

COI QUERY

Country of Origin	Guinea
Title	Situation of single women without a support network, including with children out of wedlock; legal framework; treatment by society; access to support services
Reference period	January 2021 to 23 June 2023
Topic(s)	1. Legal Framework 2. Treatment by society 3. Access to support services
Date of completion	24 June 2024
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Contributing EU+ COI units (if applicable)	N/A

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COI QUERY RESPONSE – Guinea

Situation of single women without a support network, including with children out of wedlock; legal framework; treatment by society; access to support services

Situation of single women without a support network, including with children out of wedlock

A study on gender equality in Guinea, published in 2022 by Gaïa Développement¹ indicated that over 77 % of divorcees and 94 % of widowed individuals were female.² The same source explained that divorced or widowed women often faced challenges in remarrying due to limited suitors, especially if they lacked financial stability, were older, or had children to support.³ In certain cultures, widows may be remarried to a brother or close relative of their deceased husband based on decisions made by family councils.⁴

According to the local news source Guineematin.com, in 2023, numerous divorced, widowed, or single women living with children in Guinea face significant challenges, including the need for food, clothing, training, and peaceful coexistence within their communities.⁵

Further information on the situation of single women without a support network including with children out of wedlock could not be found among the sources consulted by the EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

Information on the situation of single women without a support network in Guinea within the reference period 2019 – 2021, can be found in the EUAA (formerly the European Asylum Support Office, EASO) Query [Access to services for \(single\) women](#), published on 10 December 2021.

1. Legal framework

¹ Gaïa Développement is a French network of experts, created in 2011, which supports ‘public and private actors in international cooperation, for project management, monitoring and evaluation, strengthening of civil society’. Gaïa Développement, Home Page, n.d., [url](#)

² Gaïa Développement, Réalisation d’une étude genre et d’égalité hommes femmes et d’un plan d’action genre pour le Projet PCI en Guinée [Conducting a gender and gender equality study and developing a gender action plan for the PCI Project in Guinea], 3 May 2022, [url](#), p. 35

³ Gaïa Développement, Réalisation d’une étude genre et d’égalité hommes femmes et d’un plan d’action genre pour le Projet PCI en Guinée [Conducting a gender and gender equality study and developing a gender action plan for the PCI Project in Guinea], 3 May 2022, [url](#), p. 35

⁴ Gaïa Développement, Réalisation d’une étude genre et d’égalité hommes femmes et d’un plan d’action genre pour le Projet PCI en Guinée [Conducting a gender and gender equality study and developing a gender action plan for the PCI Project in Guinea], 3 May 2022, [url](#), p. 35

⁵ Guineematin.com, Conakry: immersion dans le difficile quotidien des mères seules ou célibataires [Conakry: immersion in the difficult daily life of single or unmarried mothers], 25 January 2023, [url](#)



In a report covering 2023, Freedom House noted that ‘women face pervasive societal discrimination and disadvantages in both the formal and traditional justice systems’.⁶ Further, sources described that women faced gender-based disadvantages in law and did not have the same legal status as men in inheritance and property.⁷ In addition, the United States Department of State (USDOS) added that discrimination was also present in employment, credit, and divorce.⁸ The same source added that ‘traditional practices historically discriminated against women and sometimes took precedence over the law, particularly in rural areas’.⁹ The source highlighted that ‘divorce laws generally favored men in awarding custody and dividing communal assets’, as well ‘legal testimony given by women commonly carried less weight than testimony by men’.¹⁰

On divorce, the Civil Code of Guinea (2019)¹¹, Article 304 states [informal translation]:

- ‘Divorce can be pronounced either:
- by mutual consent;
 - in the event of a breakdown in the common life;
 - for fault.’¹²

Further, Article 336 states [informal translation]:

‘to contract a new marriage, the woman must observe a waiting period of 130 days.’¹³

Moreover, according to a research paper by the World Bank from May 2023, ‘discrimination between men and women was still present in Guinean statutory law’, despite reforms in the Civil Code of 2019¹⁴, which ‘eliminated’ restrictions on women’s capacity ‘to be head of household’ or to get a divorce in ‘the same way as men’.¹⁵

2. Treatment by society

Information on the treatment by society of single women without a support network including with children out of wedlock was scarce among the sources consulted by the EUAA within the time constraints of this query. However, the following information may be relevant.

⁶ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 – Guinea, 2024, [url](#)

⁷ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2024 – Guinea, 2024, [url](#); USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2023 – Guinea, 23 April 2024, [url](#), p. 26

⁸ USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2023 – Guinea, 23 April 2024, [url](#), p. 26

⁹ USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2023 – Guinea, 23 April 2024, [url](#), p. 26

¹⁰ USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2023 – Guinea, 23 April 2024, [url](#), p. 26

¹¹ For more information, see: Guinea, Code Civil de la République de Guinée [Civil Code of the Republic of Guinea], 5 October 2019, [url](#)

¹² Guinea, Code Civil de la République de Guinée [Civil Code of the Republic of Guinea], 5 October 2019, [url](#)

¹³ Guinea, Code Civil de la République de Guinée [Civil Code of the Republic of Guinea], 5 October 2019, [url](#)

¹⁴ Guinea, Code Civil de la République de Guinée [Civil Code of the Republic of Guinea], 5 October 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵ World Bank (The), Unlocking Women’s and Girl’s Potential: The status of women and girls relative to men and boys in Guinea, 4 May 2023, [url](#), p. 84

Guineematin.com indicated that single mothers were sometimes stigmatized and exposed to certain social difficulties.¹⁶ Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query. Concerning women with children born out of wedlock, the same news source described that they are required to repent before men should consider marrying them, according to an interview with a local imam.¹⁷

The World Bank further illustrated that religious beliefs and traditional norms ‘prohibited sexual intercourse out of wedlock, deterring young women from seeking family planning and sexual health orientation’.¹⁸ Moreover, statistics illustrated by the World Bank, described that ‘single women’ were one of the ‘most vulnerable’ to physical intimate-partner violence and women aged 15–24 and women aged 25–34 faced the highest risk of experiencing physical gender-based violence.¹⁹ Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

According to the World Bank, women and girls have a ‘very poor status’ in Guinean society, and according to the United Nations Development Program Gender Inequality Index for 2021, Guinea ranked 182 out of 191, as one of the countries in the world with rampant gender inequality.²⁰ The 2023 country report by USDOS noted that ‘although the government did not ban girls from staying in school during pregnancy and motherhood, religious, cultural, and societal stigma or pressures often led the families of pregnant girls or adolescent mothers to deprioritize their education’.²¹

Further information concerning the treatment by society of single women without a support network including with children out of wedlock could not be found among the sources consulted by the EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

3. Access to support services

Information on support services specifically for single women without a support network including with children out of wedlock could not be found among the sources consulted by the EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

¹⁶ Guineematin.com, Conakry: immersion dans le difficile quotidien des mères seules ou célibataires [Conakry: immersion in the difficult daily life of single or unmarried mothers], 25 January 2023, [url](#)

¹⁷ Guineematin.com, Conakry: immersion dans le difficile quotidien des mères seules ou célibataires [Conakry: immersion in the difficult daily life of single or unmarried mothers], 25 January 2023, [url](#)

¹⁸ World Bank (The), Unlocking Women’s and Girl’s Potential: The status of women and girls relative to men and boys in Guinea, 4 May 2023, [url](#), p. 84

¹⁹ World Bank (The), Unlocking Women’s and Girl’s Potential: The status of women and girls relative to men and boys in Guinea, 4 May 2023, [url](#), p. 76

²⁰ World Bank (The), Unlocking Women’s and Girl’s Potential: The status of women and girls relative to men and boys in Guinea, 4 May 2023, [url](#), p. 8

²¹ USDOS, Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2023 – Guinea, 23 April 2024, [url](#), p. 28

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USDOS (United States Department of State), Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2023 – Guinea, 23 April 2024, <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/528267-GUINEA-2023-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf>, accessed 19 June 2024

World Bank (The), Unlocking Women's and Girl's Potential: The status of women and girls relative to men and boys in Guinea, 4 May 2023,
<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099050423114031515/pdf/P17565805af6560c80b4b20827c1828af36.pdf>, accessed 19 June 2024

ADDITIONAL SOURCES CONSULTED

Africa News; AP (Associated Press) News; Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation (ACCORD); Asylum Research Center (ARC); BBC News; Canada - Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB); Deutsche Welle (DW); ECOI.net; Human Rights Watch (HRW); International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH); Guinée 360; GuinéeNews; Jeune Afrique; VOA (Voice of America); UN Women; US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)