

# Guinea

## *Ethnicity in Guinea*

### *Group selection*

The remaining 10% of the population (besides the three big politically relevant groups) is made up of several small ethnic groups, none of which is politically organized/represented and thus politically relevant according to the definition of EPR. Group sizes according to figures provided by the CIA World Factbook.

### *Power relations*

*1958-1984; Sékou Touré's rule:* Touré, a Malinke, who led the country to independence was known for his personal commitment to a transethnic, united Guinean nation (<sup>1388</sup>; <sup>1389</sup>). Although his party (PDG) - the country's single ruling party until the military coup in 1984 - was sometimes portrayed/seen as a Malinke and Susu and anti-Peul party by political opponents, its leaders made a great personal effort to construct a party and government that included all of the country's ethnic groups and to maintain an ethnic balance (<sup>1390</sup>) - despite the highly personalized rule of Touré. Representation of all regions and ethnic groups in the party leadership was emphasized (<sup>1391</sup>).

<sup>1388</sup> [Schmidt, 2005]

<sup>1389</sup> [O'Toole, 2005]

<sup>1390</sup> [Schmidt, 2005]

<sup>1391</sup> [Schmidt, 2005]

Nevertheless, the more distrustful and authoritarian Touré became over the years, the more he was inclined to rely on a small clique of family members and Malinke associates which in the end formed the inner power circle of the regime (<sup>1392</sup>). The Malinke were thus coded as "senior partner" and the Susu and Peul as "junior partners".

<sup>1392</sup> [O'Toole, 2005]

There was an alleged "Peul plot" in 1976 after which Touré proceeded aggressively against prominent Peul intellectuals. Many were arrested and died in prison. However, Touré also persecuted opponents from his own ethnic group (e.g. Malinke merchants after another alleged plot in 1975) (<sup>1393</sup>). There was no evidence of an ongoing targeted discrimination or political exclusion of the Peul as a group. It seems that Touré simply became more and more distrustful and authoritarian in general, striking aggressively against all kinds of real and imagined opponents to stay in power.

<sup>1393</sup> [O'Toole, 2005]

*1985; Military coup in April 1984 after Touré's death:* According to EPR's January 1st rule, the new period is coded as starting in 1985. A military junta takes over power. At first, a power-sharing regime is installed between the two main leaders: Lansana Conté, a Susu, becomes president, Diarra Traoré, a Malinke, prime minister. However, ethnic and personal tensions quickly come to the fore (<sup>1394</sup>).

<sup>1394</sup> [O'Toole, 2005]

Nevertheless, this single-year period is characterized by a power-sharing situation between the different ethnic factions within the army. Conté's Susu can be considered the "senior partner", the Malinke and Peul groups the "junior partners" in the country's executive.

*1986-2005:* After Traoré is sidelined by Conté, there is an unsuccessful coup attempt in July 1985. This leads to anti-Malinke violence and to the execution of numerous Malinke politicians and officers (<sup>1395</sup>).

<sup>1395</sup> [O'Toole, 2005]

Meanwhile, Conté consolidates his power. More and more personalized, authoritarian rule despite the transition to a (superficial) multi-party democracy at the beginning of the 90s. The Peul- and Malinke-elite are almost completely excluded from political power. (Even the leadership of Conté's own national party PUP becomes marginalized.) A clique of Susu friends and businessmen dominate the politics alongside President Conté (<sup>1396</sup>). Also, the public sector and the top-leadership of the military are dominated by the Susu group (<sup>1397</sup>).

<sup>1396</sup> [O'Toole, 2005]

<sup>1397</sup> [State Department, 2005–2014]

The new opposition parties that emerged in the 90s and which are severely constrained by Conté's government are built along ethnic lines: the RPG of Alpha Condé is a Malinke party, the PRP and UNR are Peul parties (<sup>1398</sup>; <sup>1399</sup>).

<sup>1398</sup> [O'Toole, 2005]

<sup>1399</sup> [State Department, 2005–2014]

Therefore the Susu were coded as "dominant", and the Malinke and Peul groups as "powerless" in this period.

*2006-2008:* Continuation of Conté's rule until his death in December 2008. Increasing and increasingly mobilized opposition which in turn is met with severe violence by the regime. Continuing ethnic bias and dominance of Conté's Susu group which also occupies the crucial posts in the all important army (<sup>1400</sup>; <sup>1401</sup>). Based on this information and in absence of new evidence contrasting the picture sketched in the period of 1986-2005, it appears reasonable to add Conté's last 3 years of rule to the foregoing period, resulting in a combined period from 1986 to 2008, with the Susu coded as "dominant" and the Peul and Malinke as "powerless".

<sup>1400</sup> [State Department, 2005–2014]

<sup>1401</sup> [Freedom House, 2006–2009]

*2009:* After Conté's death, Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara seizes control over the government in a military coup, establishing a military junta (National Council for Democracy and Development) with himself as president (until a failed assassination attempt in December 2009 which left him incapacitated and led to him leaving the country for medical treatment). Camara belongs to the Kpelle (Guerze) group, one of the small ethnic groups located in the southeastern highlands (Forrest Region) which total about 10% of the population and are not relevant politically (although according to the U.S. State Department's Human Rights Report 2009, they now enjoy a certain favoritism by the military junta leading to resentment by other groups). Generally, ethnicity still matters for national politics and the major political parties - RPG (Malinke), UPR, and UFDG (both Peul) - have easily identifiable ethnic bases (<sup>1402</sup>). According to the U.S. State Department's HR Report of 2009, all major ethnic groups are included in the cabinet leadership. The junta's second man (and Camara's successor after the latter left the country), is Sékouba Konaté, a Malinke; prime minister in 2009 was a Malinke, too (Kabiné Komara). Nevertheless, it is not exactly clear based on the available information how much power representatives of the different ethnic groups really have (since Camara's Kpelle are not politically relevant as a group). Therefore, it appears reasonable to code all three relevant groups (Susu, Malinke, Peul) as "senior partners" in 2009.

<sup>1402</sup> [State Department, 2005–2014]

*2010:* After the coup attempt in late 2009, vice-president and minister of defense S. Konaté, a Malinke, took over power with president Camara staying outside the country. As no major ethnic reshuffling of the cabinet is reported for 2009 but the Malinke are upgraded through the new position of S. Konaté, they were coded as being senior partner, while Peul and Susu are coded as junior partners on January 1 2010.

*2011-2013:* After the transition government, the second round of presidential elections were finally held on November 7 2010. Alpha Condé, a Malinke from the RPG party (also mainly Malinke) won the election. As the party system in Guinea is very much based on ethnic identities, one can argue that the Peul are excluded from power. Although some sources report members of all ethnic groups to be included into government (<sup>1403</sup>; <sup>1404</sup>), no report indicates that members of one of the two Peul parties (UPR, UFDG) have access to executive power. Furthermore, ICG (<sup>1405</sup>) reports anti-Peul rhetoric from the part of government members and major tensions of the government with the opposition parties. With regard to the Susu, M. Z. Fofana was elected as PM, reportedly inter alia because of its linkages with the Susu political community and the support it granted to Condé in the second electoral round (<sup>1406</sup>). The Malinké were therefore coded as being senior partners, with the Susu as junior partners for the years 2011 to 2013.

<sup>1403</sup> [International Crisis Group, 2011]

<sup>1404</sup> [State Department, 2005–2014]

<sup>1405</sup> [International Crisis Group, 2011]

<sup>1406</sup> [International Crisis Group, 2011]

Parliamentary elections (free and fair; US State Department, 2014) were - after 2 years of delay - finally held in 2013.

## *Bibliography*

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## *Political status of ethnic groups in Guinea*

*From 1958 until 1984*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Peul	0.4	JUNIOR PARTNER
Malinke	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Susu	0.2	JUNIOR PARTNER

*From 1985 until 1985*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Peul	0.4	JUNIOR PARTNER
Malinke	0.3	JUNIOR PARTNER
Susu	0.2	SENIOR PARTNER

*From 1986 until 2008*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Peul	0.4	POWERLESS
Malinke	0.3	POWERLESS
Susu	0.2	DOMINANT

*From 2009 until 2009*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Peul	0.4	SENIOR PARTNER
Malinke	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Susu	0.2	SENIOR PARTNER



Figure 307: Political status of ethnic groups in Guinea during 1958-1984.



Figure 308: Political status of ethnic groups in Guinea during 1985-1985.



Figure 309: Political status of ethnic groups in Guinea during 1986-2008.



*From 2010 until 2010*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Peul	0.4	JUNIOR PARTNER
Malinke	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Susu	0.2	JUNIOR PARTNER

*From 2011 until 2013*

Group name	Proportional size	Political status
Peul	0.4	POWERLESS
Malinke	0.3	SENIOR PARTNER
Susu	0.2	JUNIOR PARTNER



Figure 311: Political status of ethnic groups in Guinea during 2010-2010.



Figure 312: Political status of ethnic groups in Guinea during 2011-2013.



## *Geographical coverage of ethnic groups in Guinea*

*From 1958 until 2013*

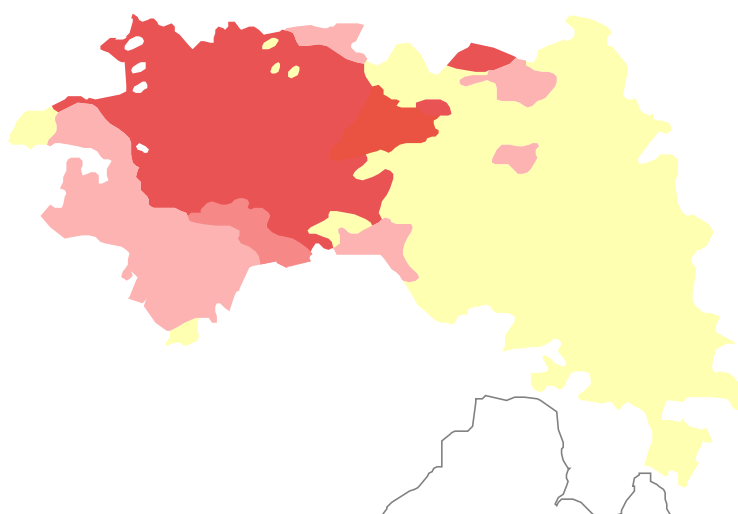


Figure 313: Map of ethnic groups in Guinea during 2011-2013.

Group name	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Type
Malinke	118 239	Regional & urban
Peul	64 770	Regional & urban
Susu	38 863	Regional & urban

Table 93: List of ethnic groups in Guinea during 1958-2013.

## *Conflicts in Guinea*

*Starting on 2000-09-01*

Side A	Side B	Group name	Start	Claim	Recruitment	Support
Government of Guinea	RFDG		2000-09-01			