

visited on 5/25/2007



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Cameroon

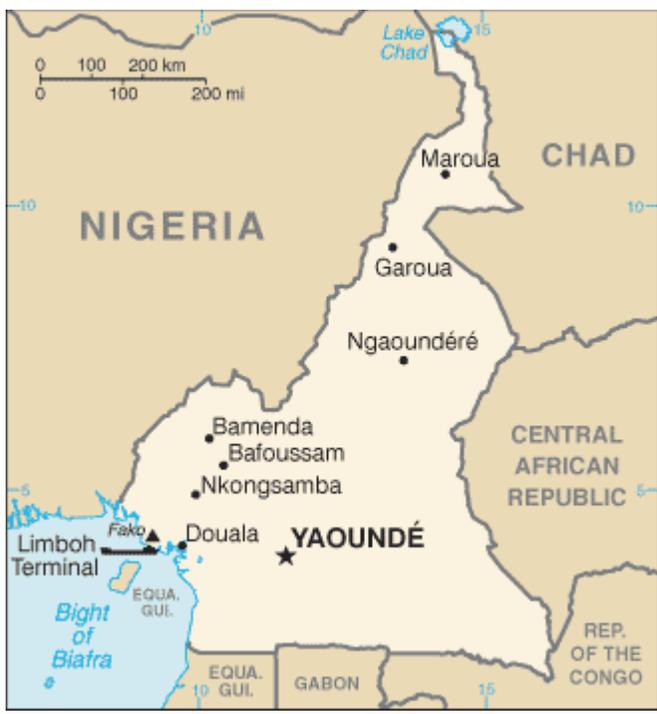


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Introduction

Cameroon

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Background:

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The former French Cameroon and part of British Cameroon merged in 1961 to form the present country. Cameroon has generally enjoyed stability, which has permitted the development of agriculture, roads, and railways, as well as a petroleum industry. Despite a slow movement toward democratic reform, political power remains firmly in the hands of an ethnic oligarchy headed by President Paul BIYA.

Geography

Cameroon

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Location:  

Western Africa, bordering the Bight of Biafra, between Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria

Geographic coordinates:  

6 00 N, 12 00 E

Map references:  

[Africa](#)

Area:   

total: 475,440 sq km

land: 469,440 sq km

water: 6,000 sq km

Area - comparative:  

slightly larger than California

Land boundaries:  

total: 4,591 km

border countries: Central African Republic 797 km, Chad 1,094 km, Republic of the Congo 523 km, Equatorial Guinea 189 km, Gabon 298 km, Nigeria 1,690 km

Coastline:  

402 km

Maritime claims:  

territorial sea: 12 nm

contiguous zone: 24 nm

Climate:  

varies with terrain, from tropical along coast to semiarid and hot in north

Terrain:  

diverse, with coastal plain in southwest, dissected plateau in center, mountains in west, plains in north

Elevation extremes:  

lowest point: Atlantic Ocean 0 m

highest point: Fako 4,095 m (on Mt. Cameroon)

Natural resources:  

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petroleum, bauxite, iron ore, timber, hydropower

Land use:  *arable land:* 12.54%*permanent crops:* 2.52%*other:* 84.94% (2005)**Irrigated land:**  

260 sq km (2003)

Natural hazards:  

volcanic activity with periodic releases of poisonous gases from Lake Nyos and Lake Monoun volcanoes

Environment - current issues:  

waterborne diseases are prevalent; deforestation; overgrazing; desertification; poaching; overfishing

Environment - international agreements:  *party to:* Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling
signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements**Geography - note:**  

sometimes referred to as the hinge of Africa; throughout the country there are areas of thermal springs and indications of current or prior volcanic activity; Mount Cameroon, the highest mountain in Sub-Saharan west Africa, is an active volcano

People

Cameroon

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18,060,382

note: estimates for this country explicitly take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected (July 2007 est.)**Age structure:**  *0-14 years:* 41.3% (male 3,763,332/female 3,695,053)*15-64 years:* 55.5% (male 5,029,658/female 4,994,786)*65 years and over:* 3.2% (male 266,616/female 310,937) (2007 est.)**Median age:**  *total:* 18.9 years*male:* 18.7 years*female:* 19 years (2007 est.)**Population growth rate:**  

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2.241% (2007 est.)

Birth rate:   

35.07 births/1,000 population (2007 est.)

Death rate:   

12.66 deaths/1,000 population (2007 est.)

Net migration rate:  

0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2007 est.)

Sex ratio:  *at birth:* 1.03 male(s)/female*under 15 years:* 1.018 male(s)/female*15-64 years:* 1.007 male(s)/female*65 years and over:* 0.857 male(s)/female*total population:* 1.007 male(s)/female (2007 est.)**Infant mortality rate:**   *total:* 65.84 deaths/1,000 live births*male:* 70.73 deaths/1,000 live births*female:* 60.79 deaths/1,000 live births (2007 est.)**Life expectancy at birth:**   *total population:* 52.86 years*male:* 52.15 years*female:* 53.59 years (2007 est.)**Total fertility rate:**   

4.49 children born/woman (2007 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:   

6.9% (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:   

560,000 (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS - deaths:   

49,000 (2003 est.)

Major infectious diseases:  *degree of risk:* very high*food or waterborne diseases:* bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever*vectorborne diseases:* malaria and yellow fever are high risks in some locations*water contact disease:* schistosomiasis*respiratory disease:* meningococcal meningitis*note:* highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza has been identified among birds in this country or surrounding region; it poses a negligible risk with extremely rare cases possible among US citizens who have close contact with birds (2007)**Nationality:**  

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noun: Cameroonian(s)
adjective: Cameroonian

Ethnic groups:  

Cameroon Highlanders 31%, Equatorial Bantu 19%, Kirdi 11%, Fulani 10%, Northwestern Bantu 8%, Eastern Nigritic 7%, other African 13%, non-African less than 1%

Religions:  

indigenous beliefs 40%, Christian 40%, Muslim 20%

Languages:  

24 major African language groups, English (official), French (official)

Literacy:  

definition: age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 79%
male: 84.7%
female: 73.4% (2003 est.)

Government **Cameroon**[Top of Page](#)**Country name:**  

conventional long form: Republic of Cameroon
conventional short form: Cameroon
local long form: Republique du Cameroun/Republic of Cameroon
local short form: Cameroun/Cameroon
former: French Cameroon, British Cameroon, Federal Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Cameroon

Government type:  

republic; multiparty presidential regime

Capital:  

name: Yaounde
geographic coordinates: 3 52 N, 11 31 E
time difference: UTC+1 (6 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:  

10 provinces; Adamaoua, Centre, Est, Extreme-Nord, Littoral, Nord, Nord-Ouest, Ouest, Sud, Sud-Ouest

Independence:  

1 January 1960 (from French-administered UN trusteeship)

National holiday:  

Republic Day (National Day), 20 May (1972)

Constitution:  

20 May 1972 approved by referendum, adopted 2 June 1972; revised January

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1996

Legal system:  

based on French civil law system, with common law influence; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Suffrage:  

20 years of age; universal

Executive branch:  

chief of state: President Paul BIYA (since 6 November 1982)

head of government: Prime Minister Ephraim INONI (since 8 December 2004)

cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the president from proposals submitted by the prime minister

elections: president elected by popular vote for a seven-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held 11 October 2004 (next to be held by October 2011); prime minister appointed by the president

election results: President Paul BIYA reelected; percent of vote - Paul BIYA 70.9%, John FRU NDI 17.4%, Adamou Ndam NJOYA 4.5%, Garga Haman ADJI 3.7%

Legislative branch:  

unicameral National Assembly or Assemblée Nationale (180 seats; members are elected by direct popular vote to serve five-year terms); note - the president can either lengthen or shorten the term of the legislature

elections: last held 23 June 2002 (next to be held in June 2007)

election results: percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - RDCP 133, SDF 21, UDC 5, other 21

note: the constitution calls for an upper chamber for the legislature, to be called a Senate, but it has yet to be established

Judicial branch:  

Supreme Court (judges are appointed by the president); High Court of Justice (consists of nine judges and six substitute judges, elected by the National Assembly)

Political parties and leaders:  

Cameroonian Democratic Union or UDC [Adamou Ndam NJOYA]; Cameroon People's Democratic Movement or RDCP [Paul BIYA]; Movement for the Defense of the Republic or MDR [Dakole DAISSALA]; Movement for the Liberation and Development of Cameroon or MLDC [Marcel YONDO]; Movement for the Youth of Cameroon or MYC [Dieudonne TINA]; National Union for Democracy and Progress or UNDP [Maigari BELLO BOUBA]; Social Democratic Front or SDF [John FRU NDI]; Union of Peoples of Cameroon or UPC [Augustin Frederic KODOCK]

Political pressure groups and leaders:  

Southern Cameroon National Council [Ayamba Ette OTUN]; Human Rights Defense Group [Albert MUKONG, president]

International organization  

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participation: ACCT, ACP, AfDB, AU, BDEAC, C, CEMAC, FAO, FZ, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICCt (signatory), ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ITU, ITUC, MIGA, MONUC, NAM, OIC, OIF, OPCW, PCA, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:  

chief of mission: Ambassador Jerome MENDOUGA
chancery: 2349 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008
telephone: [1] (202) 265-8790
FAX: [1] (202) 387-3826

Diplomatic representation from the US:  

chief of mission: Ambassador Niels MARQUARDT
embassy: Rue Nachtigal, Yaounde
mailing address: P. O. Box 817, Yaounde; pouch: American Embassy, US Department of State, Washington, DC 20521-2520
telephone: [237] 220 15 00; Consular: [237] 220 16 03
FAX: [237] 220 16 20; Consular FAX: [237] 220 17 52
branch office(s): Douala

Flag description:  

three equal vertical bands of green (hoist side), red, and yellow with a yellow five-pointed star centered in the red band; uses the popular pan-African colors of Ethiopia

Economy Cameroon

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Economy - overview:  

Because of its modest oil resources and favorable agricultural conditions, Cameroon has one of the best-endowed primary commodity economies in sub-Saharan Africa. Still, it faces many of the serious problems facing other underdeveloped countries, such as a top-heavy civil service and a generally unfavorable climate for business enterprise. Since 1990, the government has embarked on various IMF and World Bank programs designed to spur business investment, increase efficiency in agriculture, improve trade, and recapitalize the nation's banks. In June 2000, the government completed an IMF-sponsored, three-year structural adjustment program; however, the IMF is pressing for more reforms, including increased budget transparency, privatization, and poverty reduction programs. International oil and cocoa prices have a significant impact on the economy.

GDP (purchasing power parity):   

\$42.2 billion (2006 est.)

GDP (official exchange rate):  

\$16.37 billion (2006 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:   

4.1% (2006 est.)

GDP - per capita

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(PPP):	  
	\$2,400 (2006 est.)
GDP - composition by sector:	 
	<i>agriculture:</i> 45.2%
	<i>industry:</i> 16.1%
	<i>services:</i> 38.7% (2006 est.)
Labor force:	  
	6.394 million (2006 est.)
Labor force - by occupation:	 
	<i>agriculture:</i> 70%
	<i>industry:</i> 13%
	<i>services:</i> 17%
Unemployment rate:	  
	30% (2001 est.)
Population below poverty line:	 
	48% (2000 est.)
Household income or consumption by percentage share:	 
	<i>lowest 10%:</i> 1.9%
	<i>highest 10%:</i> 36.6% (1996)
Distribution of family income - Gini index:	 
	44.6 (2001)
Inflation rate (consumer prices):	  
	2.4% (2006 est.)
Investment (gross fixed):	  
	16.8% of GDP (2006 est.)
Budget:	 
	<i>revenues:</i> \$3.339 billion
	<i>expenditures:</i> \$3.157 billion; including capital expenditures of \$NA (2006 est.)
Public debt:	  
	28.4% of GDP (2006 est.)
Agriculture - products:	 
	coffee, cocoa, cotton, rubber, bananas, oilseed, grains, root starches; livestock; timber
Industries:	 
	petroleum production and refining, aluminum production, food processing, light consumer goods, textiles, lumber, ship repair
Industrial production growth	  

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rate: 4.2% (1999 est.)

Electricity - production:   

3.924 billion kWh (2004)

Electricity - consumption:   

3.649 billion kWh (2004)

Electricity - exports:  

0 kWh (2004)

Electricity - imports:  

0 kWh (2004)

Oil - production:   

82,300 bbl/day (2005 est.)

Oil - consumption:   

24,000 bbl/day (2004 est.)

Oil - exports:   

NA bbl/day

Oil - imports:   

NA bbl/day

Oil - proved reserves:   

90 million bbl (2006 est.)

Natural gas - production:   

0 cu m (2004 est.)

Natural gas - consumption:   

0 cu m (2004 est.)

Natural gas - exports:   

0 cu m (2004 est.)

Natural gas - imports:   

0 cu m (2004 est.)

Natural gas - proved reserves:   

110.4 billion cu m (1 January 2005 est.)

Current account balance:   

\$419 million (2006 est.)

Exports:   

\$4.318 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)

Exports - commodities:  

crude oil and petroleum products, lumber, cocoa beans, aluminum, coffee, cotton

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Exports - partners:  

Spain 17.3%, Italy 13.8%, France 9.5%, South Korea 8.1%, UK 8.1%, Netherlands 7.9%, Belgium 4.9%, US 4.3% (2005)

Imports:   

\$3.083 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)

Imports - commodities:  

machinery, electrical equipment, transport equipment, fuel, food

Imports - partners:  

France 24%, Nigeria 12%, Belgium 6.3%, China 5.6%, US 5.1%, Thailand 4.5%, Germany 4.2% (2005)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:   

\$1.336 billion (2006 est.)

Debt - external:   

\$3.657 billion (2006 est.)

Economic aid - recipient:  

in January 2001, the Paris Club agreed to reduce Cameroon's debt of \$1.3 billion by \$900 million; debt relief now totals \$1.26 billion

Currency (code):  

Communaute Financiere Africaine franc (XAF); note - responsible authority is the Bank of the Central African States

Exchange rates:  

Communaute Financiere Africaine francs (XAF) per US dollar - 522.59 (2006), 527.47 (2005), 528.29 (2004), 581.2 (2003), 696.99 (2002)

Fiscal year:  

1 July - 30 June

Communications Cameroon[Top of Page](#)**Telephones - main lines in use:**   

99,400 (2004)

Telephones - mobile cellular:   

2.259 million (2005)

Telephone system:  

general assessment: available only to business and government
domestic: cable, microwave radio relay, and tropospheric scatter
international: country code - 237; satellite earth stations - 2 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean); fiber optic submarine cable (SAT-3/WASC) provides connectivity to Europe and Asia

Radio broadcast stations:  

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AM 2, FM 9, shortwave 3 (2002)

Television broadcast stations:  
1 (2002)

Internet country code:  
.cm

Internet hosts:   
39 (2006)

Internet users:   
167,000 (2005)

Transportation **Cameroon**

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Airports:   
47 (2006)

Airports - with paved runways:  
total: 11
over 3,047 m: 2
2,438 to 3,047 m: 4
1,524 to 2,437 m: 3
914 to 1,523 m: 1
under 914 m: 1 (2006)

Airports - with unpaved runways:  
total: 36
1,524 to 2,437 m: 7
914 to 1,523 m: 20
under 914 m: 9 (2006)

Pipelines:  
gas 70 km; liquid petroleum gas 9 km; oil 1,107 km (2006)

Railways:   
total: 987 km
narrow gauge: 987 km 1.000-m gauge (2005)

Roadways:   
total: 50,000 km
paved: 5,000 km
unpaved: 45,000 km (2004)

Waterways:   
navigation mainly on Benue River; limited during rainy season (2005)

Merchant marine:   
total: 1 ship (1000 GRT or over) 38,613 GRT/68,820 DWT
by type: petroleum tanker 1

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foreign-owned: 1 (France 1) (2006)**Ports and terminals:**  

Douala, Limboh Terminal

Military**Cameroon**[Top of Page](#)**Military branches:**  

Cameroon Armed Forces: Army, Navy (includes naval infantry), Air Force (Armee de l'Air du Cameroun, AAC) (2006)

Military service age and obligation:  

18 years of age for voluntary military service; no conscription (1999)

Manpower available for military service:  *males age 18-49*: 3,525,307
females age 18-49: 3,461,406 (2005 est.)**Manpower fit for military service:**  *males age 18-49*: 1,946,767
females age 18-49: 1,834,600 (2005 est.)**Manpower reaching military service age annually:**  *males age 18-49*: 191,619
females age 18-49: 187,082 (2005 est.)**Military expenditures - percent of GDP:**   

1.3% (2006)

Transnational Issues**Cameroon**[Top of Page](#)**Disputes - international:**  

Joint Border Commission with Nigeria reviewed 2002 ICJ ruling on the entire boundary and bilaterally resolved differences, including June 2006 Greentree Agreement that immediately cedes sovereignty of the Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon with a phase-out of Nigerian control within two years while resolving patriation issues; implementation of the ICJ ruling on the Cameroon-Equatorial Guinea-Nigeria maritime boundary in the Gulf of Guinea is pending due to imprecisely defined coordinates and a sovereignty dispute between Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon over an island at the mouth of the Ntem River; only Nigeria and Cameroon have heeded the Lake Chad Commission's admonition to ratify the delimitation treaty, which also includes the Chad-Niger and Niger-Nigeria boundaries

Refugees and internally displaced persons:  *refugees (country of origin)*: 39,303 (Chad), 9,711 (Nigeria), 13,000 (Central African Republic); note - there are an additional 10,000 Central African refugees unregistered with UNHCR as of December 2006 (2006)

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