



French Guiana — Va-PoReg Country Report

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07/31/1667 Start Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of France]: The initial French presence in Guiana dates back to 1503, but it wasn't until 1643 that the French established a lasting settlement when colonists founded Cayenne. The Treaty of Breda awarded the territory to France on 07/31/1667.¹ Over time, Guiana evolved into a slave-based society, with a substantial influx of African slaves working on extensive sugar and other plantations, leading to population growth. During World War II, when France fell to German forces, French Guiana became part of Vichy France. However, it officially joined the Free France movement on 03/16/1943.²

03/19/1946 End Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of France, Electoral Oligarchy (Patriarchal)]/Start Part of Other Country [of France, Electoral Democracy]: On this date, French Guiana became a department of France. In 1974 regional status was given to French Guiana.³ French Guiana, being an integral part of France, holds a unique position as part of the European Union. It operates under the leadership of the President of the French Republic as its head of state and the Prime Minister of France as its head of government. The French government and its agencies have jurisdiction over various national matters, including defense and external relations. French Guiana is represented in the French National Assembly by two deputies. One deputy represents the municipalities of Cayenne and Macouria, while the other represents the remaining regions of French Guiana. Additionally, French Guiana sends two senators to the French Senate.⁴ FH, LIED and V-Dem do not list French Guiana in their data. Due to the legal equality of the overseas territory with the regions of mainland France, as well as its representation in the French Parliament and in the European Union, French Guiana can be regarded as a part of France. A referendum held in 2010 on granting greater autonomy and changing the legal status to a collectivité d'outre-mer was rejected.⁵ Consequently, participation in the French state as a department of France was further legitimized.

Part of Other Country [of France, Liberal Democracy] as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Notes

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/French-Guiana/Government-and-society#ref2490>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Guiana#History

³ <https://www.britannica.com/place/French-Guiana/Government-and-society#ref2490>

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Guiana#Politics

⁵ <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franz%C3%B6sisch-Guayana>