

OVERVIEW OF CAMEROON

Cameroon is a lower middle-income country with a population of over 28.37 million (2023). Located along the Atlantic Ocean, it shares borders with the Central African Republic, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria and Chad. Cameroon is endowed with rich natural resources, including oil and gas, minerals, wood species and high-value agricultural products such as coffee, cotton, cocoa, maize and cassava.

Political context

Presidential elections and regional councilors were scheduled in October and December 2025. On August 5, the Constitutional Council of Cameroon validated twelve candidates for the presidential election scheduled for October 12, 2025, including that of the current president Paul Biya who ran for an eighth term by being sworn in on November 6. Except that it is necessary to point out a persistent post-electoral crisis that reflects on other areas of life, notably security life (the English-speaking separatists or secessionists), economic life with the high cost of living, the arrests of people who took to the streets to demand the victory of ISSA THIROMA, who came out second according to the results published by the Constitutional Council, but who claims victory proclaiming himself elected President.

After several decades of stability, in recent years Cameroon has been confronted with attacks by Boko Haram in the Far North and a secessionist insurrection in the English-speaking regions. This is due to the political agreements related to the long history of the country before reunification in 1972. Since September 2017, this situation has led to the displacement of more than one million people within the country and around 431,530 refugees have found refuge outside Cameroon. The other thing is the political and security situation in the neighboring Central African Republic. Following the resurgence of the crisis in the Central African Republic since January 2021, more than 6,000 Central African refugees fled to the eastern region of Cameroon, which was already hosting over 67% of Central African refugees. According to the UNHCR, in March 2025, Cameroon hosted more than 431 530 refugees, mainly from the Central African Republic (67%) and Nigeria (29%) and other nationalities (4%).

Social context

Poverty reduction in Cameroon has stagnated over the past 20 years, with about 4 out of 10 Cameroonians living below the national poverty line. Household survey data from 2021-2022

indicate that 23% of the population lives below the international extreme poverty line. We can then say that Cameroon is facing several humanitarian crises. Indeed, armed conflicts and population movements aggravate the daily lives of populations who already have to face the lack of access to essential goods: drinking water, health care, education, food.

Economic situation

Cameroon's real GDP increased by 3.5% in 2024, compared to 3.2% in 2023, thanks to the rise in cocoa prices, cotton yields, and improved electricity for industries. Average growth from 2021 to 2024 was only 3.4%, well below the 6.6% target set by the National Development Strategy, due to infrastructure gaps, poor governance, weak investments and internal conflicts. The GDP per capita in 2024 reached \$1,467, exceeding pre-pandemic levels, but not yet the peak of 1986 (\$1,980). Growth is expected to improve gradually, if industrial electricity supply and public investments increase. Inflation fell from 7.4% in December 2023 to 4.5% at the end of 2024 and 4.1% mid-2025, and is expected to reach 3% by 2027.

Despite the decline in oil production, the current account deficit narrowed from 4.1 to 3.2% of GDP between 2023 and 2024, thanks to the increase in agricultural exports and the decrease in imports. The ratio of goods exports to GDP increased to 13.2% in 2024, compared with 12.9% in 2023. This short-term improvement masks a long-term decline in goods exports (19.1% of GDP in 2012) due, among other things, to internal crises, the continuing decline in hydrocarbon production, productivity constraints and trade barriers.

At the end of 2024, Cameroon's public debt reached 43.4% of GDP, compared to 42.3 in 2023, with an external and internal debt of 29% and 14.4% of GDP, respectively. While the indicators of Cameroon's outstanding external debt are below the sustainability threshold, the indicators of Cameroon's external debt service - ratio of debt service to exports and ratio of debt service to government revenue - remain above this threshold, but follow a downward trend.