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The Netherlands

## Senegal at 60

Dietz A.J., Ehrhardt D.W.L., Veldkamp F.

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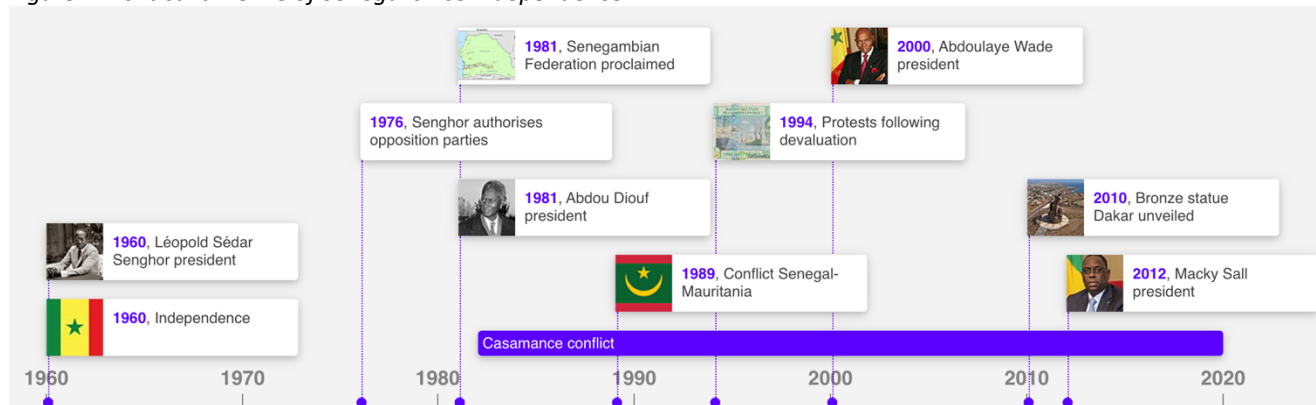
## Senegal at 60

### Political history

1960 was the ‘Year of Africa’: many former colonies in Africa became politically independent. Of the seventeen colonies gaining independence in that year, Senegal was the fifteenth one: on August 20, when it split from the Mali Federation, that had gained Independence earlier in 1960 (see the [Infosheet on Mali](#)). French influence already existed in 1624 when French traders built a trading post. In 1677 French slave traders occupied the island of Gorée. In the 1850s the French began to expand onto the

Senegalese mainland. Senegal became part of the French Sudan (which also included the areas eastward) in 1890. In 1895 French West Africa was formed, with first Saint Louis and from 1902 onwards Dakar as the federal colonial capital city. French West Africa also consisted of Mauritania, French Sudan (later Mali), French Guinea, [Côte d’Ivoire](#), Upper Volta (later [Burkina Faso](#)), Dahomey (later [Benin](#)), and [Niger](#). This colonial federation lasted until 1958 (see Figure 1 for a post-independence political timeline).

Figure 1: Political timeline of Senegal since independence



Source: Encyclopaedia Britannica

Senegal has had a relatively stable political climate since its independence from France in 1960. Léopold Senghor, poet-politician, governed as the country’s first president for 21 years. Under his rule, the Senegalese state developed collaborative relations with the country’s strong Islamic leadership – an arrangement that lasted for decades and, many argue, has contributed considerably to its political stability. Slow political liberalisation began under Senghor in the 1970s and continued under the second president, Abdou Diouf, into the 1980s and 1990s. At the same time, economic hardship contributed to rising tensions within the country, for example in the movement to establish the Senegambian Federation and the Casamance conflict in southern Senegal.

In the late 1980s, the border region between Senegal and Mauritania became witness to communal violence; a few years later, the French decision to devalue the franc

by 50% led to extensive protests, especially in the capital Dakar. Diouf, however, held onto power until 2000, when long-time opposition leader Abdoulaye Wade became the first president to be elected from outside the Socialist Party (which had been the political home of both Senghor and Diouf). Wade started strong, with effective political coalition building and the introduction of a new, widely supported constitution. Yet over time, support for his presidency waned, culminating in the widely criticized decision to build a \$27M, 50-metre high bronze statue in the middle of Dakar. In 2012, two years after the unveiling of the statue and controversial attempts to bend the rules to extend his tenure, Wade lost the presidency to Macky Sall. Sall implemented a new constitution, and became known for his “Emerging Senegal” development projects, as well as his efforts to end the Casamance conflict.



The statue of African Renaissance in Dakar

Source: [https://d36tnp772eyphs.cloudfront.net/blogs/1/2011/09/001\\_future\\_of\\_africa1.jpg](https://d36tnp772eyphs.cloudfront.net/blogs/1/2011/09/001_future_of_africa1.jpg)

### **Conflict, state fragility, and travel risks**

For African standards Senegal is not very high on the 'security risk' indices. Before the corona crisis, in December 2019, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs had put most of the country in the yellow zone (mild risks) and only the border area with Mali and Mauritania in the 'orange' zone (= high risks, 'only travel if really necessary' [Currently, September 2020, all 'danger zoning' has been disturbed by the global COVID-19 crisis].

The State Fragility Index of the Fund for Peace puts Senegal in the 'elevated warning range', with 77.4 points

(most negative score would be 120.0 points; for Africa, 'elevated warning' is a relatively mild category, seventh of eleven. See <https://fundforpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/9511904-fragilestatesindex.pdf>). The index consists of twelve variables, and Senegal has relatively good scores for 'human rights and the rule of law', and 'state legitimacy'. Senegal has relatively problematic scores for 'human flight and brain drain', and for 'demographic pressure'.

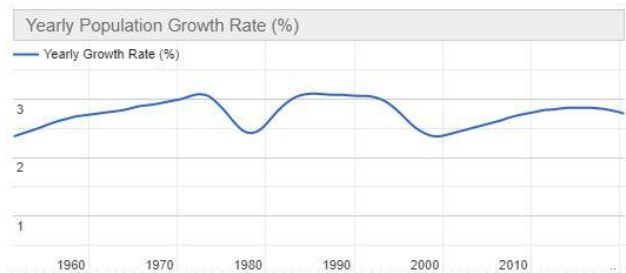
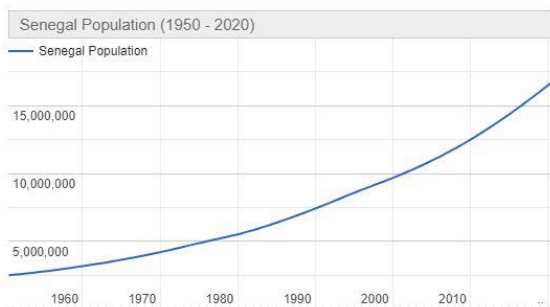


Source: <https://geology.com/world/senegal-map.gif>

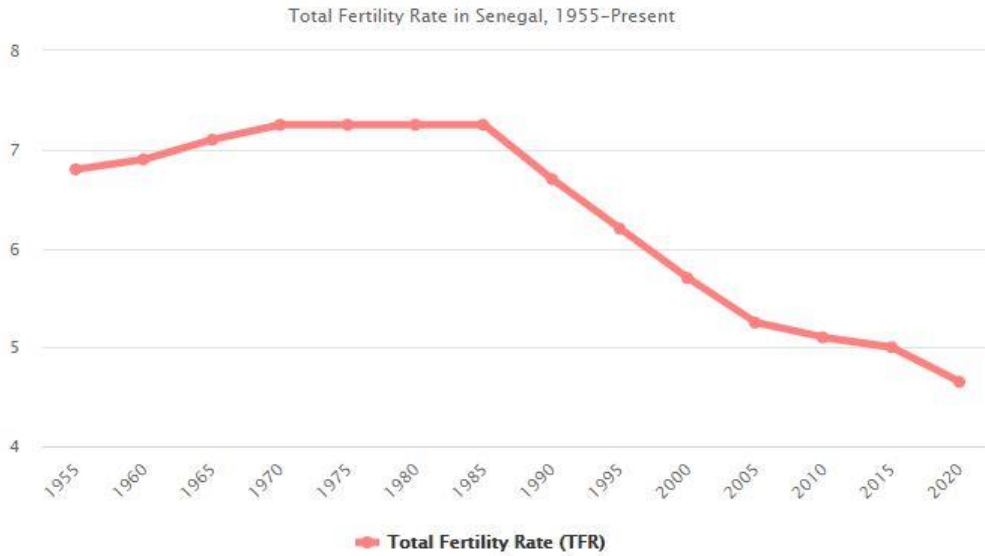
**Demography**

Senegal’s population increased more than fivefold between 1960 and 2020, from 3.2 million in 1960 to 16.7 million in mid 2020, mostly through high fertility rates and longer life expectancy for both males and females (also because of rapidly improving child and infant mortality figures). Population growth figures have always been higher than 2.5%, with the exception of 1977-1979, and 1997-2002. During 1970-1973 and again 1983-1992 population growth figures have been more than 3% per year. Currently the average growth rate is around 2.8

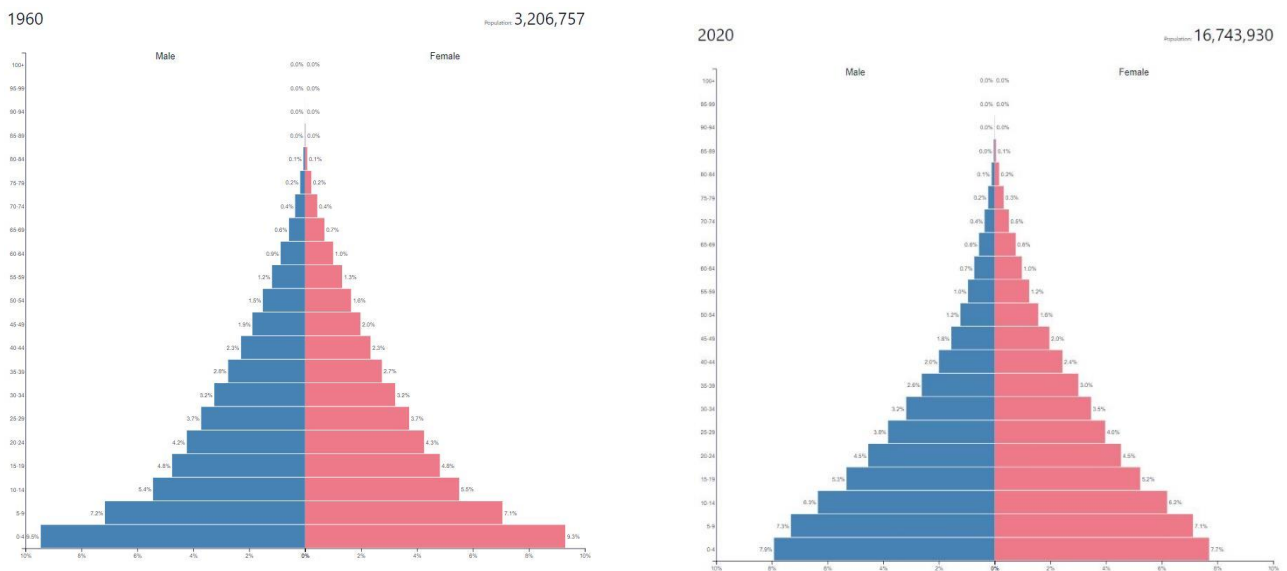
percent per year. Total fertility was around 6.9 live-born children per woman in 1960; it first increased to 7.3 between 1970 and 1985, and then started to diminish relatively fast, with currently 4.7 births per average woman in Senegal during her lifetime. As a result of these demographic developments Senegal has a skewed population pyramid, with more young people than adults and elderly people. The median age changed from 18.2 years old in 1960, to 16.4 years old in 1985, and currently 18.5 years old. Urbanisation is on the increase, and the urbanisation rate has almost reached 50% in 2020.



## ASCL Infosheet 47/2020



Source: Worldometers



Source: <https://www.populationpyramid.net/senegal>

### Demographic statistics, Senegal as a whole, 1960 and 2020

	1960	2020
Population	3.2 million	16.7 million
Fertility rate	6.9	4.7
Life expectancy (males)	38	67
Idem (females)	39	71
Median age	18.2	18.5
Infant mortality (< 1 yr)	117/1000	26/1000
Under-5 mortality	293/1000	36/1000
Urbanization rate	23%	50%
Urban population	0.7 million	8.3 million
Rural population	2.5 million	8.4 million

Source: Worldometers

### Human Development Index, Senegal as a whole, 1990 and 2018

Human Development Index data exist since 1990, with annual UNDP updates. In 1990, Senegal's Human Development Index started at a level of 0.377, quite low for African standards. The HDI consists of a health index, an income index and an education index, while UNDP also provides data about life expectancy, and some other indicators. For Senegal the various components of the HDI

mostly show gradual, and in some cases impressive improvements. The HDI increased to 0,514 in 2018, which can be attributed to improvements in all components: health, education and standard of living (but particularly education) and can also be seen in the data for life expectancy. Average income levels per capita (in US\$ of 2011, PPP) show significant improvements between 1990 and 2018, to current levels that are quite high for West African standards.

### Senegal: Human Development Index, its composition, and other indicators; data for 1990 and 2018

	1990	2018	2018/1990
Health Index	0.572	0.733	1.28
Income Index *	0.471	0.526	1.12
GNI/capita **	2262	3256	1.44
Education Index	0.198	0.352	1.78
Mean years of schooling	2.2	3.1	1.40
Expected years of schooling	4.5	9.0	2.00
Life Expectancy	57	68	1.18
Total HDI index	0.376	0.514	1.37

Source: <https://globaldatalab.org> 4.0; \* = for 2018 called 'standard of living component'.

\*\* GNI/capita in US \$ of 2011, PPP).

### Trade statistics, Senegal: exports and imports, 2018

In 2018 Senegal exported products for a total value of 3.89 billion \$, and imported for a total value of 11.1 billion \$ (mostly from China, France, the Netherlands, Belgium,

Nigeria, India and Russia, in that order), resulting in a major negative trade balance. Leading import products were refined and crude petrol, rice, cars and wheat, in that order.

### The most important export products and most important export destination in 2018 were:

Main export products (value in \$ million)		Main export destinations (value in \$ million)	
Gold	587	Mali	699
Refined petroleum	404	Switzerland	536
Phosphoric acid	319	India	383
Frozen fish	276	Spain	184
Cement	155	Italy	164

Source: <https://oec.world/en/profile/country/sen/>

In the past, groundnuts have been a leading export product for Senegal. In 2018, Senegal only exported 71 million \$ worth of groundnuts, less than 2% of its total export value. In fact, fish exports have become much more important (next to mineral exports, and acting as an in-between for Mali; e.g., for refined petroleum).

If we compare Gross Domestic Product, exports and imports, and we use Macrotrends data for the average of the four-year period of 2016-2019 (for exports and imports these differ from OEC data), we get the following picture for Senegal:

7.8 b\$	16.6 b\$	4.9 b\$
Imports	Home use	Exports
	Gross Domestic Product (21.5 b\$)	

### Protected areas and Forests

Senegal currently has one nature reserve, and six national parks, 79 forest reserves, one classified forest, four marine protected areas, three wildlife reserves and 19 other types of protected areas. Internationally eight Ramsar sites, and

four UNESCO-MAB biosphere reserves have been recognised, besides two world heritage sites. According to Protectedplanet, currently 5.0 million hectares are protected areas (25% of Senegal's total area), as well as

0.2 million hectares marine protected areas<sup>1</sup>. Senegal has 8.5 million hectares of forests, 44% of its total land area. However, between 1990 and 2010 Senegal has lost 9% of its forest cover, a total of 875,000 ha<sup>2</sup>. Other areas are mainly 'other wooded land', and areas for agriculture, livestock, hunting and gathering. Most of Senegal is in the

semi-arid zone. The southern parts are in the sub-humid zone.

### **Agricultural Senegal**

Crop area (in 1000 hectares), and total production (in 1000 tonnes), 1961 and 2018, in the order of the crop areas in 2018:

	1961		2018		2018/1961	
	Area	Prod.	Area	Prod.	Area	Prod.
Groundnuts	1026	1022	963	846	0.9	0.8
Millet	738	334	818	574	1.1	1.7
Maize	32	28	180	264	5.6	9.4
Rice paddy	73	83	174	763	2.5	9.2
Sorghum	103	76	166	143	1.6	1.9
Cowpeas	48	12	160	60	3.4	5.0
Fruits and sugarcane	4	25	67	1390	17.6	55.6
Other vegetables, including potatoes	5	68	41	825	11.7	12.1
Cassava	36	145	33	314	0.9	2.2
Other nuts and seeds	4	10	30	17	7.7	1.7
Cashewnuts	-	-	21	9	+++	+++
Cotton	1	1	20	42	20.0	42.0
Oil palm	..	15	..	94	...	6.3
Other crops (fonio)	-	-	4	3	+++	+++
Total (area)	2070		2677		1.3	

2018/1961: **red** = 2018 is below 1961; **green**: 2018 is more than 4.8 times the 1961 figures (that is: more than population increase in Senegal from 3.3 million to 15.9 million between 1961 and 2018); black: in-between.

Source: Faostat data.

Senegal's land area is 19.3 million hectares, and its crop area increased from 11% to 14% of its land area between 1961 and 2018. The country's most important crop during colonial times and during the first decades after independence, groundnuts, became less important, and its area and production volumes decreased. The traditional staple crops millet and sorghum increased somewhat in area and volumes, but much less than population growth. However, crops like maize, rice and cowpeas became much more important and volumes increased (much) faster than population growth. Nuts and seeds became more important as well. But particularly vegetables and fruits expanded enormously, mainly feeding the big cities in Senegal itself, but also for export. The importance of cotton, although still relatively modest, increased in area and volume. If we look at the overall agricultural development, we can conclude that the expansion of production areas as a whole has been much

smaller than the increase in population, and that the composition of crops shifted from groundnuts and traditional grains to more 'modern grains', as well as more areas under fruits and vegetables. In terms of yields, the performance of rice was very good (from 1146 kg/ha in 1961 to 4381 kg/ha in 2018), followed by maize (from 886 kg/ha to 1470 kg/ha), millets (from 453 kg/ha to 702 kg/ha) and finally sorghum (from 740 kg/ha to only 860 kg/ha).

The numbers of all live animals, measured in stock units, expanded less rapidly than Senegal's population: 290% compared with 480%. Per capita the numbers of live animals in the country decreased from 0.5 livestock units per capita in 1961 to 0.3 livestock units per capita. The best growth performance can be seen for chickens, pigs, asses, and goats; the growth of the number of cattle lagged behind.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.protectedplanet.net/country/SEN>; slightly different data in <http://www.parks.it/world/SN/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://rainforests.mongabay.com/deforestation/2000/Senegal.htm>

Livestock numbers (x 1000)

	1961	2018	2018/1961
Asses	65	486	7.5
Camels	3	5	1.7
Cattle	1960	3616	1.8
Chicken	1400	50340	35.6
Goats	900	5846	6.5
Horses	94	554	5.9
Pigs	31	422	13.6
Sheep	1100	6096	5.5
Livestock units	1703	5004	2.9

Source: Faostat data; 1 livestock unit = based on 1.0 camels, 0.7 cattle/horses/asses; 0.1 goats/sheep/pigs; 0.01 chicken.

**International migration**

In 2015, 587,000 people who were born in Senegal lived outside the country (3.9% of Senegal’s total population of 15.2 million people inside and outside the country during that year), of which 272,000 million elsewhere in Africa (mainly The Gambia, Mauritania, and Guinea, in that order), and 315,000 outside Africa (less than 2.1% of Senegal’s total population: most of them in France and Italy, but also considerable numbers in Spain and the United States; UN migration report 2015). In 2017 Senegal had around 263,000 immigrants, mainly from Mauritania, Guinea and Mali. Senegal also had 13,000 French citizens in 2015. Immigration has been rather stable between 1990 and 2017: always around 260,000; UN Migration Report 2017).

**Urban Senegal**

The majority of Senegal’s population lives in urban areas now. Senegal’s urban population increased from 700,000 people in 1960 (23% of its national population at Independence) to 8.3 million in 2020 (50%). Growth has been rapid for all cities. In 1960, Dakar already was a big city, but the other cities were much smaller. Gradually, all cities expanded, and currently Dakar is a huge metropolis, but at least six or even seven other cities have more than 100,000 inhabitants. Among these other cities Touba has become a (religious) metropolis as well. Touba is northeast of Diourbel. Included is a picture of the Great Mosque of Touba.



Source: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d8/Touba\\_moschee.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d8/Touba_moschee.jpg)





Source: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5e/Sg-map.png>

**Major urban areas in Senegal**

Cities (and region)	Population in thousands of inhabitants				
	Macrotrends: 1960	Population census 1988 (wikipedia)	Population census 2005 (wikipedia)	Macrotrends 2020	Worldometers, city, as given in 2020
Dakar *	408	1517	3020 est.	3487	3350
Touba	...	123	428	(880-1.5m)	529
Thiès *	66	175	240	377	572
St Louis	(56)	113	131	...	176
Kaolack	...	151	174	...	172
Ziguinchor	...	124	162	...	160
Tiebo/Diourbel	...	77	99	...	100
M'bour	...	76	171	(213)	...

\* Dakar includes Rufisque and Pikine; Thiès includes Thiès Nones.

Touba 2020: see [https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Touba\\_\(S%C3%A9n%C3%A9gal\)](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Touba_(S%C3%A9n%C3%A9gal)).

M'bour 2020: see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%27Bour>.

Source for 2020: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/senegal-population/>;

1960 for Saint Louis: <file:///C:/Users/dietzaj1/Downloads/956-ICOMOS-1119-en.pdf>.

Macrotrends: <https://www.macrotrends.net/cities/22439/dakar/population>;

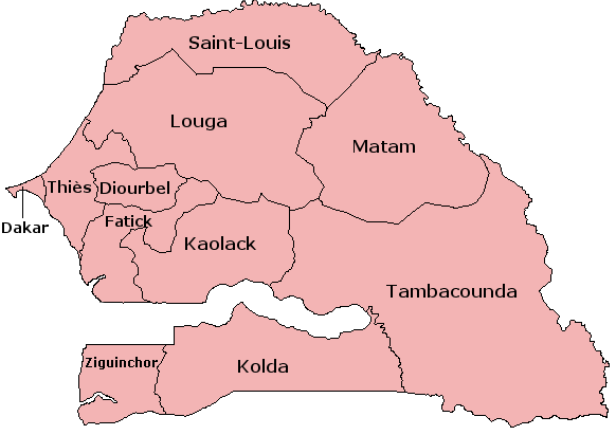
<https://www.macrotrends.net/cities/22442/thies/population>;

<https://www.macrotrends.net/cities/204181/rufisque/population>;

<https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/senegal-population/>;

[https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_cities\\_in\\_Senegal](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_cities_in_Senegal)

**Regional Inequality in Senegal**

Map	Region / Région	Population x 1000		'18/ '90
		1990	2018	
	1 = Dakar	1540	3810	2.5
	2 = Diourbel	690	1820	2.6
	3 = Fatick	550	840	1.5
	4 = Kaolack	950	1710	1.8
	5 = Kolda	610	1270	2.1
	6 = Louga	580	1000	1.7
	7 = St Louis	760	1620	2.1
	8 = Tambacounda	500	1050	2.1
	9 = Thiès	1020	2100	2.1
	10 = Ziguinchor	330	630	1.9
Total Senegal		7530	15900	2.1

Source: <https://globaldatalab.org> 4.0

Map: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/ae/Senegal\\_Regions.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/ae/Senegal_Regions.png)

Senegal has 10 Regions. Between 1990 and 2018 all regions experienced population growth, but the highest growth happened in Diourbel. High population growth was not so much experienced in Fatick. If we look at the regional data for human development, which for Senegal exist since 1990, we see that across the board improvements have taken place between 1990 and 2018, and for education these improvements have been considerable. The best conditions for all variables and for both 1990 and 2018 could be found in the capital city, Dakar. For SHDI and education, the worst conditions could and can be found in Diourbel, the area of the Mourides Islamic group, east of Dakar. The worst life expectancy conditions existed and still exist in Kolda, in the Haute Casamance, south of the Gambia. The worst income per

capita conditions could be found in the southeast in 1990, in Tambacounda, but those worst conditions shifted to Kolda, which was the only region in Senegal where income per capita conditions had deteriorated between 1990 and 2018. Kolda had been one of the hotbeds of the secession movement for the Casamance, that turned into a violent conflict between the government of Senegal and the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance between 1982 and 2014. Between 1990 and 2018 regional inequality in Senegal became less extreme, with the exception of income inequality. For education, regional inequality was extreme in 1990 (with one of the best and some of the worst scores of sub-Saharan Africa), and is still considerable.

Region	Subregional HDI			Life expectancy			Education index			K\$/capita		
	1990	2018	18/90	1990	2018	18/90	1990	2018	18/90	1990	2018	18/90
1	542	638	1.18	64	71	1.11	406	533	1.31	4.6	5.9	1.30
2	246	407	1.65	56	66	1.19	62	187	3.02	1.8	2.9	1.59
3	335	513	1.53	56	69	1.23	161	382	2.37	1.6	2.2	1.40
4	290	437	1.51	57	67	1.18	99	244	2.46	1.8	2.2	1.24
5	285	431	1.51	54	64	1.18	103	289	2.81	1.6	1.5	0.89
6	285	425	1.49	56	67	1.20	93	215	2.31	1.9	2.6	1.36
7	330	473	1.43	56	68	1.21	155	288	1.86	1.6	2.7	1.70
8	280	408	1.46	55	65	1.19	99	223	2.25	1.6	1.8	1.13
9	393	530	1.35	59	68	1.22	215	368	1.71	2.3	3.7	1.58
10	449	576	1.28	55	68	1.24	379	530	1.40	1.8	2.5	1.35
Senegal	376	514	1.37	57	68		198	352	1.78	2.3	3.3	1.44
Ineq	2.20	1.57		1.18	1.11		6.55	2.85		2.86	3.29	

HDI and education figures / 1000; life expectancy: years; k\$/capita: 1000 US \$ (2011), PPP (comparisons between the years on the basis of more detailed figures).

If we compare 2018 with 1990, the education situation has improved very much, with the fastest improvements

in the worst region, Diourbel, and the slowest improvements in the best region, Dakar. The same is true for SHDI as a whole. For life expectancy, the biggest improvements took place in Ziguinchor in the maritime part of the Casamance (and again the slowest

improvements in Dakar). For income per capita, the fastest improvements took place in the north, Saint Louis, and we have already seen that the region of Kolda experienced deteriorating income conditions.

Data about regional inequality do not say anything about income inequality between the rich and the poor (let alone wealth inequality). Senegal had one of the most

extreme figures for income inequality in the world in 1991: 54%. Income inequality became less extreme in and after 1995, and was relatively stable, around 40%, between 1995 and 2011. There are no figures (yet) for the current situation.

(<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI?locations=SN>).



<https://www.ascleiden.nl/africa2020>

Country Information: Ton Dietz, David Ehrhardt and Fenneken Veldkamp

Country Portal: Harro Westra

Selected publications: Germa Seuren

*African Studies Centre Leiden, September 2020*

### Further Reading

Country Portal: <http://countryportal.ascleiden.nl/senegal>

Selected publications: <https://www.ascleiden.nl/content/africa-2020-further-reading#Senegal>