



Guinea — Va-PoReg Country Report

Kailitz, Steffen, et al., 2026: Varieties of Political Regimes (Va-PoReg). Country Report Guinea, Dresden: Hannah Arendt Institute for Totalitarianism Studies.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/JYEL7U>

12/17/1891 Start Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of France]: Guinea became on 12/17/1891 a colony of France and was since 06/16/1895 part of French West Africa.¹ Universal suffrage was absent during this period (LIED). According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held until 1945, from 1946 to 1952 only multiparty legislative elections were held, from 1953 to 1956 no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held, in 1957 only multiparty legislative elections were held. According to LIED and political liberties were absent. V-Dem's PCLI classifies political liberties as absent until 1944 and as not really present from 1945 onward. For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also absent.

03/31/1957 End Direct Rule Colonial Regime [of France, Liberal Democracy]/Start Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of France, Liberal Democracy]: On this day, elections to the Guinean Territorial Assembly were held under universal suffrage, after voting inequalities had been removed in the French African Colonies through the loi-cadre (Reform Act) passed in 1956.²

10/02/1958 End Indirect Rule Colonial Regime [of France, Liberal Democracy]/Start One-Party (Personalist) Autocracy: Post-World War II colonial policy led to increasing political activity by indigenous groups, and in 1947 the Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG) was founded. Under the leadership of Ahmed Sékou Toure, the PDG pushed for independence, and, following rejection of membership in the French Community in a referendum held on 09/28/1958, Guinea became the first of France's African colonies to achieve complete independence. Since the PDG already held 58 of the 60 seats in the Territorial Assembly, Sékou Touré automatically became president upon establishment of the republic on 10/02/1958 (Lansford 2021: 660). Soon after independence the opposition merged with the PDG and there was no more legal opposition. As leader of the PDG, Touré was the only candidate for president of the republic. He was elected unopposed to four seven-year terms. Independence was achieved under the single-party rule of the PDG. While the PDG initially won a fair election before independence, the opposition later merged with the PDG. The regime is deemed authoritarian due to the government's swift suppression of opposition activities following independence (Finer 1975: 495-96, Brooker 1995: 117-18, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014b: 64).³ In 1958 universal suffrage was introduced.⁴ On 01/01/1979 Guinea was named People's Revolutionary Republic of Guinea and on 05/25/1984 Republic of Guinea. As classified by FH for this regime period, the country is scored from 11 to 14 as not free, which corresponds to our interpretation of not free. Both LIED and V-Dem's PCLI classify political liberties as absent. Based on Polity5's assessment, during this period, the executive operated with unlimited authority, facing no institutional checks on power. During this regime period, V-Dem's JCE is classified by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also absent. According to LIED multiparty executive and legislative elections were held until 1960, from 1961 onward executive and legislative elections, which weren't multiparty, were held.

04/03/1984 End One-Party (Personalist) Autocracy/Start Military Autocracy: On this date, after Toure's death a military coup led by Lieutenant Colonel Lansana Conté and other middle ranking officers toppled the PDG

regime. A 25-member Military Committee of National Restoration (CMRN) under the leadership of Conté was set up. He became president of the Republic (Lansford 2012c: 569).⁵ A national referendum regarding a new constitution was held on 12/23/1990 (Brüne 1999: 448). Per FH, for this regime period, the country scores between 11 and 14 as not free, which we also interpret as not free. LIED's political liberties outcomes continued to be coded as absent. According to V-Dem's PCLI they were absent until 1986 and can be interpreted as not really present since 1987. Based on Polity5's assessment, during this period, the executive operated with unlimited authority, facing no institutional checks on power. According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held.

01/16/1991 End Military Autocracy/Start Non-Electoral Transitional Regime: The Junta (CMRN) was replaced by the Transitional Committee for National Recovery (CTRN) to prepare elections. The new constitution was promulgated on 12/23/1991, it was a further step in the direction of civilian rule. Furthermore, it provided for a unicameral legislative and a civilian president. We classify this regime change event as a strategic liberalizing restructuring because the regime's stated goal was to establish democratic institutions. At this stage, however, the change cannot yet be considered full liberalization, as those institutions were not functioning in practice. As classified by FH for this regime period, the country is scored from 11 to 14 as not free, which corresponds to our interpretation of not free. In 1992 political parties were legalized, but legislative elections were indefinitely postponed (Brüne 1999: 448).⁶ For this transition period, political liberties were coded as absent (LIED). V-Dem's PCLI indicates them as not really present in 1991 and as ambiguous afterwards. Based on Polity5's evaluation, during this period, the executive faced weak constraints, classified as Intermediate Category 1 between unlimited authority and slight limitations. For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also absent. According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held.

12/19/1993 End Non-Electoral Transitional Regime/Start Electoral Autocracy: On this date, the first multi-party presidential election since independence took place. Beforehand, Conté had resigned from the army to run as a civilian in line with the constitution in the presidential elections. Conté, who ran for the newly formed the Unity and Progress Party (Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès, PUP), won 51.7 per cent of the vote. The elections are not considered to be fair and the rule of Conté remained authoritarian. Especially the neutrality of the electoral commission was questioned. National Assembly election took place on 06/11/1995 and municipal elections in late June. The PUP won the majority of seats in both elections. In total 21 parties competed. The inaugural session was held on 08/30/1995 and attended by members of all elected parties, despite raised allegations of electoral fraud (Brüne 1999: 448).⁷ Conté's government narrowly survived a coup attempt on 02/02/1996 that stemmed from an army mutiny over payment of salaries. On 12/14/1998 a presidential election was held. Conté was re-elected.⁸ The presidential elections in 12/1998, once again clouded by serious fraud allegations, occurred amid heightened political tension and were marked by incidents of repression (Brüne 1999: 449). The next presidential election was held on 12/21/2003 and Conté was re-elected again and began his third and last term in office.⁹ Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. LIED categorizes elections during this period as not competitive. V-Dem's EF&FI scores them as not really free or fair while their CEI scores them as not clean. As classified by FH for this regime period, the country is scored from 11 to 14 as not free, which corresponds to our interpretation of not free. Besides, political liberties are considered as absent by LIED. V-Dem's PCLI indicates them with an ambiguous presence. According to Polity5, during this period, the executive encountered slight limitations on decision-making power imposed by other institutions. From 1994 to 2002, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, and V-Dem's LCE is similarly interpreted as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were also absent. From 2003 to 2008, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as

indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were limited.

12/22[&23]/2008 End Electoral Autocracy/Start Military Autocracy: President Conté died on 12/22/2008. After his death a military coup by junior officers led by Captain Camara established a military junta, the Comité National pour le Développement et la Démocratie (National Council for Democracy and Development) to rule (Lansford 2012c: 570, Lansford 2021: 662, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014b: 64-65).¹⁰ In December 2009 President Camara was shot and General Konaté took over as president while Camara was in Morocco for medical treatment. According to FH's classification for the assessed regime period, a score between 11 and 14 makes the country not free, which we also place in the not free category. Furthermore, political liberties are coded as absent (LIED) and can be interpreted as ambiguous (V-Dem PCLI). Based on Polity5's assessment, the executive faced slight limitations on power during this period. For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were limited. According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held.

01/16/2010 End Military Autocracy/Start Non-Electoral Transitional Regime: On this date, based on an agreement between Sékouba Konaté¹¹, Camara, and the opposition power was turned over to a transitional government led by the opposition until elections (Burgis 2010: 1, Lansford 2012c: 570, Lansford 2021: 662, Geddes/Wright/Frantz 2014b: 64-65). Based on Polity5's assessment, the executive faced slight limitations on power during this period. Per FH's evaluation for this regime period, the country scores from 9 to 10 as not free, which we categorize as rather not free.

11/07/2010 End Non-Electoral Transitional Regime/Start Electoral Autocracy: On this date, the second round of competitive presidential election completed the transition to an electoral regime. Condé was declared the winner with 52.5 percent of the vote (Brüne 1999, Lansford 2021: 663).¹² Although the constitution enshrined respect for freedom of assembly, it was often suppressed in practice. Based on our observations, multiparty executive and legislative elections were held during this period, which aligns with the observations of LIED. LIED categorizes elections during this period as not competitive. V-Dem's EF&FI scores freedom and fairness as ambiguous while their CEI scores them as not really clean. Given the high illiteracy rate, the majority of the population relied on radio for information, with limited access to the internet, primarily in urban areas. However, certain radio stations faced repression by the state. The judicial system exhibited a modest level of independence starting from 2010. Legislative elections, initially slated for 12/29/ 2011, were repeatedly postponed (Puddington 2013). On 09/28/2013, legislative elections were held, several irregularities have been cited by observers. Presidential balloting was held on 10/11/2015. Condé was re-elected with 57.9 percent of the vote (Lansford 2021: 663). The seven opposition parties called for a postponement citing alleged irregularities in the electoral roll, but their pleas were rejected.¹³ Constitutional changes in 2020 allowed Condé to seek two additional terms. He was re-elected in the 2020 Guinean presidential elections (Lansford 2021: 663). During the last year of the second term and his third term, Condé cracked down on protests and on opposition candidates, some of whom died in prison.¹⁴ LIED categorizes elections during this period as not competitive. V-Dem's EF&FI scores freedom and fairness as ambiguous while their CEI scores them as not really clean. As classified by FH for the time of 2013 to 2020, the country scores between 9 and 10 as not free, which we interpret as rather not free. From 2021 onwards, Guinea will be classified as not free with a score of 11, which corresponds to our not free category. Furthermore, LIED's outcome concerning the political liberties maintained to be coded as absent. V-Dem's PCLI classifies them as ambiguous until 2012 and as somewhat present from 2013 to 2016. The scores decreased to ambiguous since 2017. In 2011 and 2012, according to Polity5, the executive encountered slight limitations on decision-making power imposed by other institutions. From 2013 to 2018, as per Polity5's classification, the executive experienced moderate limitations on authority, placing it in the second intermediate category. For 2011 and 2012, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were absent, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were limited. For the rest of the regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were

limited, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were absent.

09/05/2021 End Electoral Autocracy/Start Military Autocracy: Condé was captured by the country's armed forces in a coup d'état after gunfire in the capital, Conakry. Special forces commander Mamady Doumbouya released a broadcast on state television announcing the dissolution of the constitution and government.¹⁵ On 05/11/2023, a minimum of 7 individuals were fatally shot during anti-government protests in various cities across Guinea. The demonstrators, part of the anti-government movement, engaged in peaceful protests, urging authorities to terminate military governance and facilitate a transition to democracy in the country.¹⁶ According to FH's classification for the assessed regime period, a score between 11 and 14 makes the country not free, which we also place in the not free category. Furthermore, LIED continues to code political liberties as absent. V-Dem's PCLI indicates an ambiguous presence since 2021. For the relevant regime period, V-Dem's JCE is interpreted by us as indicating that judicial constraints on the executive were limited, while V-Dem's LCE is classified by us as indicating that legislative constraints on the executive were absent. According to LIED no multiparty executive and legislative elections were held.

Military Autocracy as of 07/01/2025 continued.

Notes

¹ <https://www.webguinee.net/bibliotheque/economie/vdubois/independence-movement-in-guinea/chapter01-guinea-introduction.html>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1957_Guinean_Territorial_Assembly_election; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loi-cadre_Defferre

³ <http://tinyurl.com/446xmvk>

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_suffrage

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lansana_Con%C3%A9; <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-guinea/#history>

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_Committee_of_National_Restoration;
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Guinea/Government-and-society#ref517229>

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unity_and_Progress_Party; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lansana_Con%C3%A9

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lansana_Con%C3%A9

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lansana_Con%C3%A9

¹⁰ <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-guinea/#history>

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%A9kouba_Kon%C3%A9

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alpha_Con%C3%A9

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2015_Guinean_presidential_election

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alpha_Con%C3%A9

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revoluci%C3%B3n_Libertadora

¹⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guinea#History>

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