



Equatorial Guinea

Republic of Equatorial Guinea

Africa

Geography

Area 28,051 sq km. A small enclave, Rio Muni, on the African mainland and several islands in the Gulf of Guinea, including Bioko (2,000 sq km) and Pégalu (Annobon, 10 sq km).

Population	Ann Gr	Density
2010 693,385	2.64%	25/sq km
2020 875,242	2.32%	31/sq km
2030 1,066,881	1.90%	38/sq km

Capital Malabo 131,000. **Urbanites** 39.7%. **Pop under 15 yrs** 41%. **Life expectancy** 49.9 yrs.

Peoples

Bantu 77.3%. Nine groups.

Mainland Fang 57.2%, politically dominant; Seke 2.5%; Ngumba 3.4%; Batangan 2.0%; Ngumbi 1.0%.

Islands Bubi 10.3%.

Other African 19.5%. Yoruba 8.3%; Igbo 4.2%; Eurafrican 2.5%; Hausa 2.1%; Fernandino Creole 1.2%.

Others 3.2%. Spanish.

Literacy 84.2%. **Official languages** Spanish and French. **All languages** 14. **Languages with Scriptures** 3Bi 2NT 6por 2wi.p.

Economy

Prosperous until independence; subsequent mismanagement brought the nation to economic ruin by 1979. Discovery of massive offshore petroleum deposits in 1995 transformed the economy; the nation now has one of the world's highest per capita incomes. Oil revenues – precise figures are a state secret – enabled the rapid transformation of the capital; the development of

rural areas from this income is on a much more modest level. A small minority of foreign investors and local elite have been greatly enriched, but the majority continue to live in poverty. Corruption is a major problem.

HDI Rank 118th/182. **Public debt** 0.9% of GDP. **Income/person** \$14,941 (31% of USA).

Politics

Independence from Spain in 1968. A coup in 1969 brought Macias Nguema to power. With Soviet bloc assistance, this atheist dictator turned his country into a slave-labour camp. A military coup in 1979 saw Nguema's nephew Obiang rise to the position of president. The multiparty system introduced in 1991 still needs to see greater freedom for opposition political parties. Despite a history as one of the worst human rights abusers in Africa, praiseworthy progress is being made in political reform, education and the country's infrastructure. The uncertainty of succession in political leadership, combined with the great oil wealth and a weak democratic tradition, make stability essential for the future.

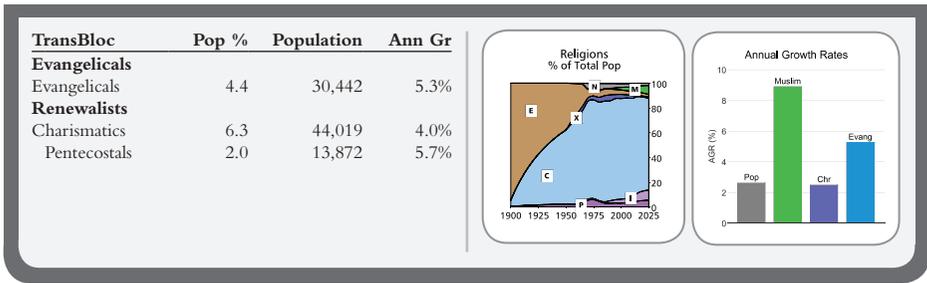
Religion

In colonial times, almost the entire population were baptized as Catholics. The savage persecution of the 1970s, with the repression of religions, is now followed by limited but increasing religious freedom.

Religions	Pop %	Population	Ann Gr
Christian	90.00	624,047	2.5%
Muslim	3.90	27,042	8.9%
Ethnoreligionist	3.10	21,495	1.4%
Non-religious	2.60	18,028	1.1%
Baha'i	0.40	2,774	3.2%

Christians	Denoms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	10	3.35	23,000	3.6%
Independent	24	3.96	27,000	4.9%
Catholic	1	80.33	557,000	2.4%
Marginal	2	0.60	4,000	2.9%
Unaffiliated		1.80	12,000	-3.0%

Churches	MegaBloc	Congs	Members	Affiliates
Catholic Church	C	141	373,826	557,000
New Apostolic Ch	I	20	5,090	8,500
Council of Ev Chs	P	91	4,541	8,400
Other Indigenous chs	I	91	3,650	7,300
Assemblies of God	P	41	820	4,100
Seventh-day Adventist	P	22	2,550	3,800
Betania	I	20	980	2,450
Crusade Chs [WEC]	P	47	880	2,200
Other denominations[15]		235	8,702	18,138
Total Christians[37]		708	401,039	611,888



Challenges for Prayer

- 1 **The unusual politico-economic situation** of Equatorial Guinea betrays a massive gap between the haves and have-nots. Pray for the following issues:
 - a) **Economic justice.** Millions of dollars of oil money enrich a minority, as Western oil companies happily collude with a regime possessing a less-than-stellar human rights record in order to obtain their own profits. Spending on infrastructure (especially in the capital) is increasing, but very little trickles down to the masses. A battle with corruption and an historic governmental unfamiliarity with how to steward such wealth mean prayer for wisdom is needed.
 - b) **The oil boom** brings in foreigners, most drawn by wealth, and includes an influx of evangelical Christians and Muslims. Pray that foreign companies might do business in a way that benefits the local people. Pray that expat believers might be moved to engage with the spiritual and physical needs of the nation.
 - c) **Political freedoms.** In over 30 years, the country has had only two rulers. Opposition parties do not have the freedom to operate that a multiparty democracy should offer. Freedom of the press is limited. Some progress is being made, however.
- 2 **The vast majority are Roman Catholic**, the highest percentage of any African nation. But beneath the surface of the imposed colonial religion lies the reality that animistic beliefs and practices were never abandoned. Pray that the 85% who claim Christianity – without having been born again – might hear and respond to the true gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 3 **An encouraging increase in religious freedom** has occurred alongside a number of newer, growing Pentecostal, charismatic and evangelical denominations (**AoG**, Deeper Life, several indigenous denominations). Pray for purity of life and fervency of evangelism in the churches despite the prevailing poverty, corruption and despair. The government has actually been quite positive about the potential role of the Church and missions in developing society, a much-needed foil to the oil-oriented multinational corporations.
- 4 **Training leaders and discipling believers** are strategic and growing ministries. Three training institutions exist (Reformed, **WEC**, **AoG**) along with TEE programmes. **YWAM** runs short-term Discipleship Training Schools. Pray that graduates may be used of the Spirit to evangelize the nation and disciple believers. Pray for greater opportunities for lay to grow in their faith; the move from a nominal Catholic/animist worldview to a biblical one is a significant transition.
- 5 **Missionaries have increased in number**, including growing numbers from West and Central Africa, but they need wisdom in the convoluted socio-political situation. Several delicate and difficult situations in relating to indigenous leadership have occurred in recent years. Pray for grace and humility on the part of both expats and nationals. The main agencies are: EqGuiMsn, **YWAM**, **AoG**, **WEC**.
- 6 **The large majority of peoples are predominantly Catholic**, with strong strains of animism. Pray especially for:
 - a) **The Fang**, who are the majority people and politically dominant. They are only around 2-3% evangelical.
 - b) **The Hausa**, numbering around 12,000. Originating from Nigeria and staunchly Muslim, they are

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only 0.1% Christian.

c) *The Ngumba, Benga and Fa D'Ambu peoples*, all less than 1% evangelical.

7 **The Bible Society and AoG distribute Scriptures**, but importing and distributing networks are a challenge. Seven indigenous languages have Scriptures. However, most of these translations are archaic. The Fang NT is being translated by Outreach International/*Asociacion Cristiana de Traducciones Biblicas*; pray for its completion. **CLC** runs a bookshop in Bata, and there are numerous audio and video resources in Fang and other languages.