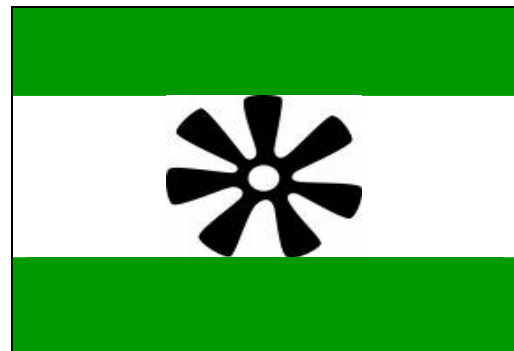




## The Republic of Gerinia

### General

Gerinia is a constitutional republic situated on the Gulf of Guna, located south of Laloku and east of Letos, spanning an area about 85% the size of France or Texas. Due to its inherent advantages, both in relation to its location and available natural resources, Gerinia is, by far, the wealthiest nation in Southern Azuria and, as a result, is also a prominent player in the regional Matapaturi Union.



Flag

### History

The people of Gerinia have an extensive history, and archaeological evidence shows that human habitation of the area dates back to at least 9000 BC. Falling under the control of several regional tribal powers, including the Mekalo monarchy (6-9th centuries), the Parunic dynasty (10th-14th centuries) and the Taery Empire (15th-19th centuries) the area of modern-day Gerinia remained generally a traditional tribal area for most of modern history.

Anthem: shlu kom borera Gerinia (Kanobi)  
("We hail thee, Gerinia")

Capital	Barubu
Largest city	Shiban
Official languages	English, Kanobi, Gadinu, Xalubo

Portuguese explorers were the first Europeans to begin trade in Gerinia, following in the footsteps of Vasco de Gama, who travelled through the area in 1498. However, following the Napoleonic Wars, it was the British who significantly expanded trade with the Gerinian interior. In 1884, a challenge to the British dominance arose when the German Empire claimed the territory as the German colony of Gerinia, and began a steady push inland. However, through primarily diplomatic and economic maneuvering, the British managed to thwart the German plans and in 1885 British claims to Gerinia received international recognition. Accordingly, in the following year the Royal Gerin Company was chartered. In 1900 the company's territory came formally under the control of the British government, which moved to consolidate its hold over the area of modern Gerinia. On

January 1, 1901 Gerinia became a British protectorate, part of the British Empire, the foremost world power at the time.

In 1914, the area was formally united as the Colony and Protectorate of Gerin. Western education and the development of a modern economy proceeded more rapidly in the south than in the north, with consequences felt in Gerinia's political life ever since. Following World War II, in response to the growth of Gerinian nationalism and demands for independence, successive constitutions legislated by the British Government moved Gerinia toward self-government on a representative basis.

Under pressure from local independence movements, the British government approved a national election in August 1957, the first ever direct elections for Gerinians to the Legislative Council. Despite British attempts to support the moderate Gerinian political parties, it was the radical Gerinia National Union which won the majority of the votes. As a direct consequence, on October 1, 1963, Gerinia gained its independence from the United Kingdom. The new republic incorporated a number of peoples with aspirations of their own sovereign nations. Following independence, Malik Wikaje (leader of the Gerinia National Union party) was appointed as Gerinia's first president through a ballot process, strongly supported by the Gerinian military elite, the result of decades of British military training, which remained the real source of power. In fact, except for very brief periods, Gerinian would remain under different forms of military rule for more than three decades.

Following its independence, Gerinia promoted rapid economic growth through public investment, encouragement of agricultural production, and incentives for private and foreign industrial investment. During the oil boom of the 1970s, Gerinia joined OPEC and billions of dollars generated by production in the oil-rich Laloku river delta flowed into the coffers of the Gerinian state. However, increasing corruption and graft at all levels of government squandered most of these earnings. The military clique benefited immensely from the oil boom to the detriment of the Gerinian people and economy. As oil production and revenue rose, the Gerinian government created a dangerous situation as it became increasingly dependent on oil revenues and the international commodity markets for budgetary and economic concerns eschewing economic stability.

Beginning in 1979, Gerinians enjoyed a brief period of seemingly genuine democracy when power was transferred to the civilian regime of Shego Suhari. However, the Suhari government was soon recognised as corrupt and incompetent by virtually all sectors of Gerinian society, so when the regime was overthrown by the military coup of Iba Hadmi shortly after the regime's fraudulent re-election in 1984, it was generally viewed as a positive development by most of the population. Hadmi promised major reforms but his government fared little better than that of his predecessor, and his regime was overthrown by yet another military coup in 1985.

The new head of state, Quando Banida, promptly declared himself President and Commander in chief of the Armed Forces and the ruling Supreme Military Council and also set 1990 as the official deadline for a return to democratic governance. Banida's tenure

was marked by a flurry of political activity and economic activity, including setting up a new national program for the repayment of the country's crushing international debt, which most federal revenue was dedicated to servicing.

After Banida survived an abortive coup, he pushed back the promised return to democracy to 1992. When free and fair elections were finally held on the 12th of June, 1993, Banida declared that the results showing a presidential victory for his opponents null and void, sparking mass civilian violence in protest which effectively shut down the country for weeks and forced Banida to keep his shaky promise to relinquish office to a civilian run government. Banida's caretaker regime headed by Stern Honseska survived only until late 1993 when General Seni Avidal took power in another military coup. Avidal proved to be perhaps Gerinia's most brutal ruler and employed violence on a wide scale to suppress the continuing pandemic of civilian unrest. Money had been found in various western European countries banks traced to him. He avoided coup plots by bribing army generals. Several hundred million dollars in accounts traced to him were unearthed in 1999. The regime would come to an end in 1998 when the dictator was found dead amid dubious circumstances. Avidal's death yielded an opportunity for return to civilian rule.

Gerinia re-achieved some form of democracy in 1999 when it elected Olus Obanno a former military head of state, as the new President ending an almost continuous thirty six years of military rule (from 1963 until 1999) excluding the short-lived second republic (between 1979 and 1983).

However, the elections which brought Obanno to power in 1999, 2003 and again in 2007 have been consistently condemned by the international community as corrupt and unfair, and while Obanno has expressed willingness to fight corruption, he is constantly accused by others of pursuing personal wealth.

## Economy

Gerinia is classified as an emerging market, with its relatively abundant supply of resources, well-developed financial, legal, communications, transport sectors and stock exchange. Gerinia is ranked 77th in the world in terms of GDP (PPP) as of 2007 (according to the World Bank, Gerinian GDP at purchasing power parity has reached approximately \$170.7, with the GDP per capita crossing the \$1,000 per person mark) and is the wealthiest country in the region.

Gerinia's natural resources are very well suited to agriculture and arboriculture. An estimated 70% of the population farms, and agriculture comprised an estimated 45.2% of GDP in 2006. Most agriculture is done at the subsistence scale by local farmers using simple tools. They sell their surplus produce, and some maintain separate fields for commercial use. Urban centres are particularly reliant on peasant agriculture for their foodstuffs. Soils and climate on the coast encourage extensive commercial cultivation of bananas, cocoa, oil palms, rubber, and tea. Inland on the South Gerinia Plateau, cash crops include coffee, sugar, and tobacco. Coffee is a major cash crop in the western

highlands, and in the north, natural conditions favour crops such as cotton, groundnuts, and rice. Reliance on agricultural exports makes Gerinia vulnerable to shifts in their prices.

The United States is the country's largest foreign investor. However, continued economic development has been hindered by years of military rule, corruption, and mismanagement. During the oil boom of the 1970s, Gerinia accumulated a significant foreign debt to finance major infrastructural investments. With the fall of oil prices during the 1980s oil glut Gerinia struggled to keep up with its loan payments and eventually defaulted on its principal debt repayments, limiting repayment to the interest portion of the loans. Arrears and penalty interest accumulated on the unpaid principal which increased the size of the debt. However, after negotiations by the Gerinian authorities, in October 2005 Gerinia and its creditors reached an agreement in which Gerinia repurchased its debt at a discount of approximately 60%. Gerinia used part of its oil profits to pay the residual 40%, freeing up at least \$1.15 billion annually for poverty reduction programmes.

Gerinia is a relatively large producer of petroleum and has significant proven reserves. Petroleum therefore plays a large role in the Gerinian economy, accounting for 25% of GDP and 60% of Government earnings.

Uranium ore is another primary source of national income. The rich uranium deposits in the extreme north of the country generate another 10% of the national GDP.

## Demographics

Gerinia is the second most populous country in the region but exactly how populous is a subject of speculation. The United Nations estimates that the population in 2009 was at 154,729,000, distributed as 51.7% rural and 48.3% urban, and with a population density of 167.5 people per square kilometer. National census results in the past few decades have been disputed. The results of the most recent census were released in December 2006 and gave a population of 140,003,542.

According to the United Nations, Gerinia has been undergoing explosive population growth and one of the highest growth and fertility rates in the world. 2006 estimates claim 42.3% of the population is between 0–14 years of age, while 54.6% is between 15–65; the birth rate is significantly higher than the death rate, at 40.4 and 16.9 per 1000 people respectively.

Health, health care, and general living conditions in Gerinia are poor. Life expectancy is only 47 years (average male/female) and just over half the population has access to potable water and appropriate sanitation; the percentage of children under five has gone up rather than down between 1990 and 2003 and infant mortality is 97.1 deaths per 1000 live births.

Education is also in a state of neglect. Independent Gerinia's first education system was introduced by remaining British colonists. After the 1970s oil boom, tertiary education

was improved so that it would reach every subregion of Gerinia. Education is provided free by the government, but the attendance rate for secondary education is only 29% (32% for males, 27% for females). The education system has been described as "dysfunctional" largely due to decaying institutional infrastructure. 68% of the population is literate, and the rate for men (75.7%) is higher than that for women (60.6%). This coincides with the fact that Gerinian society is male-dominated, and violence and discrimination against women is not uncommon.

Gerinia has many ethnic groups, with varying languages and customs, creating a country of rich ethnic diversity. The largest ethnic groups are the Faluna and Yobara tribes, accounting for 68% of population. Smaller ethnic groups and tribes, such as the Shongi, Ibo and Tobune tribes, make up an additional 21%. The remaining 11% are comprised of a wide variety of multi-cultural and religious groups. As opposed to Laloku to the North, the Gerinian government has not advocated a policy of decentralization of authority and increased tribal autonomy. Accordingly, it has repeatedly refused all proposals for the establishment of autonomous tribal regions.

### Foreign relations

Due to its regional economic dominance, Gerinia is a very important and dominant member of the Matapaturi Union, and Gerinian representatives have served as the Union's President more than any other State.

In addition, Gerinia has also been an important player in the international oil industry since the 1970s, and maintains membership in OPEC which it joined in July, 1973. Its status as a significant petroleum producer figures prominently in its sometimes complicated international relations with other countries, notably the United States and more recently China.

Gerinia has consistently maintained relatively peaceful relations with its neighbours, notwithstanding some sporadic border disputes and recurring arguments concerning allocations of water and other transboundary natural resources. In addition, traditional seasonal tribal migrations have often created international incidents, as such large scale movements of populations increasingly conflict with modern border and custom controls.

### Military

The Gerinian military consists of a relatively large army, a navy and an air force. The military in Gerinia have played a major role in the country's history since independence. Various juntas have seized control of the country and ruled it throughout most of its history.

While strong compared to most of its neighbours, the Gerinian military accounts only for approximately 1.5% of the country's GDP.

Gerinia has strongly embraced the possibilities of involvement in international peacekeeping efforts. Accordingly, since 1995, the Gerinian military has deployed peacekeepers in Liberia, Patrimaga, Sierra Leone, and Sudan's Darfur region.