such as: International Military Education and Training (IMET), English language training, Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA), direct support to the Guinean peacekeeping mission in Mali, the Department of Defense HIV/AIDS Prevention Program (DHAPP), maritime domain awareness, and the African Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS).

[Bilateral Economic Relations](#)

In late 2011, the United States reinstated Guinea's African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) benefits. The reinstatement followed a review by the U.S. government to examine whether the country had made "continual progress" in meeting AGOA's eligibility criteria. Those criteria include establishment of a market-based economy, rule of law, economic policies to reduce poverty, protection of internationally recognized worker rights, and efforts to combat corruption. Progress in the political sphere was an important additional factor. AGOA eligibility provides the potential for an increase in mutually beneficial trade and investment between Guinea and the United States.

The United States and Guinea have signed an investment guarantee agreement offering political risk insurance to U.S. investors through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

[Guinea's Membership in International Organizations](#)

Guinea has been active in efforts toward regional integration and cooperation. Guinea and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations, including the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization.

[Bilateral Representation](#)

The U.S. Ambassador to Guinea is Dennis B. Hankins; other principal embassy officials are listed in the Department's Key Officers List.

Selling US Products & Services

Using an Agent to Sell US Products and Services

Entering a successful partnership or representational relationship can be difficult in Guinea. The Guinean judicial system is understaffed, corrupt, lacks transparency, and accounting practices are frequently unreliable. U.S. businesses should exercise extreme caution when entering contract arrangements, and do so with local legal representation. The U.S. Embassy Economic/Commercial Section and Guinea's Agency of Private Investment Promotion (APIP) are good points of contact with the local business community. In 2015, U.S. Embassy Conakry facilitated establishment of an American and International Business Committee that can provide investor references.

Establishing an Office

There are six categories of companies recognized by the Code of Economic Activities:

- Joint Stock Companies, either S.A. (minimum capitalization of at least 100 million GNF, approx. \$15,000) or S.A.R.L. (minimum capitalization of 10 million GNF, approx. \$1,500)
- Partnerships
- Non-trading Real Estate Companies
- Professional Services Companies
- Cooperatives
- Special and grouping companies, including joint venture companies, de facto companies, and temporary groupings

Legal incorporation for new investments involves signing by-laws, depositing the start-up capital in a blocked bank account, registering the

company in the Register of Economic Activities, and announcing the incorporation in a journal for legal notices. The process is centralized at the Guichet Unique (One-Stop-Shop) in Kaporo, established in December 2011 and operated by the Agency for Private Investment Promotion (APIP), part of the Ministry of Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises.

Fees for individuals total 212,500 GNF (approximately \$32). Total fees for limited liability partnerships are 550,000 GNF (\$80) plus a sliding fee to register the statutes and procès-verbal: 1 percent of capital for companies with a capitalization between 10 and 100 million GNF (\$1,500 to \$15,000), 0.5 percent for companies between 100 million and 500 million GNF (\$15,000 to \$75,000), and 0.25 percent of capital for any amount above 500 million GNF (\$75,000). Corporations pay 650,000 GNF (\$97) plus 0.5 percent of capitalization between 100 million and 1 billion GNF (\$15,000 to \$150,000). Cooperatives register free of charge. The company must submit two photos of the company's director, managing director, or agent, and a copy of his or her identification and visa (if a foreigner), as well a rental contract for the physical location of the office. Corporations and LLPs must also provide proof of a bank account containing their initial capital to assess the statute registration fee. A branch office can be established through the same procedure at a cost of 700,000 GNF (\$105).

Following registration, to apply for "privileged regime" status and benefit from the provisions of Guinea's investment code, the company will need to address a letter to the Minister of Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises detailing the nature of the company, describing the installation and equipment, projecting anticipated production and revenue for the next

three years, and estimating the number of jobs to be created. Large projects entailing new construction may need to submit feasibility studies. The proposal will be reviewed by the National Investment Commission, composed of representatives from APIP, Customs, and the Ministries of Finance, Justice, Taxes, and Tourism.

Although employees at the Guichet Unique seem competent and well-trained, the new registration process is not yet fully streamlined. Most notably, incoming investors have had difficulty with the rental contract requirement: the Guichet Unique requires a rental contract to establish a business, but most landlords require that the company be established before agreeing to a lease.

Franchising

Franchise arrangements are rare in Guinea, but the U.S. Embassy is aware of franchising in petroleum distributorships with the French gasoline company Total and the Sheraton Grand Hotel Conakry, which opened in late 2016.

Direct Marketing

Although the government permits direct marketing, the U.S. Embassy knows of no such companies currently operating in Guinea due to the lack of a reliable postal system or land line telephone network. Demonstration events or product fairs are generally best for high-technology or specifically for products targeting a small market niche in Conakry. Small fairs can be staged in a hotel or public space available in Guinea's larger cities or through agreement with a local partner or government office.

The U.S. Embassy has sponsored business development seminars to introduce Guinean businesses to working in partnership with U.S. companies. The Embassy also helps organize Guinean delegations for U.S. product trade and demonstration events. The Commercial Section helps to facilitate connections between Guinean buyers and producers with appropriate U.S. counterparts.

Joint Ventures/Licensing

Joint ventures with local Guinean companies follow the same procedures as outlined above in the Establishing an Office Section. Joint ventures with the government are managed by the Office of Public-Private Partnerships. As part of the 2011 Mining Code, the Guinean government is accorded an automatic 15 percent share in all mining projects, with the option to purchase up to an additional 20 percent.

Selling to the Government

The rules governing sales to the Guinean government vary depending on the amount of investment, source of funds, and nature of material. Donor countries and institutions stipulate the bidding and awarding rules for foreign financed public investment projects. The Guinean Central Procurement Agency (AGCP) handles projects and contracts valued at over one million dollars. The public market handles projects and contracts that are valued under one million dollars. The government's lax procurement regulation has been identified as one of the most serious corruption loopholes and has been targeted for reform. These projects and contracts generally go to Guinea-based companies and there have been allegations of non-competitive practices. The various ministries and government organizations are responsible for the procurement of their own materials and services (not as part of an investment project); they generally order from local representatives or from foreign sources. In many cases, the government

does not meet payment obligations in a timely fashion, so advance payment is strongly recommended.

Many governments finance public works projects through borrowing from the Multilateral Development Banks. Please refer to “*Project Financing*” Section in “*Trade and Project Financing*” for more information.

Distribution & Sales Channels

Each industry has its own policy and network for sales and distribution. Sales of communication products usually occur through wholesalers who import in bulk for resale to small traders or distributors in the interior of the country. Retailers often directly import luxury consumer goods. Generally, mining, utility, and industrial firms conduct heavy equipment purchases directly through suppliers. Service and customer support should not be expected, and are only possible if negotiated at the time of sale. Guinea features many open-air marketplaces, numerous small shops, and a few medium-sized grocery stores. A majority of consumer sales are completed within the informal (“black”) market.

Express Delivery

There are three main delivery companies operating in Guinea: DHL, UPS, and Bollore Logistic Express, which recently replaced Fedex. Using one of these services, sending a parcel from the United States to Guinea requires between four and five days. Prices for package delivery to the United States range from \$45 to \$80 depending on relative size and weight.

Selling Factors & Techniques

The Guinean population is approximately 85 percent Muslim, and Islam plays a significant role in shaping the customs and habits of the local business culture. Though Guinean culture is very tolerant of other religions, U.S. businesspeople should be familiar with the basic tenets of Islam to help

facilitate their transactions. The country's official language is French, though many major traders are not fluent, and prefer to use local languages (Peular, Malinké, and Soussou, for example). In addition, the rate of literacy in Guinea is very low, with estimates that only 30 percent of the population is considered to be literate. Few Guineans use English in business discussions and even less so outside of Conakry. Friendship and trust are extremely important in Guinean culture. It takes time to build a successful working relationship in Guinea. Effort, patience, and face-to-face contact are required to bring business transactions to fruition.

It is also important to understand the political environment in which Guinea is currently operating. Financial investment is centralized around the Office of the President. Processes and decisions directed by the government can be invariable and inconsistent. The new government pledged to address these issues, making discussions and contractual negotiations more transparent and spread out among relevant ministries, but progress toward transparency, although improving, has been slow.

eCommerce Overview

Although there is limited internet connectivity available in Guinea, it is not yet a viable or feasible method for trade and promotion. Guinea has been connected to the submarine fiber optic cable off the coast since 2013 so as the internet penetration rate rises, it is expected that electronic commerce will increase commensurately in the future as access becomes easier and the costs decrease. The government signed a \$238 million fiber optic backbone project that is currently installing 4,000 km of fiber optic cable throughout the country. The project is expected to be completed by 2018. The majority of households and businesses in Guinea have difficulty obtaining electricity and,

consequently, do not have internet, although mobile internet access is ramping up quickly, especially through the use of “medium technology” phones capable of simple internet connections. Internet cafes do exist in some of the larger cities, but they are expensive for many Guinean consumers.

Guinea is a cash economy. A majority of Guinea’s commerce is informal and transactions are mostly completed with cash. At present, the banking systems cannot support e-commerce nor ensure the reliability or safety of transactions completed with credit or debit cards. Mobile money platforms are being rolled out aggressively by the mobile phone companies. Most monetary amounts are moved via a money transfer system, such as Western Union or MoneyGram. ATM machines exist in Conakry but are generally rare.

Popular eCommerce Sites

It is rare for Guineans to make purchases online as the vast majority of Guineans do not have credit cards and the unreliable nature of the Guinean postal service makes delivery of goods impossible to market.

Mobile eCommerce

Mobile money is a fast growing part of the Guinean economy. Most Guineans who use mobile banking use the “Orange Money” platform, a partnership between Guinea’s largest cell carrier Orange and Ecobank.

Digital Marketing

Digital Marketing has grown significantly in over the past two years, particularly over Facebook. Private companies are increasingly turning to Facebook to target Guineans with disposable incomes and government ministries have begun using Facebook as a platform to communicate with the general population.

Major Buying Holidays

Guinea is a Muslim country and major buying holidays follow the Islamic calendar. Eid-al-fitr and Tabaski are major gift-giving holidays. Christmas and New Year's holidays are minor buying holidays as well.

Social Media

Social Media is growing quickly as a standard means of interfacing with the internet and communicating. Facebook dominates the Guinean social media market. Twitter, Instagram, and other platforms have low penetration rates in Guinea.

Trade Promotion & Advertising

The Guinean press operates with little official government interference. However, some media outlets occasionally report government harassment or are subject to excessive fines, under the guise of special "licensing costs." The majority of Guinea's population is illiterate, so the best and most preferred method for advertising and commercial promotion is through the radio. In 2006, the government liberalized airwave frequencies, and today there are roughly 30 radio stations operating in Guinea, many of which provide substantial air time to advertising products and services. Domestic print media has low circulation and limited readership due to the high cost of printing materials and the high illiteracy rate.

The major newspapers in Guinea include: one daily government publication, one daily independent, eight major weekly independents, and several other independent newspapers that are published intermittently. Advertising in print media is fairly limited, though many newspapers would likely be receptive to advertising revenue. There are no regular English-language publications. The government-run television station, Radio Television

Guinee (RTG), is the oldest television broadcaster. There are a few nascent independent TV stations that Guineans generally find to be more credible than the public television station. Most Guineans do not have access to television broadcasts.

Popular private radio stations:

- EspaceFM (96.6)
- NostalgieGuinee (98.2)
- LiberteFM (101.7)
- SabariFM (97.3)
- HorizonFM (103.4)
- SoleilFM (93.5)
- EvasionFM (90.7)
- DjiguiFM (105.7)
- CherieFM (104.1)
- RenaissanceFM (95.9)
- FamiliaFM (105.3)
- GanganFM (101.1)
- Lynx FM (91.00)
- City FM (88.1)
- Planet (106.3)

Selected Publications:

- Horoya (government daily): BP 341, Conakry; Email: horoya2010@yahoo.fr
- La République (independent daily), Telephone: 628 54 69 52, Email: quotidienlarepublique@gmail.com
- Le Lynx (political weekly)/La Lance: BP 4968, Conakry; Email: lerynx@mirinet.net.gn; Website: Mirinet

- L'independent/La Democrate: BP 2427, Conakry; Email: indept@mirinet.net.gn
- L'Observateur: BP 1955, Conakry; Email: dembureau@yahoo.fr
- Le Standard: BP 6682, Conakry, Hassan Abraham Kaba; Telephone: +224 601 20 01 01
- Le Diplomate: PB 22 Conakry; Telephone: +224 655 51 51 51; Email: hawasanouci@yahoo.fr
- Le Defi: PB 66 33 Conakry; Telephone: +224 666 45 41 03; Email: jledefi@yahoo.fr
- La Nouvelle: PB 8647; Email: contmoussaiboun@yahoo.fr; Tel: +224 601 26 94 56
- La Croisade: Telephone: +224 601 26 97 73
- Ecovision: PB 36 29 Conakry; Tel: +224 622 48 10 45; Email: kenssa2@yahoo.fr
- Lynx (satirical weekly newspaper)
- Lance (political weekly paper)

Websites:

- [Guinee News](#)
- [Africa Guinee](#)
- [Guinee Live](#)
- [The Day Guinea](#)
- [Media Guinee](#)
- [GCI News](#)
- [Conakryinfos](#)
- [Guinee Inter](#)
- [Guinee WebInfo](#)
- [Kibarou](#)
- [KabaBachir](#)

- [Tam Tam Guinea](#)
- [The Facts of Guinea](#)
- [Mosaïque Guinea](#)
- [Guinee 24](#)
- [Guinee 58](#)
- [Kibanyi Guinea](#)
- [Focus Guinea](#)
- [Le Verificateur](#)
- [Le Jour](#)

Pricing

While U.S. goods are popular in Guinea, the low-income market favors low-cost goods, especially from Asia. For low-cost items, if the difference in cost is not significant, consumers strongly prefer U.S. products. The average mark-up is 25 percent, but can range as high as 100-150 percent. While some American food stuffs are imported by high-end grocers, the mark-up on these products is substantial, limiting the consumer base. In 2017, the government decreased value added taxes from 20% to 18%. Certain staples such as rice and wheat in addition to materials associated with investments in certain sectors can secure exemptions from this tax.

Sales Service/Customer Support

Sales Service and Customer Support are relatively unknown in Guinea, especially due to the informal nature of Guinea's market. The principle of "buyer beware" applies throughout the country.

Protecting Intellectual Property

In any foreign market companies should consider several general principles for effective management of their intellectual property. For background on these principles please link to our article on [Protecting Intellectual Property](#) and also [Corruption](#).

Guinea has signed a number of major IPR treaties, such as the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) copyright treaty, the Berne Convention for Literary and Artistic Works, the Madrid System for the International Registration of Marks, and the Patent Cooperation Treaty.

IP Attaché Contact Guinea

Name: VACANT

Address

Telephone

E-mail

Due Diligence

The use of a local attorney as a source of consultation and guidance, especially in the case of business disputes, is strongly recommended. The judicial system in Guinea is underdeveloped, underfunded, and there are frequent reports of rampant corruption. The U.S. Embassy's Consular Section maintains a list of local attorneys, though the list should not be interpreted as an endorsement of any of the attorneys listed. A list of local attorneys is also available from the Ministry of Justice.

There is no existing agency through which U.S. businesses can verify the credit background of counterparts in Guinea before doing business. The U.S. Embassy suggests requesting a letter of credit before commencing business transactions.

Local Professional Services

A list of local attorneys and physicians is available from the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy (Email: conconakry@state.gov).

There are several accounting firms present in Guinea, including:

Ernst and Young: Mr. Rene-Marie Kondiano, Country Managing Partner; Tel: +224-621-99-99-10; Email: rene-marie.kadouno@gn.ey.com

PriceWaterHouseCoopers: Mr. Mohamed Lahlou, Director; Tel: 664-00-00-37 Email: Mohamed.lahlou@gn.pwc.com

KPMG Audieurs Associes en Afrique: Mory Cisse, Manager; Jean-Joseph Gomez, auditor; Tel: +224-601-34-48-56; Email: jean-joseph@caramail.com

Audit Guinee: email: auditguinee@yahoo.fr

Alpha Kabine Cisse, Manager; Tel: +224-601-21-62-45; Email: akaudit@yahoo.fr

Principle Business Associations

While there are sector specific associations that exist for industries including pharmaceuticals, mining, and transportation, the principle international investors association is CEAIG (American and International Business Committee). Committee President is Mr. Mohamed Lahlou: Tel: 664-00-00-37 Email: Mohamed.lahlou@gn.pwc.com

Limitations on Selling US Products and Services

There are no specific limitations on the selling of U.S. products and services in Guinea.

Web Resources

Investment assistance and resources is available at [Investment Portal of the Republic of Guinea](#).

Leading Sectors for US Exports & Investments

Equipment and Machinery

Overview

Guinea has little manufacturing capability, so most machinery and equipment must be imported into the country. With government and private investments in large infrastructure continuing as the country develops, the sector is likely to expand.

	2014	2015	2016	2017 (Estimated)
Total Local Production	175,090	217,014	240,000	
Total Exports	0	0	0	
Total Imports	175,090	217,014	240,000	
Imports from the US				
Total Market Size	175,090	217,014	240,000	
Exchange Rates	175,090	217,014	240,000	

(total market size = (total local production + imports) - exports)

Leading Sub-Sectors

The sector with the most potential is the mining sector. Bauxite, iron ore, gold, and diamond mining projects represent key markets for Guinea. Additionally - and linked to the success of the mining projects development - road and railroad construction is a potentially lucrative market in the future. However, most recently, large road contracts went exclusively to politically well-connected Guinean or Chinese construction firms.

Opportunities

There are several opportunities for exporting machinery and equipment to Guinea, particularly in the mining sector. Several mining companies are in the early exploration or construction phases of their contracts and will likely look to make substantial investments in machinery and construction equipment in the upcoming years. Additionally, new hotels, office buildings, and road construction in and around Conakry offer opportunities for machinery and equipment sales.

Web Resources

- [Investment Portal for the Republic of Guinea](#)
- [EGA – Guinea Alumina Corporation](#)
- [Alcoa – Guinea](#)
- [RioTinto – Simandou](#)
- [ALUFER – Guinea](#)
- [Newmont](#) (no info on Guinea’s operation)
- [Groupe Guicopres](#)
- [Guter SA Mining](#)
- [United Mining Supply](#)

Agricultural Sector

Overview

Historically, Guinea was the major agricultural producer among the colonies of French West Africa. The sector has subsequently collapsed, making Guinea a net food importer, despite its immense agricultural potential. Agricultural production is, with few exceptions, at the smallholder/subsistence level. However, with increased direct foreign investment in the mining sector, other foreign firms are looking to invest in agricultural projects in Guinea, such as rice production in the northern region of Boké. The government is currently self-funding the construction of a rice irrigation project on the Koundian Plain outside of Kankan. The government hopes to be self-sufficient in the production of rice by 2020.

Guinean producers have little or no access to short-term loans or guaranteed markets, so it is difficult for them to make capital improvements in their farms. Poor or nonexistent infrastructure compounds the problem, as producers have little access to cold storage or good roads. As a result, it is hard to get produce to local markets before it starts to spoil, let alone transport it overseas. Some producers are making the transition to dried foodstuffs, which are easier to transport, but lack the necessary machinery and capability to make this a large-scale operation.

While sophisticated producers are aware of U.S. sanitary and phytosanitary regulations, it is difficult for Guinean producers to meet the regulations at the present time. There is potential for Guinea to export bananas, pineapples, potatoes, mangoes, other fruits and vegetables, flowers, and plants if these problems are overcome. These could provide for significant investment opportunities for U.S. business.

Guinea's largest suppliers of rice are Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Pakistan, China, and Taiwan. Flour imports originate largely in France and Morocco. Principal sugar suppliers include Belgium, France, Brazil, and Senegal. Periodically, the government takes measures to protect domestic agricultural production. For example, in 2011 the government banned many agricultural exports, most notably rice, believing that this would hold down domestic prices. In 2016, the government banned the export of many high value agricultural exports overland in an attempt to capture more trade via sea and airports.

Leading Sub-Sectors

Areas that may offer potential for U.S. exports are rice and wheat, along with livestock feed. For interested U.S. exporters, Guinea is eligible under two USDA export programs: the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP, which is not operational at this time), and the GSM-102 Export Credit Guarantee Program. For further information, please contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Credit Programs Division, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 1025, Washington, D.C. 20250-1025.

Web Resources

[Portal of Investments for the Republique de Guinee - Agriculture](#)

Oil and Gas

Overview

Currently, the Guinean government fixes gasoline at the retail level, subsidizing prices to ease the burden on consumers. Since the start of 2015, due to the decrease in world oil prices the government has reduced the price of gasoline from 10,000 GNF/liter to 9,000 GNF in February 2015 to 8,000 GNF/liter in March. As of June 2017, the price remains at 8,000 GNF/liter for all grades of fuel. The exchange rate as of June 2017 is 9,100 GNF/U.S. dollar.

Storage capacity of petroleum products in Guinea is a problem, with the sole private importer, Guinea Petroleum Company (SGP), having capacity only for an amount equal to about three weeks demand. There is no petroleum refinery in Guinea, meaning that even the slightest interruption in fuel deliveries may provoke fuel shortages. Major consumers include mining companies, retail gasoline stations, and the state-owned electrical utility's diesel generators.

	2014	2015	2016	2017 (Estimated)
Total Local Production	778,782	494,949		
Total Exports	0	0		
Total Imports	778,782	494,949		
Imports from the US	0	0		
Total Market Size	778,782	494,949		
Exchange Rates	778,782	494,949		

(total market size = (total local production + imports) - exports)

Leading Sub-Sectors

The extent of Guinea's potential oil and gas reserves remains unknown, but promising. A U.S.-owned firm conducted oil exploration studies off of Guinea's coast. In February 2012, their first exploratory well uncovered non-commercial quantities of oil. As of May 2017, further planned exploratory offshore drilling is set to recommence in partnership with a Nigerian oil firm.

Opportunities

The Guinean government is assessing ways to repair its dilapidated energy grid, and may seek new avenues to access petroleum products for its power plant.

Web Resources

[Hyperdynamics](#)

Construction and Semi-Finished Materials

Overview

From 2008 to 2010, political instability and the global economic crisis slowed construction considerably. However, the return of international investors to Guinea after 2010's presidential elections sparked a boom in hotel, residential, and office building construction. Construction in the capital of Conakry remains robust. As in most other sectors, most construction material must be imported.

	2014	2015	2016	2017 (Estimated)
Total Local Production				
Total Exports				
Total Imports	63,557	62,329		
Imports from the US				
<u>Total Market Size</u>				
Exchange Rates				

(total market size = (total local production + imports) - exports)

Leading Sub-Sectors

As with much of Guinea's economy, the best prospects for growth revolve around mining company operations. Several mining companies are expected to begin construction on projects and will require a vast amount of infrastructure development to access their concessions.

Opportunities

There are several major bauxite companies in the process of expanding or establishing operations in Guinea. These include The Guinea Alumina Corporation's bauxite project in Sangaredi and Kamsar, UK- based Alufer, and Compagnie Bauxite de Guinee (CBG). CBG's expansion alone is valued at \$660 million and U.S. company FLUOR is leading the infrastructural preparation for CBG's expansion project. There will also be major construction in the Kipe neighborhood of Conakry as Guicopres leads a consortium building the new seat of government over the next several years.

Web Resources

- [Bechtel](#)
- [Fluor](#)
- [Alufer](#)
- [Guinea Alumina Corporation](#)
- [Anglo Gold Ashanti](#)
- [Guicopres BTP](#)

Renewable Energy and Hydropower Generation

Overview

The Guinean government has announced a long-term energy strategy focusing more on solar and hydroelectric power as a way to promote environmentally-friendly development and to take advantage of Guinea's abundant water supplies. Kaleta Dam, which came online in 2015, is the first step in this strategy, which includes restructuring of Guinea's electricity parastatal and new power lines connecting Guinea to its neighbors. The Guinean government has also been bullish on building on Guinea's power generating capacity from thermal and renewable sources, signing conventions with two U.S. firms in 2016 and seeking financing for large and small scale hydro projects.

Guinean authorities do not keep statistics on renewable energy as a discrete sector.

Leading Sub-Sectors

Guinea's rivers show great potential for hydroelectric power. With Kaleta completed, the government plans to invest in several smaller dams in the near future and hopes to secure the financing for the Souapiti Dam, which will be twice Kaleta's size, cost, and generation capacity. Located several kilometers upstream from Kaleta, Souapiti will regulate the Konkoure River to ensure that Kaleta can operate at full capacity even during the dry season. Solar power is also growing in popularity for both corporate and residential use.

Opportunities

In April 2015, the government chose French firm Veolia to manage the dysfunctional state operated electric company, Electricité De Guinée (EDG), widely regarded as having been mismanaged for decades. Veolia received a four year contract to implement a recovery plan for the indebted utility. The

government hopes to privatize or seek a Public-Private Partnership for the utility following the conclusion of Veolia’s contract. The management of former State Operated Enterprises (SOEs) could be an opportunity for U.S. companies.

U.S. manufacturers such as General Electric, Pratt & Whitney, and others could see increased opportunities for sales of power generation turbines in Guinea as the country develops its hydro potential to meet domestic and regional demand.

Web Resources

- [DACC](#)
- [Nations Solar](#)
- [Veolia](#)
- [Investment Portal for the Republic of Guinea - Documents](#)

Processed Foods

Overview

Rice is the largest component of food imports to Guinea, making up almost 40% of all food imports and accounting for over \$80 million annually. The second largest component is wheat flour. Both of these items are staples of the Guinean diet, and domestic production is currently unable to meet demand. While there is some domestic production of rice and wheat, imported products are generally much cheaper, and therefore more popular.

	2014	2015	2016	2017 (Estimated)
Total Local Production				
Total Exports		51		

Total Imports	480,938	482,499		
Imports from the US				
<u>Total Market Size</u>				
Exchange Rates				

(total market size = (total local production + imports) - exports)

Leading Sub-Sectors

President Conde’s government is eager to reinvigorate its agricultural sector, but will still remain heavily reliant upon processed food imports. The poor condition of transportation routes in the interior of the country means that much of the population depends upon processed and easily transported food products. There is no cold chain transportation network in the country and roads are in poor condition so Guinea does not export much of its agricultural output. The domestic transportation networks are also not efficient.

Opportunities

American processed food brands are well-respected and preferred over Asian imports as being higher-quality and safer to consume. However, they are generally sold as premium products at prices higher than the average Guinean can afford.

Customs, Regulations & Standards

Trade Barriers

There is a value-added tax (VAT) on all taxable items at a uniform rate of 18 percent. While not a typical “barrier,” many businesses have complained of competitors with political connections receiving favorable tax exemptions, in effect creating an unfair barrier for their operations. Business executives have also complained that congestion in the port of Conakry and new internal government procedures intended to fight corruption have resulted in delays of a month or more between the time a container arrives at Conakry and the release of its contents to the importer. The importation of staple foods such as rice, sugar, cooking oil, and flour across Guinea’s land borders is prohibited.

For more information and help with trade barriers please contact:

International Trade Administration
Enforcement and Compliance
(202) 482-0063
ECCcommunications@trade.gov
[Trade.gov - Enforcement and Compliance](#)

Import Tariffs

Guinea has a flat import tax rate of 33 percent on most imports. However, some “privileged regimes” (see Chapter 3: Establishing an Office), public institutions, and donor organizations can receive exemptions. Privileged regimes have an exemption on import duties for machinery and equipment for use on investment projects and a six percent duty on raw materials. Basic food and agricultural products are taxed at one to two percent, and some items (certain medicines, for example) are tax exempt. A surtax is imposed on luxury items, such as vehicles, alcohol, tobacco, and most other consumer items. The surtax varies from 20 to 70 percent. The surtax is between 20 and 30 percent for vehicles.

Four import rates exist in Guinea. The import rate is called DFI --Droit Fiscal d'Importation. The rates vary from zero to 20 percent:

- Zero percent for health, education and information-related items
- 5 percent rate for staple food, raw material and property and equipment.
- 10 percent for semi-finished products and industrial inputs
- 20 percent for luxury goods

Import Requirements & Documentation

The government requires importers to obtain formal import authorization (Demande Décursive d'Importation – DDI) from the Ministry of Commerce if importing quantities exceeding 12 million GnF (\$2000).

U.S. Export Controls

The government requires exporters to obtain formal export authorization (Demande Décursive d'Exportation – DDE) from a commercial bank and to present a certificate of Guinean origin to the Office of Foreign Commerce. According to the government, with the exception of some agricultural goods, gold, and diamonds, exporters are not taxed.

A list that consolidates eleven export screening lists of the Departments of Commerce, State and the Treasury into a single search as an aid to industry in conducting electronic screens of potential parties to regulated transactions is available here: [Trade.gov - Consolidated Screening List API](#)

Temporary Entry

Temporary exemptions from import duties are accorded to those importers fulfilling government contracts. At the end of the contract period, or after three years, items must be exported or the company and the government agree on a fixed rate total tax (which is less than paying each of the different duties separately). A fee of 0.25 percent of the value of merchandise will be

levied on goods in transit through Guinea to support a national insurance fund as part of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) road transit agreement.

Labeling/Marking Requirements

There are no labeling or marking requirements for exports or imports.

Prohibited & Restricted Imports

The following items are restricted for import into Guinea:

- Live animals and fresh meats
- Machines capable manufacturing counterfeit currencies
- Firearms, ammunition, bullets, cartridges and powders
- Military equipment
- Pornographic Publications
- Medals and coins
- Poisonous and narcotic substances
- Explosives
- Live plants and soil fertilizers
- Fuel
- Products containing Asbestos

Customs Regulations

Corruption remains a major factor in clearing products through customs. After customs declaration and prior to clearance, importers must verify the value of goods imported. Following valuation, Customs issues a bill for duties owed, which must be paid directly to the Central Bank or to a local commercial bank. With the bank receipt, merchandise can be cleared through customs. A variety of local shipping agents are available to assist in this process and with warehousing of incoming goods.

[Douanes](#)

Standards for Trade

Overview

Product and service quality standards are neither applied nor enforced in Guinea. Occasionally, investigations will be launched at the request of law enforcement in cases of suspected poisoning. Importers, however, may request that specific international product requirements or standards be applied to Guinea's products.

Standards, testing, inspection and certification

The Guinean Institute for Standardization and Metrology is in charge of drafting standards and/or adopting Guinean standards to international standards.

Contact Information

Mr. Yacouba Sylla, Deputy Director of the Guinean Institute for Standardization

Tel: +224 628 36 46 84 / 601 28 22 69

Email: Yacousyl01@yahoo.fr

Trade Agreements

Guinea has no free trade or export processing zones or warehouses, but a temporary license to conduct free trade transactions can be obtained with special permission from the Ministry of Finance. The government is currently exploring the idea of a free trade zone with China in the Boke mining region. Guinea is a member of the Mano River Union, which includes standardized customs tariffs between Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. Guinea is also a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which includes fifteen countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape

Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. ECOWAS is in the process of developing a customs union among its members, allowing for the free flow of goods and services between member nations.

Countries with bilateral investment protections agreements with the Guinean government include Belgium, Benin, China, France, The Gambia, Germany, Great Britain, Iran, Italy, Japan, Morocco, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa, South Korea, Switzerland, and Tunisia.

Licensing Requirements for Professional Services

Regulated professions in Guinea include bankers, medical professionals, lawyers, accountants, judicial officers, notaries, loggers, taxi owners, and hotel owners.

Web Resources

Investment assistance and resources are available at [Investment Portal for the Republic of Guinea](#)

Investment Climate Statement

Executive Summary

Despite persistent corruption and fiscal mismanagement, the long-term economic prognosis of Guinea, buoyed by strong endowments of natural resources, energy opportunities, and arable land, remains promising. Constrained by an austere budget, Guinea has increasingly looked to foreign investment and the private sector to stimulate growth. China, Guinea's largest trading partner, has dramatically increased its role through investment agreements in 2016.

Blessed with abundant mineral resources, Guinea has the potential to be an economic leader in extractive industry. Guinea is home to over half the world's reserves of bauxite (aluminum ore). Bauxite is the most active mining sector in Guinea, accounting for over half of Guinea's present exports. Guinea also possesses over four billion tons of untapped high-grade iron ore, significant gold and diamond reserves, undetermined amounts of uranium, as well as prospective off-shore oil reserves. Most of the country's bauxite is exported by Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinee (CBG) via a designated port in Kamsar. CBG, a joint venture between the Government of Guinea, American company Alcoa and Anglo-Australian firm Rio Tinto, is the largest single producer of bauxite in the world. New investment in CBG in addition to new market entries are expected to significantly increase Guinea's bauxite output over the next five to ten years. Medium to long term, Guinea's greatest potential economic driver is the Simandou iron ore project. Simandou is slated to be the largest greenfield project ever developed in Africa. Chinalco (China Aluminum Corporation) recently bought out Rio Tinto's shares in the project and the Guinean government is anxious to move forward with developing the iron ore concessions. The infrastructure costs for the project are projected to be \$20 billion, which is enormous considering

Guinea's GDP is less than \$7 billion/year. When fully operational, the project could double Guinea's GDP.

Guinea's abundant rainfall and natural geography bode well for hydroelectric and renewable energy production. The largest energy sector investment in Guinea is the 240MW Kaleta Dam project that began operating its first hydro turbine in May 2015. Built and financed (\$526 million) by China, Kaleta more than doubled Guinea's electricity supply and for the first time furnished Conakry with reliable, albeit seasonal electricity. The government is seeking backing for even larger hydroelectricity projects and investing in distribution infrastructure to become an energy supplier in West Africa. The government is also looking to invest in solar and other energy sources to compensate for lost hydroelectric production in Guinea's dry season.

Agriculture and Fisheries are other areas for opportunities and growth in Guinea. Already an exporter of fruits, vegetables, and palm oil to its immediate neighbors, Guinea is climatically well-suited for large-scale agricultural production. However, the sector has suffered from decades of neglect and mismanagement and was the sector hit hardest by the 2014-2015 Ebola Crisis. Guinea also remains an importer of rice, its primary staple crop.

Guinea's Macroeconomic and Financial situation is weak. Ebola stifled Guinea's economic growth prospects in 2014 and 2015 leaving the government with few financial resources to support the Guinean economy. Decreased natural resource revenues stemming from a drop in world prices and ill-advised government loans have strained an already sparse government budget: however, improved macroeconomic discipline in 2016 stabilized exchange rates, rebuilt government reserves, and improved government revenue collection. Growth for 2016 was pegged at 5.3 percent, but little of that growth was felt by the largely impoverished population and

the government is under pressure to deliver tangible development progress. The demand for credit, particularly for small and medium sized enterprises, exceeds available supply. The government is increasingly looking to international investment to increase growth, provide jobs, and kick-start the economy.

Guinea has recently updated its Investment Code and renewed efforts to attract international investors. Guinea’s investment promotion agency rolled out a new website (invest.gov.gn) in 2016 to increase transparency and streamline investment. However, Guinea’s capacity to enforce its more investor-friendly laws is compromised by a weak and unreliable legal system.

Table 1

Measure	Year	Index/Rank	Website Address
TI Corruption Perceptions Index	2016	142 of 175	http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview
World Bank’s Doing Business Report “Ease of Doing Business”	2017	163 of 190	doingbusiness.org/rankings
Global Innovation	2016	127 of 128	globalinnovationindex.org/content/page/data-analysis

U.S. FDI in partner country (\$M USD, stock positions)	2014	\$188 Million	http://www.bea.gov/international/fa-ctsheets/
World Bank GNI per capita	2015	\$470	http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD

Openness to and Restrictions upon Foreign Investment

Policies Towards Foreign Direct Investment

After the conclusion of the 2014-2016 Ebola Crisis, President Conde's election to a second term, and the inauguration of a new government at the end of 2015, the Guinean government has adopted a strong positive attitude toward foreign direct investment (FDI). Facing budget shortfalls and low commodity prices, the Guinean government seeks FDI to diversify its economy, spur GDP growth, and provide reliable employment. There are no laws in Guinea that discriminate against foreign investors with the exception of prohibition of foreign ownership of media. In late 2015, the U.S. Embassy facilitated establishment of an informal international investors group to liaise with the government. More formally, there is a "Chambre des Mines," a government sanctioned advisory organization that includes Guinea's major mining firms. Guinea's Agency for the Promotion of Private Investment (APIP) offers six categories of services to potential investors.

1. Creating and registering a business
2. Facilitating access to advantages offered under the investment code
3. Providing information and resources to potential investors
4. Publishing studies and statistics for targeted sectors
5. Training and technical assistance
6. Facilitating needs for investors in Guinea's interior

More information about APIP can be found at: [APIP](#)

Limits on Foreign Control and Right to Private Ownership and Establishment

Investors can register as one of four types of businesses in Guinea. More information on the four types of business registrations is available at Invest.gov . There are no general limits on foreign ownership or control, and 100 percent ownership by foreign firms is legal in most sectors. As mentioned above, foreign-majority owned print media, radio, and television stations are not permitted. Also, the government is required to own a 10 percent interest in any major mining operations in Guinea. Mining and media notwithstanding, there are no sector-specific restrictions that discriminate against market access applicable to foreign investment.

According to the Investment Code, there is no specific screening of FDI. However, the National Investment Commission does have a role in reviewing requests for approval, and for monitoring companies' efforts to comply with investment obligations. This commission is headed by the Minister for Planning and International Cooperation, who also holds the secretariat. Approval of investments is granted based upon a request to the Secretary of the National Investment Commission. The government grants approved companies, particularly industrial firms, the use of the land necessary for their plant, for duration and according to conditions set out in the terms of approval. The land and associated buildings belong to the State, but can also be rented by or transferred to another firm with Government approval.

Other Investment Policy Reviews

There has been no investment policy review conducted by UNCTAD or OECD within the past several years. The World Trade Organization (WTO) last conducted a review of Guinea in 2011. The 2011 report can be viewed here: http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tpr_e/tpr_e.htm.

Business Facilitation

Business registration and facilitation is managed by APIP, which maintains a guide on Guinea's investment website (<http://invest.gov.gn>). Business registration, however, must be completed in person at APIP's office in Conakry. The only internationally accredited business facilitation organization that assesses Guinea is GER.co which gives Guinea's business creation/investment website a 4/10 rating. The process of business registration now requires around seventy two hours. Its services are available to both Guinean and foreign investors. The use of a notary is not necessary in the creation of small and medium size enterprises since the "One-Stop-Shop" at APIP's Conakry office has the credentials to provide a business with requisite registration numbers including tax administration numbers and social security numbers. Notaries are required for the creation of any other type of enterprise.

A small or medium size enterprise in Guinea is defined as a business with less than 50 employees and revenue less than 500 million GNF (around \$50,000). SMEs are taxed at a yearly fixed rate of 15 million GNF (\$1,500). Administrative modalities are simplified and funneled through the "One Stop Shop." These advantages are available for both Guinean and foreign investors.

Outward Investment

Guinea does not formally promote outward investment and the government does not restrict domestic investors from investing abroad.

Bilateral Investment Agreements and Taxation Treaties

Guinea has bilateral investment agreements with Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, China, Egypt, France, The Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Serbia, South Africa, Switzerland, Tunisia, and Turkey. Although Guinea does not have a

Bilateral Investment Treaty or Free Trade Agreement with the United States, ECOWAS and the United States signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement in May 2014. There is no Bilateral Tax Treaty between Guinea and the United States. The agreement created a Council on Trade and Investment responsible for identifying and removing trade impediments between the United States and ECOWAS countries.

Legal Regime

Transparency of the Regulatory System

Guinea has accomplished much in the past seven years to make laws and regulations more transparent. While draft bills were not made available for public comment, the Presidency and National Assembly have worked closely with international partners to modernize its legal framework. However, Guinea's legal system hampers the implementation of clear "rules of the game."

Ministries do not develop forward-looking regulatory plans and do not publish summaries or proposed legislation. Laws in Guinea are proposed by either the President or members of the National Assembly and are not presented for public comment. Once ratified, laws are not formally considered enforceable until they are published in the government's official gazette. All laws relevant to international investors are posted (in French) on invest.gov.gn. When investing, it is important to engage with all levels of government that will be affected to ensure each authority is aware of mutual expectations and responsibilities.

Guinea's amended Mining Code commits the country to increasing transparency in the mining sector. In the code, the government commits to award mining contracts by competitive tender and to publish all past, current, and future mining contracts for public scrutiny. Members of mining sector governing bodies and employees of the Ministry of Mines are prohibited from owning shares in mining companies active in Guinea or their

subcontractors. Each mining company must sign a code of good conduct and develop and implement a corruption monitoring plan. Guinea has already implemented a portion of its transparency approach through the creation of a public database of its mining contracts designed by the Natural Resource Governance Institute (<http://www.contratsminiersguinee.org/>).

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) ensures more transparency in how Guinea's natural resources are governed, and full disclosure of government revenues from its extractive sector. The EITI Standard aims to provide a global set of conditions that ensures more transparency in the management of a country's oil, gas, and mineral resources. EITI reiterates the need to augment support for countries and governments that are making genuine efforts to address corruption but lack the capacity and systems necessary to effectively manage the business, revenues, and royalties derived from extractive industries.

Guinea was accepted as EITI Compliant for the first time by the international EITI Board at its meeting in Mexico City on July 2, 2014. As a country implementing the EITI, Guinea regularly discloses the government's revenues from natural resources, completing their most recent report in December 2016 for the 2014 reporting period.

While Guinea's laws promote free enterprise and competition, the government often lacks transparency in the application of the law. Business owners openly assert that application procedures are sufficiently opaque to allow for corruption, and regulatory activity is often applied based on personal interest.

International Regulatory Considerations

Guinea is a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), but not a member of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and as such has its own currency. At the beginning of 2017, Guinea adopted ECOWAS's Common Exterior Tariff (TEC) which harmonizes Guinea's import taxes with other West African states and eliminates the need product taxes on Guinea's land borders. Guinea is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) but is not party to any trade disputes.

Legal System and Judicial Independence

The country's legal system is codified and largely based upon French civil law. However, the Guinean judicial system is reported to be understaffed, corrupt, and lacking in transparency. Accounting practices in Guinean courts are frequently unreliable. U.S. businesspersons should exercise extreme caution when negotiating contract arrangements, and do so with proper local legal representation. Although the constitution and law provide for an independent judiciary, the judicial system lacks independence and is underfunded, inefficient, and corrupt. Budget shortfalls, a shortage of qualified lawyers and magistrates, nepotism, and ethnic bias limited the judiciary's effectiveness. President Conde's administration has successfully implemented some judicial reforms and has increased the salaries of judges by 400 percent in order to discourage corruption. Despite the rights to dispute settlement set forth in Guinean law, business executives complain of the glacial pace of Guinean justice in business disputes. Most legal cases take years and numerous legal fees to resolve. In speaking with local business leaders, the general sentiment is that any resolution occurring within 3-5 years would be considered relatively fast.

In many cases, the government does not meet payment obligations to private suppliers of goods and services, either foreign or Guinean, in a timely fashion. Arrears to the private sector are a major issue that is often ignored. Guinea is currently looking for ways to finance past arrears to the private sector - possibly through issuing a public debt instrument. There is no independent enforcement mechanism for collecting debts from the government, although some contracts have

international arbitration clauses. The government, while bound by law to honor judgments made by the arbitration court, often actively influences the decision itself.

Although the situation has improved recently, business executives, Guinean and foreign, have publicly expressed concern over the absence of rule of law in the country. In 2014, foreign managers of a telecommunications company were harassed by high-ranking members of the military for not renewing a contract. Some businesses have been subject to sporadic harassment and “requests” for donations from military and police personnel.

Laws and Regulations on Foreign Direct Investment

The National Assembly ratified a new Investment Code regulating FDI in May 2015. Developed in cooperation with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, the new code harmonizes Guinea’s investment climate with other countries in the region and broadens the definition of FDI in Guinea. The Code also organizes avenues for direct agreements between investors and the State. Other important legislation related to FDI includes the Procurement Code, the BOT Law and the Customs Code.

The Government of Guinea states it will let the legal system deal with domestic cases involving foreign investors. The legal system is weak, in the midst of much needed reforms, and is subject to interference. Although the constitution provides for an independent judiciary, the judicial system lacks independence and is underfunded, inefficient, and overtly corrupt. Factors limiting the judiciary’s effectiveness include budget shortfalls, a shortage of qualified lawyers and magistrates, nepotism, an egregious prison system, and ethnic bias. Although the government is making an effort to better equip judges, most are poorly trained and corruption plays a role in many court proceedings. There are few international investment lawyers accredited in Guinea and it is best practice to include international arbitration clauses in

all major contracts. U.S. companies have identified the absence of a dependable legal system as a major barrier to investment.

The Agency for the Promotion of Private Investment (APIP) launched a new website in 2016 that lists information related to laws, rules, procedures, and registration requirements for foreign investors as well as strategy documents for specific sectors. (<http://invest.gov.gn>). Further information on APIP's services is available at (<http://www.apiguinee.org>). APIP is run by a largely bilingual (English and French) staff and is designed to be a clearinghouse of information for investors.

Competition and Anti-Trust Laws

There are no agencies that review transactions for competition-related concerns.

Expropriation and Compensation

Guinea's Investment Code states that the Guinean government will not, except for reasons of public interest, take any steps to expropriate or nationalize investments made by individuals and companies. It also promises fair compensation for expropriated property.

In 2011, the government claimed full ownership of several languishing industrial facilities in which it had previously held partial shares as part of joint ventures—including a canned food factory and processing plants for peanuts, tea, mangoes, and tobacco—with no compensation for the private sector partner. Each of these facilities had been privatized under corrupt circumstances in the late 1980s and early 1990s. By expropriating these businesses from their owners, whom the government deemed to be corrupt and/or ineffective, and putting them to public auction, Guinea hopes to correct past mistakes and put the assets in more productive hands. The private partner in at least one of these joint ventures has protested the

seizure of its assets and has been battling the government decision in court. As of 2016, there was no resolution of the case. Government representatives have said that this expropriation applies only to former state-owned firms; fully-owned private businesses and other joint ventures with the government will not be affected. Guinea's previous government created another major expropriation case over the Simandou mining asset in 2008. The legal proceedings associated with the case are ongoing.

The government realizes that future expropriations carry too much risk and are not beneficial to the future economic development of the country. The country desperately needs foreign investment and policy makers are not willing to risk the negative consequences that expropriation will cause. Furthermore, the government has demonstrated that it cannot manage small and medium enterprises in a profitable manner and would prefer the private sector to manage these assets. The investment climate is welcoming to foreign and American firms and the government is working to reduce corruption and increase transparency. The current government is aware of its international image and does not want to risk losing possible foreign investment in the economy.

Dispute Settlement

ICSID Convention and New York Convention Guinea is a member of the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), an autonomous international institution established under the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States with over one hundred and forty member states

(<https://icsid.worldbank.org/apps/ICSIDWEB/Pages/default.aspx>).

Guinea is also a member of the New York Convention, which applies to the recognition and enforcement of foreign arbitral awards and the referral by a court to arbitration. (<http://www.newyorkconvention.org>).

Investor-State Dispute Settlement

The Investment Code states that competent Guinean judicial authorities shall settle disputes resulting from interpretation of the Code in the accordance with laws and regulations and provides several avenues to see arbitration. In practice, however, fair settlements may be difficult. The current Guinean constitution mandates an independent judiciary, although many business owners and high level government officials frequently claim that poorly trained magistrates, high levels of corruption, and nepotism plague the administration of justice. Guinea established an arbitration court in 1999, independent of the Ministry of Justice, to settle business disputes in a less costly and more expedient manner. The Arbitration Court is based upon the French system in which arbitrators are selected from among the Guinean business sector, rather than from among lawyers or judges, and are supervised by the Chamber of Commerce. All parties must be in agreement in order for their case to be settled in the arbitration court. In general, Guinea's arbitration court has a better reputation than the judicial court system for settling business disputes.

International Commercial Arbitration and Foreign Courts

In 1993, Guinea became a member of the Organisation pour l'Harmonisation du Droit des Affaires en Afrique (Organization for the Harmonization of Commercial Law in Africa), known by its French initials, OHADA, which allows investors to appeal legal decisions on commercial and financial

matters to a regional body based in Abidjan. The organization also seeks to create harmonization of commercial law, debt collection, bankruptcy, and secured transactions throughout the OHADA region. The treaty superseded the Code of Economic Activities and other national commercial laws when it was ratified in 2000, though many of the substantive changes to Guinean law have yet to be implemented. U.S. companies seeking to do business in Guinea should be aware that under OHADA, managers may be individually liable for corporate wrongdoing. See the OHADA website for specific OHADA rules and regulations (<http://www.ohada.com>).

Bankruptcy Regulations

Guinea, as member country of OHADA, has the same bankruptcy laws as most West African francophone countries. The OHADA's Uniform Act enforces collective proceedings for writing off debts and defines bankruptcy from articles 227 to 233. The Uniform Act also distinguishes from fraudulent from non-fraudulent bankruptcies. There is no distinction between foreign and domestic investors. The only distinction made is a "privilege" ranking that defines which claims must be paid first from the bankrupt company's assets. Articles 180 to 190 of the OHADA's Uniform Act on the organization of securities define which creditors are entitled to priority compensation. Bankruptcy is only criminalized when it occurs due to fraudulent actions. Bankruptcy is penalized though OHADA, which leaves criminal penalties to national authorities.

In the World Bank's 2017 Ease of Doing Business Report on Resolving Insolvency, Guinea ranked 113/190. According to the report, resolving insolvency takes an average of 3.8 years and costs 8.0 percent of the debtor's estate, with the most likely outcome being that the company will be sold as piecemeal sale. The average recovery rate is 19.9 cents on the dollar.

Industrial Policies

Investment Incentives

The Investment Code provides preferential taxes for investments meeting certain criteria (See Screening of FDI). Other exemptions can be reached in contract negotiations with the government. The government's priority investments are: promotion of small and medium-sized Guinean businesses, development of non-traditional exports, processing of local natural resources and local raw materials, and establishment of activities in less economically developed regions. Priority activities include agricultural promotion, especially of food and rural development, commercial farming involving processing and packaging, livestock - especially when coupled with veterinary services, fisheries, fertilizer production, chemical or mechanical preparation, processing industries for vegetable, animal, or mineral products, health and education businesses, tourism facilities and hotel operations, real estate development with social benefit, and investment banks or any credit institutions settled outside specified population centers. Detailed information on each of these opportunities is available at [Promotion of Private Investment Agency](#).

Foreign Trade Zones/Free Ports/Trade Facilitation

Guinea has no foreign trade zones or free ports.

Performance and Data Localization Requirements

Under the 2011 Mining Code, amended in April 2013 to reduce taxes and royalties, mining companies are required to hire Guinean citizens as a certain percentage of their staff, to eventually transition to a Guinean country director, and to award a certain percentage of contracts to Guinean owned firms. The percentage varies based on employment category and the chronological phase of the project. The mining code requires that 20 percent of senior managers be Guinean. However, the code does not define what constitutes senior management. The Code also aims to liberalize mining development and secure investment. In 2013, the Code called for the creation of a Mining Promotion and Development Center, a One-Stop-Shop for mining to simplify the administrative process for investors. The Development Center opened in May 2016. Post is not aware of non-mining sectors having

performance requirements, but that is likely to change as the Guinean economy becomes more developed.

Guinea has no forced localization policy related to the use of domestic content in goods or technology. There are no requirements for foreign IT providers to turn over source code or provide access to surveillance. There are also no requirements to store data within Guinea.

Protection of Property Rights

Real Property

The Land Tenure Code of 1996 provides a legal base for documentation of property ownership. As with ownership of business enterprises, both foreign and national individuals have the right to own property. However, enforcement of these rights depends upon a corrupt and inefficient Guinean legal and administrative system. It is not uncommon for the same piece of land to have several overlapping deeds. Furthermore, land sales and business contracts generally lacked transparency.

According to the 2017 World Bank's Doing Business Report, Guinea ranks 140 out of 190 countries for the ease of "registering property:" [World Bank - Doing Business in Guinea](#) .

Intellectual Property Rights

Guinea is a member of the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI), comprised of 15 African countries, and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), comprised of 186 members. OAPI is signatory to the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, the Bern Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the TRIPS agreement, and several other intellectual property treaties. Guinea modified its intellectual property right laws in 2000 to bring them into line with established international standards. There have been no formal complaints filed on behalf of American companies concerning

intellectual property rights infringements in Guinea. However, it is not certain that an intellectual property judgment would be enforceable, given the general lack of law enforcement capability. The Property Rights office in Guinea is severely understaffed and underfunded. Guinea is not cited in the USTR's Special 301 Report or the Notorious Market Report. For additional information about treaty obligations and points of contact at local IP offices, please see WIPO's country profiles at [WIPO – Country Profiles](#) .

Financial Sector

Capital Markets and Portfolio Investment

Commercial credit for private and public enterprise is difficult and expensive to obtain in Guinea. The legislature passed a Build, Operate, and Transfer (BOT) convention law in 1998, which provides rules and guidelines for BOT and related infrastructure development projects. The law lays out the obligations and responsibilities of the government and investors and stipulates the guarantees provided by the government for such projects.

The Investment Code allows transfers of income derived from investment in Guinea, the proceeds of liquidating this investment, and the compensation paid in the event of nationalization to any country in convertible currency. The legal and regulatory procedures, based on French civil law, are not always applied uniformly or transparently.

Individuals or legal entities making foreign investments in Guinea are guaranteed the freedom to transfer to any country of their choice the original foreign capital, profits resulting from investment, capital gains on disposal of investment, and fair compensation paid in the case of nationalization or expropriation of the investment. The Guinean franc uses a managed floating exchange rate. The few commercial banks in Guinea are dependent on the Central Bank for foreign exchange liquidity, making large transfers of foreign currency difficult.

Laws governing takeovers, mergers, acquisitions, and cross-shareholding are limited to rules for documenting financial transactions and filing any change of

status documents with the economic register. There are no laws or regulations that specifically authorize private firms to adopt articles of incorporation that limit or prohibit investment.

Money and Banking System

Guinea's financial system is small and dominated by the banking sector. It comprises 15 active banks and 22 microfinance institutions totaling 146 branches across the country. Guinea also has ten insurance firms, three money-transfer companies, and 45 currency exchange offices. Guinea's banking sector is overseen by the Central Bank (BCRG) and it serves as the agent of the treasury for overseeing banking and credit operations in Guinea and abroad. The BCGR manages the foreign exchange reserves on behalf of the State. Further information on the BCRG can be found in French at [BCRG](#) .

Due to the difficulty of accessing funding from commercial banks, small commercial and agricultural enterprises have increasingly turned to microfinance, which has been growing rapidly with a net increase of deposits and loans, but the quality of its products remains mediocre, with bad debt accounting for five percent of loans with approximately 17 percent of gross loans outstanding.

Guinea plans to broaden the country's SME base through investment climate reform, solutions to improve access to finance, and the establishment of SME growth corridors. Severely limited access to finance (especially for SMEs), inadequate supply of infrastructure, deficiencies in logistics and trade facilitation, corruption and low capacity of the government, inflation, and poor education of the workforce has seriously undermined investor confidence in Guinean institutions. Guinea's weak enabling environment for business, its history of poor governance, erratic policy, and inconsistent regulatory enforcement exacerbate the country's reputation as an investment destination. As a result, private participation in the economy remains low

and firms' productivity measured by value added is one of the lowest in Africa. Firms' links with the financial sector are weak - only 6 percent of firms surveyed in the 2006 World Bank Enterprise survey have a bank loan. Credit to the private sector is low, but increasing, at around 14 percent of GDP in 2015 from 5 percent in 2010. Sub-Saharan African averages around of 60 percent. The banking sector is highly concentrated, technologically behind, and banks tend to favor short-term lending at high interest rates. While the microfinance sector grew strongly from a small base, microfinance institutions were hit hard in the Ebola crisis, were not profitable, and needed capacity and technology upgrades. Finally, the efficiency and the use of payment services by all potential users needs to be improved, in a context of financial inclusion. Guinea is a cash society and the economy is driven by trade, agriculture, and the informal sector, which all rely on cash transactions outside the banking sector. However, digital cellphone transfers of funds are increasing their penetration in the country.

Generally there are no undue restrictions on foreigners' ability to establish bank accounts in Guinea. However, one dual citizen (Guinea-American) commented that his preferred bank declined his request to establish an account due to U.S. Foreign Account Tax Compliant Act (FACTA) reporting requirements. Post was unable to find any information related to rules concerning hostile takeovers.

Foreign Exchange and Remittances

Foreign Exchange

There are no restrictions or limitations placed on foreign investors for converting, transferring, or repatriating funds associated with an investment. Although there have been no recent changes to remittance policies, it is difficult to obtain foreign exchange in Guinea's economy. Guinea has experienced significantly weakened liquidity levels over the last several years due to government mismanagement,

populist policies, corruption, and a decrease in mining revenue due to lower global commodity prices. Further, liquidity levels of commercial banks are affected by tight reserve requirements (22 percent of deposits) that are in line with IMF performance criteria.

Until December 2015, the exchange rate was managed by the Guinean Central Bank (BCRG) and held to a four percent variance from the unofficial rate. The exchange rate had remained relatively stable since 2013 and only recently depreciated versus the U.S. dollar. Between 2013 and 2015 the Guinean franc (GNF) maintained a value between 7,000 and 7,500 GNF/USD. In late 2015 the unofficial rate reached a value 10 percent higher than the official rate while Guinea had nearly exhausted its foreign currency reserves. The IMF recommended BCRG float the GNF and the official rate jumped to over 9,000 GNF/USD by March 2016.

Remittance Policies

Guinea has no limitations on the conversion and transfer of money or the repatriation of capital and earnings, including branch profits, dividends, interest, royalties, or management or technical service fees. The Central Bank needs to be informed of any major transfers and the wait time to remit investment returns is less than 60 days. Guinea is a member of the Inter-Governmental Action Group against Money Laundering in West Africa, but is not included on the Financial Action Task Force. Guinea is listed as a country of primary concern the 2015 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report.

There are no limits on the conversion of U.S. dollars to Guinean francs (GNF). Post knows of no issues related to currency conversion and does not see any issues with convertibility risks going forward. The official exchange rate is relatively unstable, but is currently holding at approximately 9,000 GNF/USD (as of March 2016). A weakened economy largely resulting from low commodity prices has caused the GNF to depreciate from an average of 7,000 GNF/USD in early 2015. Since mid-2016 the official exchange rate has been keeping pace with the rate in the parallel black market.

Sovereign Wealth Funds

Guinea does not have a sovereign wealth fund.

State-Owned Enterprises

While Guinea maintains some SOEs for public utilities (water and electricity), the Conde Administration is moving towards allowing private enterprises to operate in this sphere, handing over management of the state-owned electric utility Energie de Guinée (EDG) a French firm. The firm is taking steps to improve the urban electricity infrastructure by reducing system losses and electricity theft. Several private projects aimed at harnessing Guinea's hydroelectric energy potential are being implemented with the goal of producing and selling energy throughout Guinea and to neighboring countries.

The hydroelectricity sector could provide the basis for Guinea's modernization and also supply regional markets. Guinea's large hydropower potential is estimated at over 6000 MW, making Guinea a potential exporter of power to neighboring countries. In 2015, Guinea completed Kaleta Dam, doubling the country's electricity generating capacity and providing urban Conakry with a reliable source of power for most of the year. The government is now pushing forward with the more ambitious Souapiti Dam and numerous renewable and non-renewable power generation plans for which EDG would be the primary vendor.

The government does not publish significant information concerning the financial stability of its SOEs. EDG is listed in the national budget as a line item. Its balance sheet is in the red and the utility received \$32 million in state subsidies in 2017.

R&D expenditures are not known, but it would be highly unlikely that any of Guinea's failing SOEs would devote significant funding to R&D given the lack

of sophistication in the Guinean economy. Guinean SOEs are entitled to subsidized fuel, which EDG uses to run thermal generator stations in the capital. Guinea is not party to the Government Procurement Agreement.

OECD Guidelines on Corporate Governance of SOEs

Corporate Governance of SOEs is determined by the government. Guinean SOEs do not adhere to the OECD guidelines and are generally highly insolvent organizations. SOEs typically report to the line minister. However, in theory, they typically report to the Office of the President. Seats on the board are allocated by the ruling government and usually by presidential decree. It is most likely that domestic courts will side with SOEs over investment disputes.

Privatization Program

The Guinean government is considering the privatization of the energy sector. In April 2015, the government tendered a management contract to run the state owned electrical utility EDG. A French firm won the tender and has begun a four year program to manage and rehabilitate the poor performing, insolvent utility that has suffered from decades of poor management. Post understands that at the conclusion of the firms contract, the government will look to privatize EDG or seek a Public Private Partnership. The government also wants a private company to operate the recently completed Kaleta Dam.

The bidding process is spelled out clearly for potential bidders. However, Post has learned that Guinea has given weight to competence with the French language and experience working on similar projects in West Africa. In spring 2015 a U.S. company lost a fiber optics tender largely due to its lack of native French speakers on the project and lack of regional experience.

Responsible Business Conduct

The amended 2011 Mining Code includes Guinea's first legal framework outlining corporate social responsibility. Under the provisions of the code, mining companies must submit social and environmental impact plans for approval before operations can begin and sign a code of good conduct, agreeing to refrain from corrupt activities and to follow the precepts of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI). However, lack of capacity in the various ministries involved make government monitoring and enforcement of corporate social responsibility requirements difficult, a gap that some NGOs play a role in filling. Guinea was deemed an EITI compliant country in July 2014.

Corruption

In its 2017 "Ease of Doing Business" index, the World Bank ranked Guinea 163rd of 190 countries worldwide. Transparency International's 2016 "Corruption Perception Index" ranked Guinea 142nd of 176 countries listed.

The business and political cultures, coupled with low salaries, have historically combined to create and encourage a culture of corruption throughout Guinea's government system. Business is often conducted through the payment of bribes rather than by the rule of law. Though it is illegal to pay bribes in Guinea, there is no enforcement of these laws. In practice, it is difficult and time-consuming to conduct business without paying bribes in Guinea, leaving U.S. companies who must comply with the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act at a disadvantage.

Although the law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials, the government does not implement the law effectively, and officials often engaged in corrupt practices with impunity. The World Bank's most recent Worldwide Governance Indicators reflected that corruption continued to be a severe problem. Public funds were diverted for private use or for illegitimate

public uses, such as buying vehicles for government workers. Land sales and business contracts generally lacked transparency.

Guinea's Anti-Corruption Agency (ANLC) is an autonomous agency established by presidential decree in 2004. The ANLC reports directly to the president and is currently the only state agency focused solely on fighting corruption. However, it has been largely ineffective in its role with only two cases prosecuted and no convictions. The ANLC receives anonymous tips concerning possible corruption cases received through a hotline. However, during the past three years there have been no prosecutions as a result of these tips. The ANLC executive director died in 2014 and has yet to be replaced. The agency is underfunded, understaffed, and lacks the basics to fight corruption such as computers and vehicles. The ANLC is comprised of 52 employees in seven field offices and operates on a budget of \$1.1 million per year.

The ANLC's Bureau of Complaint Reception fields anonymous tips forwarded to the ANLC. Investigations and cases must then be prosecuted through criminal courts. During the year there were no prosecutions as a result of tips.

A poll by Afrobarometer and Stat View International of 1,200 citizens from 2011 to 2013 found that 57 percent of the respondents reported paying a bribe within the past 12 months. A separate survey by the ANLC, Open Society Initiative West Africa, and Transparency International found that among private households 61 percent of the respondents stated they were asked to pay a bribe for national services and 24 percent for local services. Furthermore, 24 percent claimed to have paid traffic-related bribes to police, 24 percent for better medical treatment, 19 percent for better water or electricity services, and 8 percent for better judicial treatment.

The Conde Administration has promised to combat corruption in both government and commercial spheres as one of its top priority agenda items. In general, the situation has improved over the past few years as the government earnestly attempts to improve transparency and reduce corruption.

Guinea is a party to the UN Anticorruption Convention. [UNODC - United Nations Convention Against Corruption](#)

Guinea is not a party to the OECD Convention on Combatting Bribery. [OECD - Convention on Combating Bribery](#)

Resources to Report Corruption

Contact at government agency or agencies are responsible for combating corruption:

-NAME: Seko Mohamed Sylla

-TITLE: Deputy Executive Director

-ORGANIZATION: Agence Nationale de Lutte Contre la Corruption (ANLC - National Agency Against Corruption)

-ADDRESS: Cite des Nations, Conakry, Guinea

-TELEPHONE NUMBER: +224- 669 22 82 51

-EMAIL ADDRESS: tourealnc@gmail.com

-ORGANIZATION: Transparency International

-ADDRESS: Dakar, Senegal

-TELEPHONE NUMBER: +221-33-842-40-44

-EMAIL ADDRESS: forumcivil@orange.sn

Political and Security Environment

Guinea has a long history of political violence. The country suffered under authoritative rule from independence in 1958 until its first democratic election (presidential) in 2010 and it has seen political violence during its transition as a new democracy, although the level of political violence has decreased with each subsequent election since 2010 (legislative in 2013 followed by its second democratic presidential election in 2015). The state persecuted political dissidents and opposition parties for decades. The Sekou Toure regime (1958-1984) and the Lansana Conte regime (1984-2008) were both marked by political violence and human rights abuses.

Following the death of President Lansana Conte on December 22, 2008, a military junta calling themselves the National Council for Democracy and Development (CNDD) took power in a bloodless coup. Immediately following the coup, the U.S. government suspended all but its humanitarian and election assistance to Guinea. The African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) suspended Guinea's membership pending democratic elections and a relinquishment of power by the military junta.

On September 28, 2009, after months of public opposition to the tactics of the military regime, the Forces Vives, a group formed of political opposition, civil society, economic actors, and labor unions, organized a large rally at the capital's soccer stadium to symbolize their rejection of junta leader Moussa Dadis Camara's intention to run in upcoming presidential elections. Soon after the rally began, members of Guinea's armed forces entered the facility and opened fire on the crowd, killing at least 150 people and injuring over a thousand others. Many of the female protestors were also publicly and brutally raped. In the aftermath of the massacre, the military continued to target political and economic opposition. Much of the international community condemned the massacre and the gross human rights abuses. On

December 3, 2009 Moussa Dadis Camara was shot by his Aide-de-camp Lt. Abubaker "Toumba" Diakite and was flown to Morocco for treatment. Camara's bodyguard and driver were killed in the attack. After over a month of recuperation in Morocco, Camara flew to Burkina Faso on January 13, 2010. On January 15, Camara, Burkinabe President Blaise Compaore, and Guinean Minister of Defense Sekouba Konate signed the Ouagadougou Accord, creating a transition government and naming Konate as the Interim President of Guinea, and a civilian, Jean Marie Dore, as Prime Minister. The Transition Government was tasked with organizing presidential and legislative elections to usher in a new democratic government of Guinea.

Guinea experienced additional violent incidents during 2011 and thereafter. On July 19, 2011, the President's personal residence was attacked with small arms fire and rocket propelled grenades. Following the attack the government arrested and charged 38 people, mostly military personnel. The government also temporarily reinstated road blocks nationwide with night time check points continuing for months.

The small mining town of Zogota located in Guinea's Forest Region, saw the deaths of five villagers including the village chief during August 2012 clashes with security forces over hiring practices at Brazilian iron-mining company Vale. The villagers alleged that Vale was not hiring enough local employees and was instead bringing workers from other regions of Guinea. The ensuing instability led to Vale evacuating all expatriate personnel from the town. Also in 2012, the Ministry of Economy and Finance official and anticorruption activist Aissatou Boiro was shot and killed in her car in November, allegedly for her anticorruption efforts. Authorities arrested two persons in December 2012 and charged them with the killing. However, they remain in pretrial detention.

In 2013, numerous protests resulting in more than 30 deaths took place in the lead-up to the national legislative elections that had been repeatedly postponed prior to finally being held on September 28, 2013. Many other protests were held in 2013 by citizens and residents angry about the extreme lack of water and electricity in the capital city of Conakry. Some of these protests turned violent and many small businesses were negatively impacted by the frequency of the protests.

Since the July 3 accords brokered by the United States, EU, and France in 2013, there have been minimal occurrences of political violence. The accords led to legislative elections in September 2013 that were internationally recognized as being free and fair and, more importantly, the results were accepted by the population.

On July 15, 2013, violence erupted in N'Zerekore, the administrative capital of Guinea's Forest Region, 350 miles southeast of Conakry. Conflicting accounts exist of what triggered the onset of the violence that escalated as confrontations ensued between members of Guerze and Konianke ethnic groups. According to local officials, mob and riot-inspired retaliation attacks put the death toll at more than 95 people dead and at least 150 injured. Local police and gendarmerie security forces were deployed to break up the fighting but were initially unable to quell the violence despite an imposed curfew.

Other instances of violence occurred in 2014 and 2015 related to the Ebola epidemic. There were instances since the start of the Ebola epidemic where locals attacked the vehicles and facilities of aid workers. Humanitarian organizations all reported cases of property damage (destroyed vehicles, ransacked warehouses, etc.). On September 16, 2014 in the Forest Region village of Womei, eight people were killed by a mob when they visited the

village as part of an Ebola education campaign. The casualties included radio journalists, local officials and Guinean health care workers. Thirty eight people have been arrested and are awaiting trial.

Presidential Elections in 2015 sparked some violent protests in Conakry, but clashes between police and demonstrators were largely contained and widespread post-election violence never materialized.

Sporadic and generally peaceful protests against fuel prices, lack of electricity, union complaints, and other issues have occurred in the capital and sometimes beyond from 2014 to 2017. In February 2017, seven civilians died in confrontations with security service during large protests against education reforms. Teachers' unions and the government resolved the dispute in an agreement on February 20.

Although none of these events targeted American or foreign investors, they were disruptive to business in general and eroded confidence in the security situation under which investors must operate in Guinea.

Labor Policies and Practices

Guinea's National Assembly adopted a new labor code in February 2014. Guinea's Labor Code protects the rights of employees and is enforced by the Ministry of Social Action, Women, and Child Promotion. The Labor Code sets forth guidelines in various sectors, the most stringent being the mining sector. Guidelines cover wages, holidays, work schedules, overtime pay, vacation, and sick leave. The new labor code also outlaws all discrimination in hiring, including sex, disabilities, and ethnicity. It also prohibits all forms of workplace harassment, including sexual harassment. However, the law does not provide antidiscrimination protections for persons based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

The National Assembly increased employer rights to hire and fire under the 1999 revision of the Labor Code. Employers no longer need to go through the labor office in order to contract or terminate the work of an employee, and the Act removed the requirement to hire only Guinean employees. Some employers, including the Guinean government, avoid paying mandatory benefits by employing people as contractors for years at a time rather than as permanent employees. Some foreign managers cite incidents of theft, low productivity, and difficulties in terminating employees as problems.

Although the law provides for the right of workers to organize and join independent unions, engage in strikes, and bargain collectively, the law also places restrictions on the free exercise of these rights. The 2014 labor code requires unions to obtain support of 20 percent of the workers in a company, region, or trade that the union claims to represent. The new code mandates that unions provide 10 days' notice to the labor ministry before striking, but the code does allow work slowdowns. Strikes are only permitted for "professional claims." However, the new labor code says it does not apply to government workers, members of the armed forces, or temporary government workers. While the labor code protects union officials from anti-union discrimination, it does not extend that same protection to other workers. The labor code prohibits employers from taking into consideration union membership and activities with regard to decisions about employee hiring, firing, and conduct. The new labor code allows workers 30 days to appeal any labor decisions.

The law prohibits child labor in the formal sector and sets forth penalties of three to 10 years imprisonment and confiscation of resulting profits. The law does not protect children in the informal sector. The minimum age for employment is 16. Exceptions allow children to work at age 12 as apprentices for light work in such sectors as domestic service and agriculture, and at 14

for other work. The law does not permit workers and apprentices under 18 to work more than 10 consecutive hours, at night, or on Sundays. The Ministry of Labor maintained a list of occupations in which youth under 18 cannot be employed, but enforcement is limited to large firms in the modern sector of the economy. The penal code increases penalties for forced labor if minors are involved, but penalties do not meet international standards, and enforcement is not sufficient to deter child labor violations. The most recent statistics indicated that more than one-third of all children under 18 worked in industries considered dangerous by the United Nation's International Labor Organization (ILO). Although the child code requires the country's laws to respect treaty obligations and is regarded as law by the justice system, ambiguity remained about the code's validity, because the government did not pass a required implementation text.

The Ministry of Social Action, Women, and Child Promotion is responsible for enforcing child labor laws, and it conducted occasional inspections. The police division OPROGEM under the Ministry of Security was responsible for investigating child trafficking and child labor violations. While its funding and resources are generally insufficient, a budget allocation by the government to OPROGEM in 2017 signified recognition by the government of OPROGEM's critical role investigating cases and transporting victims to NGOs for care. In 2016-2017, the government initiated four trafficking investigations primarily involving children, prosecuted four alleged traffickers and parents for facilitating trafficking, and convicted three offenders. It also continued one investigation involving 14 alleged traffickers.

Child labor occurs most frequently in the informal sectors of subsistence farming, small-scale commerce, and mining. Smaller numbers of girls, mostly migrants from neighboring countries, are subjected to domestic

servitude. Forced child labor occurs primarily in the cashew, cocoa, coffee, gold, and diamond sectors of the economy. Many children between the ages of five and 16 work 10 to 15 hours a day in the diamond and gold mines for minimal compensation and little food. Child laborers extract, transport, and clean the minerals. They operate in extreme conditions, lack protective gear, do not have access to water or electricity, and face a constant threat of disease and sickness.

According to a government study conducted with the ILO and issued in 2011, 43 percent of all children between five and 17 worked, including 33 percent of children ages five to 11, 55.9 percent between 12 and 15, and 61.3 percent between 16 and 17. Of those, 93.3 percent worked in what the ILO defines as hazardous conditions – meaning 40.1 percent of all children in the country worked in hazardous conditions. This included more than one million children in fishing and agriculture, 30,619 in manufacturing, 46,072 in mining, 15,169 in construction, 204,818 in commerce and restaurants, 6,816 in transport, and 92,873 in other hazardous or dangerous work.

The Labor Code outlines general guidelines related to health and safety, but the Guinean government has yet to implement a set of practical occupational standards. The government has limited resources for this activity. The law provides that the government should support children's rights and welfare, although in practice, the government has neither the capability nor the political will to curb the high rate of child labor. The Labor Code also stipulates that the Minister of Social Action, Women, and Child Promotion maintain a list of occupations in which women and youth under the age of 18 cannot be employed. In practice, enforcement by ministry inspectors is limited to large firms in the modern sector of the economy.

The labor code allows the government to set a minimum monthly wage enforced by the Ministry of Social Action, Women, and Child Promotion. On April 29, 2014 the government exercised this provision for the first time, setting the minimum wage for domestic workers at 440,000 GNF (approximately \$64) per month. No minimum wage for other sectors was established. There is no known official poverty income level established by the government.

The law mandates that regular work should not exceed 10 hour days or 48 hour weeks, and it mandates a period of at least 24 consecutive hours of rest each week, usually on Sunday. Every salaried worker has the legal right to an annual paid vacation, accumulated at the rate of at least two workdays per month of work. There also are provisions in the law for overtime and night wages, which are a fixed percentage of the regular wage. The law stipulates a maximum of 100 hours of compulsory overtime a year.

The law contains general provisions regarding occupational safety and health, but the government has not established a set of practical workplace health and safety standards. Moreover, it has not issued any orders laying out the specific safety requirements for certain occupations or for certain methods of work called for in the labor code. All workers, foreign and migrant included, have the right to refuse to work in unsafe conditions without penalty.

The Ministry of Social Action, Women, and Child Promotion is responsible for enforcing labor standards, and its 160 inspectors were empowered to suspend work immediately in situations deemed hazardous to workers' health. Nevertheless, enforcement efforts were sporadic. According to the ILO, inspectors received inadequate training and had limited resources. Retired labor inspector positions went unfilled. Inspectors lacked computers and

transportation to carry out their duties. Penalties for violation of the labor law were not sufficient to deter violations. The penal code calls for prison terms of up to 10 years for people found guilty of trafficking in persons. Additionally, the law subjects traffickers to forfeiture of objects of value or money received through forced labor of others. Offering someone into forced labor is punishable by up to five years' imprisonment.

Authorities rarely monitored work practices or enforced the workweek standards and the overtime rules. Teachers' wages were extremely low, and teachers sometimes went six months or more without pay. Salary arrears were not paid, and some teachers lived in abject poverty.

Violation of wage, overtime, and occupational health and safety standards were common across sectors. Forced child labor, which constituted the majority of forced labor victims, occurred primarily in the gold, diamond, cashew, cocoa, and coffee sectors. There were, for example, reports of unsafe working conditions in the artisanal (small-scale) gold mining communities in the northern section of the country, where inspectors found occupational health and environmental hazards.

Despite legal protection against working in unsafe conditions, many workers feared retaliation and did not exercise their right to refuse to work under unsafe conditions. Data were not available on workplace fatalities and accidents in 2016, but accidents in unsafe working conditions were common. The government banned artisanal gold and other mining during the rainy season to prevent deaths from mudslides, but the practice continues.

Pursuant to the Guinean Labor Code, any person is considered a worker, regardless of gender or nationality, who is engaged in any occupational activity in return for remuneration, under the direction and authority of another individual or entity, whether public or private, secular or religious.

In accordance with this Code, forced or compulsory labor means any work or services extracted from an individual under threat of a penalty and for which the individual concerned has not offered himself willingly.

A contract of employment is a contract under which a person agrees to be at the disposal and under the direction of another person in return for remuneration. The contract may be agreed upon for an indefinite or a fixed term and may only be agreed upon by individuals of at least 16 years of age, although minors under the age of 16 may be contracted only with the authorization of the minor's parent or guardian. An unjustified dismissal provides the employee the right to receive compensation from the employer in an amount equal to at least six months' salary with the last gross wage paid to the employee being used as the basis for calculating the compensation due.

The law provides that the government should support children's rights and welfare, although in practice, the government has neither the capability nor the political will to curb the high rate of child labor. The Labor Code also stipulates that the Minister of Social Action, Women, and Child Promotion maintain a list of occupations in which women and youth under the age of 18 cannot be employed. In practice, enforcement by ministry inspectors is limited to large firms in the modern sector of the economy.

Guinea has a young population with a high unemployment rate and lacks employees with specialized skills. The country has a poor educational system and lacks professionals in all sectors of the economy. Guinea lacks the specialized skills needed for large-scale projects.

Workers at the Port Autonome Conakry (PAC) have occasionally held strikes. The most recent call for a strike was in October 2014 to protest the awarding of the Roll On/Roll Off concession for vehicles from PAC to the secure

container operator. Although PAC employees did not go on strike as this time, a strike has the potential to bottleneck port operations, which would have a ripple effect in the economy as customs revenues account for 45 percent of Guinea's revenues with 98 percent of these revenues collected at the Port of Conakry.

OPIC and Other Investment Insurance Programs

Guinea and the United States have had an agreement on private investment guarantees in effect since 1962, making investors eligible for Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) insurance programs. OPIC had been active recently in Guinea, investing in the expansion project of Guinea's largest bauxite exporter, and is currently considering support for a project in the energy sector. U.S. private sector firms are interested in utilizing OPIC for infrastructure related projects in the mining and energy sectors. A USAID Power Africa transaction advisor visited Conakry in April 2017 for meetings and fact finding to gauge Power Africa's potential role in Guinean renewable energy contracts.

Foreign Direct Investment and Foreign Portfolio Investment Statistics

Table 2: Key Macroeconomic Data, U.S. FDI in Host Country/Economy

	Host Country		USG or		USG or International Source of Data: BEA; IMF; Eurostat; UNCTAD, Other
	Statistical source*		international statistical		
Economic Data	Year	Amount	Year	Amount	
Host Country Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$M USD)	N/A	N/A	2015	\$6.7 Billion	http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=GN

Foreign Direct Investment	Host Country Statistical source*		USG or international statistical source		USG or international Source of data: BEA; IMF; Eurostat; UNCTAD, Other
U.S. FDI in partner country (\$M USD, stock positions)		Not Reported	2014	\$188 Million	http://www.bea.gov/international/factsheet/
Host country's FDI in the United States (\$M USD, stock positions)		Not Reported	2015	\$0	http://bea.gov/international/direct_investment_multinational_companies_comprehensive_data.htm
Total inbound stock of FDI as % host GDP		N/A		N/A	

Table 3: Sources and Destination of FDI

Direct Investment from/in Guinea Data					
From Top Five Sources/To Top Five Destinations (US Dollars, Millions)					
Inward Direct Investment			Outward Direct Investment		
Total Inward	Amount	100%	Total Outward	Amount	100%
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	

"0" reflects amounts rounded to +/- USD 500,000.

Table 4: Sources of Portfolio Investment

Portfolio Investment Assets		
Top Five Partners (Millions, US Dollars)		
Total	Equity Securities	Total Debt Securities

All Countries	Amount	100 %	All Countries	Amount	100 %	All Countries	Amount	100 %
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	
No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data		No Data	No Data	

Contact for More Information on the Investment Climate Statement

Before 7/2017

- Michael Westendorp
- Economic and Commercial Officer
- BP 603, Transversale 2 Ratoma
- +224655104428
- westendropmc@state.gov

After 7/2017

- John Stark
- Economic and Commercial Officer
- BP 603, Transversale 2 Ratoma
- +224655104428
- starkjr2@state.gov

Trade & Project Financing

Methods of Payment

The vast majority of transactions are made in cash. Imports/exports rely on documentary letters and letters of credit. There are no credit rating or collection agencies. Credit card fraud is prevalent in Guinea and cards should only be used in reputable establishments.

Banking Systems

Guinea's banking system is loosely based on the rules and regulations governing the French banking system. Guinea's commercial banking sector was legalized by reforms in 1985 and 1986. Guinea's formal financial sector consists of the Central Bank and several commercial banks. The financial sector is largely controlled by foreign-owned banks. The system has a narrow base, is very fragile, and is unable to meet the development needs of the private sector; hence, there is a thriving black market for foreign currencies. Since banks are conservative and risk averse, there is not a significant amount of capital available to finance large investments. Commercial banks favor short-term lending at high interest rates (25% and up), as there is high potential for default. International banking institutions have reported harassment by the military in the form of robbery and attempted extortion.

Foreign Exchange Controls

Guinea's Investment Code guarantees the free transfer of capital.

US Banks & Local Correspondent Banks

First International Bank (FIBank) is being acquired by an American firm and is now the only U.S. bank operating in Guinea, but there are several other local banks with U.S. banking arrangements including:

Banque Internationale pour le Commerce et l'Industrie de Guinee (BICIGUI)
operates with Citibank of New York, and the French American Banking

Corporation Banque Nationale de Paris

Tel : (+224) 30 41 45 15
Email: dg.bicigui@bnpparibas.com
www.biciguinet.net

Societe Generale de Banque en Guinee, with SBG New York,
Tel : (+224) 30 41 17 46
www.sgbg.net

OraBank formerly UIBG, a subsidiary of Credit Agricole Francais
www.orabank.net
Av. de la République - 5ème Bld. / 6ème Av.
BP 324 Conakry
T: 00 (224) 622 35 00 70

ECOBANK, a partner of Citibank
Tel: (+224) 30-45-58-76/ +224-30-45-58-77
Email: ecobankgn@ecobank.com

ECOBANK, a West African bank under partial Citibank ownership, has direct financing and transfer links with Citibank worldwide. ECOBANK has gained the bulk of U.S. banking business in Guinea and has consistently been more accommodating to potential U.S.-based clients.

First International Bank
Cite Chemin de Fer PB 557
Tel : (224) 662 46 46 46

Director : Mady Conde

First International Bank (FIBank) in the process of being aquired by Lithium Capital of NewYork.

Project Financing

The six major commercial banks limit their activities to short and medium-term finance. Commercial interest rates are very high, averaging 20-30 percent, making commercial loans scarce and expensive. A majority of these programs focus on helping local Guinean businesses and are therefore

difficult for foreigners to access. Most U.S. exporters dealing with Guinean importers receive direct payment through international transfer. If not, exporters are encouraged to insist upon an irrevocable letter of credit before shipping products to Guinea. Funding for larger projects or business expansions can be found through international lenders and development banks. For example, the African Development Bank's private-sector window also has some funding available for development-orientated business projects. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) will accept invitations for investment projects in Guinea. However, all contracts/projects that are "under review" by the government of Guinea are not eligible for consideration by OPIC. The U.S. Trade and Development Agency (TDA) has a program to assist in the financing of feasibility studies that meet significant U.S. export criteria.

U.S. Commercial Service Liaison Offices at the Multilateral Development Banks (African Development Bank, World Bank)

The Commercial Service maintains Commercial Liaison Offices in each of the main Multilateral Development Banks, including the African Development Bank and the World Bank. These institutions lend billions of dollars in developing countries on projects aimed at accelerating economic growth and social development by reducing poverty and inequality, improving health and education, and advancing infrastructure development. The Commercial Liaison Offices help American businesses learn how to get involved in bank-funded projects, and advocate on behalf of American bidders. Learn more by contacting the Commercial Liaison Offices to the African Development Bank ([Export.gov - African Development Bank](#)) and the World Bank ([Export.gov - World Bank](#)).

Web Resources

[Commercial Liaison Office to the African Development Bank](#)

[Commercial Liaison Office to the World Bank](#)

Web Resources

- [Trade Finance Guide](#)
- [Export-Import Bank of the United States](#)
- [Country Limitation Schedule](#)
- [OPIC](#)
- [Trade and Development Agency](#)
- [SBA's Office of International Trade](#)
- [USDA Commodity Credit Corporation](#)
- [U.S. Agency for International Development](#)

Business Travel

Business Customs

Given the complexity of Guinea's social and economic customs, it is imperative to establish local contacts, and possibly a local office staffed by individuals who know the language(s) and cultures of Guinea. Rampant corruption and several years of political instability mitigate the beneficial effects of good investment laws. It will take time to change an established culture of corruption and mistrust.

Bribery is a common practice in commercial negotiation in Guinea. Though it is illegal to pay bribes in Guinea, there is no enforcement of these laws. In practice, it is difficult and time-consuming to conduct business without paying bribes in Guinea, which can leave U.S. companies at a disadvantage as they must comply with the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Enforcement of the rule of law in Guinea is irregular and inefficient. Businesses report that one must pay a bribe to see that law is enforced, and then a bribe is paid by the offender to reduce or eliminate any penalties. It is crucial that businesses understand that bribery is common and be prepared to appropriately address and deflect bribery attempts.

Business in Guinea is conducted on a very personal level; given the weakness of local legal institutions and law enforcement Guineans rely heavily on personal networks to make business connections and establish trust. Particularly at the beginning of a business relationship face-to-face meetings are vital. Guinean businesspeople will want to inspect potential partners' products and facilities personally to establish their quality.

Guinea's population is approximately 85% Muslim. Businesses will encounter similar challenges and opportunities found in other West

African/Muslim countries. Business attire is recommended and business cards are commonly exchanged during meetings. Key elements to success in Guinea are French language ability, patience, and taking the time necessary to develop relationships, and very clear contractual terms, including an irrevocable letter of credit and/or advance payment.

Travel Advisory

It is highly advisable for any U.S. citizen to consult the U.S. Embassy's Consular Information sheet for Guinea, available at the Department of State website. In case of a public health crisis in Guinea, consult CDC for the latest travel notices and information at [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Travel Health Notices](#).

Visa Requirements

A passport, visa, international vaccination record (WHO card), and a current yellow fever vaccination are all required for entry into Guinea. Please contact the Embassy of the Republic of Guinea for the most current visa information. The Embassy of the Republic of Guinea in Washington, D.C. is located at 2112 Leroy Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008; tel: (202) 986-4300; fax: (202) 478-3010. Overseas inquiries should be made at the nearest Guinean embassy or consulate. The U.S. Department of State is unaware of any HIV/AIDS entry restrictions for visitors to or foreign residents of Guinea. Although the reciprocity visa agreement between Guinea and the United States calls for a 36 month multiple entry visa, the Guinean embassy presently only issues visas for six and 12 month validity.

U.S. Companies that require travel of foreign businesspersons to the United States should be advised that security evaluations are handled via an interagency process. Visa applicants should go to the following links:

State Department Visa Website: [U.S. Visas](#)

[U.S. Embassy, Conakry Consular Office](#)

Currency

Guinea is a cash economy. While some upscale hotels will accept credit cards, fraud and exchange rate manipulation make dealing in hard currency a simpler way to settle accounts. ATMs are rare and susceptible to tampering. Dollars can be exchanged for local currency relatively easily at local banks.

Telecommunications/Electric

The telephone network in Guinea is generally unreliable and subject to coverage failure and frequent system outage in the countryside, but there is generally reliable 3G network in Conakry. While there are some land lines, the more common practice is to carry multiple cell phones with different cellular company subscriptions. There are currently four major cellular phone companies in Conakry (MTN, Cellcom, Intercel, and Orange). Competition between the available service providers affords customers reasonable local rates. International calls can be made from most cellular phones, major hotels, and places of business. Guinean postal service is not reliable and is not a secure means of transmitting anything of value. It is strongly advised that all mail be routed through the overnight carriers serving Guinea (DHL or FedEx).

There are numerous web equipped facilities in Conakry, but the services are expensive and insecure, and the connections are poor. Internet connectivity in the interior of the country is almost non-existent. Guinea is connected to the undersea fiber optic cable off the West African coast and internet speed and reliability has improved. Some providers now provide fiber optic based service, which represents a vast improvement. Guinea's internet speeds are poised to continue improving as more service providers roll out fiber optic based data services.

Guinea uses a 220 volt system with a standard European/French plug.

Transportation

Conakry Airport is served by Air France, Brussels Airlines, Royal Air Maroc, Air Ivoire, Tunisair, Ethiopian Air, Turkish Airlines, Emirates Air, ASKY, and Air Mauritanie. Guinean has launched a new national carrier, but it has yet to offer flights. There is no commercial air service to the interior of Guinea.

Taxis are available at the major hotels in Conakry, but are not up to U.S. standards and can be unsafe. Car rental (with or without a driver) is available through many larger hotels in Conakry, though it is expensive. There are no car rental agencies at the airport.

Avis: B.P. 1455, Conakry, Republique de Guinee; Tel: +224.622.41.11.82; Email: avisgui@sotelgui.net.gn

Hertz Guinee: B.P. 1562, Conakry, Republique de Guinee; Tel: +224.43.07.45

EURO Car: Hotel de l'Independence, B.P. 3152, Conakry, Republique de Guinee; Tel: +224.631.40.70.80; Email: azcorp@sotelgui.net.gn

Language

French is the official language of government, education, and business. Local languages (Soussou, Peular, Malinké, etc) are also widely spoken, particularly outside of Conakry. Most Guinean businesspeople speak little or no English.

Health

Most healthcare facilities in Guinea are in poor condition. There is little or no control on the importation of medicines, many of which are suspected to be counterfeit and dangerous to use. Visitors should update all appropriate vaccinations before traveling to Guinea. Consult the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website, [Centers for Disease Control and](http://www.cdc.gov)

[Prevention](#), and the U.S. Embassy's Consular Information Sheet for information on vaccinations, medical education, insurance (including Medevac insurance), medical facilities, and health care. Please be advised that any traveler to Guinea must have a yellow fever shot recorded on an official World Health Organization (WHO) card (see "visa requirements" section) in order to enter the country. The vaccination should be given at least 10 days before travel and at 10 year intervals if there is an on-going risk. If a traveler does not have the immunization and card when entering Guinea, they will be given the shot by airport medical officials, which is not a recommended space for such vaccinations.

Malaria is a major cause of death among unprotected travelers. Malaria is a tropical infection spread by the Anopheles Mosquito. Chloroquine-resistant malaria is present in Guinea. Malaria prophylaxis should be started two weeks before arrival for Mefloquine and continue four weeks after departure; two days prior for Malarone, and seven days after departure; and for Doxycycline, two days prior to coming and continued for 4 weeks after departure. Please consult your physician for the appropriate prophylaxis and usage before taking any of these prescription medications.

Before traveling to Guinea, it is important to consult your physician about appropriate measures to take to maintain your health. Although not an exhaustive list, the following simple health precautions should be observed in Guinea:

- Drink only bottled, boiled, or filtered water
- Wash and disinfect salad ingredients and non-peelable vegetables and fruits before eating them
- Take anti-malaria pills as the prescription requires

- Use a mosquito net at night and wear long-sleeved clothing and pants when possible
- Do not swim in non-moving fresh water
- Persons with chronic medical conditions must bring supplies and medications sufficient for their length of stay

Medical facilities are limited and are not up to U.S. or European standards. Doctors and hospitals will expect immediate cash payment for medical care. The Embassy's Consular Section keeps a list of doctors for referral to Americans.

Guinea suffered an Ebola outbreak from December 2013 to June 2016. Although the outbreak is over, there remains the remote chance of viral re-emergence in Guinea. The CDC website will contain the most up to date information concerning any re-emergence and its threat to visitors. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Travel Health Notices](#).

Local Time, Business Hours and Holidays

Conakry follows Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Business hours are generally from 9am until 6pm, but times vary greatly. The following official holidays are observed in Guinea (days vary for religious holidays):

The U.S. Embassy in Conakry, Guinea will be closed on the following dates in 2017 in observance of local and U.S. holidays.

Date	Holiday	Type
January 1	New Year's Day	GG/US
January 16	Martin Luther King's Day	US
February 20	President's Day	US

April 17	Easter/Lundi de Pâques	GG
May 1	Labor Day (G)	GG
May 25	OUA Anniversary	GG
May 29	Memorial Day	US
June 22	Lailatoul Qadr	GRH*
June 26	End of Ramadan (Eid-al-Fitr)	GRH*
July 04	Independence Day (U.S.)	US
August 15	Assumption Day	GG
September 01	Tabaski (Eid-al-Adha)	GRH*
September 04	Labor Day (US)	US
October 02	Independence Day	GG
October 09	Columbus Day	US
November 10	Veteran's Day	US
November 23	Thanksgiving Day	US
December 02	Mawlid (Maouloud)	GRH*
December 25	Christmas Day	GG/US

U.S. = United States holiday

GG = Guinean Government

GRH = Guinean religious holiday, governed by lunar calendar. Exact dates confirmed by religious authorities.*

Temporary Entry of Materials or Personal Belongings

Provided that goods are declared prior to entry, all items for personal use and personal effects may be brought into the country in small amounts, free of duty. Transport of narcotics, military equipment, and firearms is prohibited.

Web Resources

- [U.S. Embassy in Guinea](#)
- [U.S. Department of State](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)