

# IOA — 2019 — ACBR



AFRICA COUNTRY BENCHMARK REPORT

Benin Profile



Located between the ocean and a large inland lagoon, where thatched-roof wooden structures take visitors into the calm waters, Ouidah is typical of tourist attractions for a country that is off the beaten path.



Image courtesy of Panoramas



# BENIN



## OVERVIEW ANALYSIS

Despite poor performance in the Business and Economics quadrants, improvements in the Politics and in particular in the Society quadrants see Benin advance one country position in the ACBR 2019 rankings to 22<sup>nd</sup> from 23<sup>rd</sup> in ACBR 2017. The overall score rose from 44.76 in 2017 to 46.07. A good degree of data exists to evaluate the country's gradual if slow development, which has been assisted by government reforms. The country is in need of improving their regional and international trade, as well as supporting targeted agricultural and value-added manufacturing products for revenue. Transportation is not an impediment, given Benin's river connections to neighbouring countries and their port on the Gulf of Guinea.

## COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS

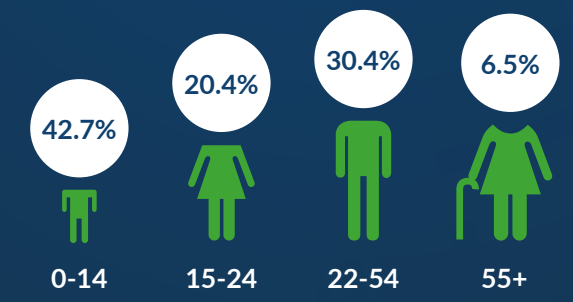
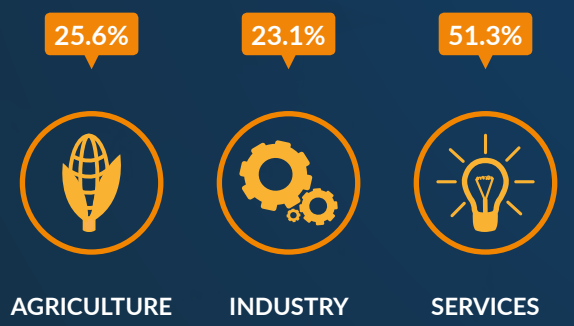
<b>PREDOMINANT RELIGION</b>  Christianity	<b>PREDOMINANT LANGUAGE</b>  French	<b>POPULATION WITHOUT ELECTRICITY</b>  58.6% (#30) ▬	<b>LITERACY RATE</b>  38.4% (#46) ▲ <sup>1</sup>	<b>PRIMARY ELECTRICITY SOURCE</b>  Oil
<b>IMPORT/EXPORT</b>  Vegetable Products/Gold	<b>EXTERNAL DEBT</b>  US\$ 2.716 billion (#34) ▲ <sup>1</sup>	<b>ACTIVE CONFLICT</b>  No	<b>LAND SIZE</b>  112,622 km <sup>2</sup> (#37)	<b>INTERNET PENETRATION</b>  12% (#37) ▲ <sup>4</sup>

### KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- The country has established but has underutilised their trade and river links with their West African neighbours
- A pro-business government seeks to reform economic policy
- The home of Voodoo, Benin holds cultural charms for the tourism sector

### KEY CONCERNS

- Years of underdevelopment have caused poor transport networks
- Nearly two-thirds of Benin's people live without electricity, curtailing retail growth and public health progress
- Internet penetration of only 12% is one of Africa's lowest



**Term:**  
06/04/2016 - present  
5 years (2 term limit)

**Political Party:**  
Independent

**Recent Electoral Information:**  
30/03/2016  
2 030 941 Votes  
65.37%  
Voter turnout: 66.05%



**President**  
Patrice Talon

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO GDP BY SECTOR

## POPULATION AGE BREAKDOWN

## NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

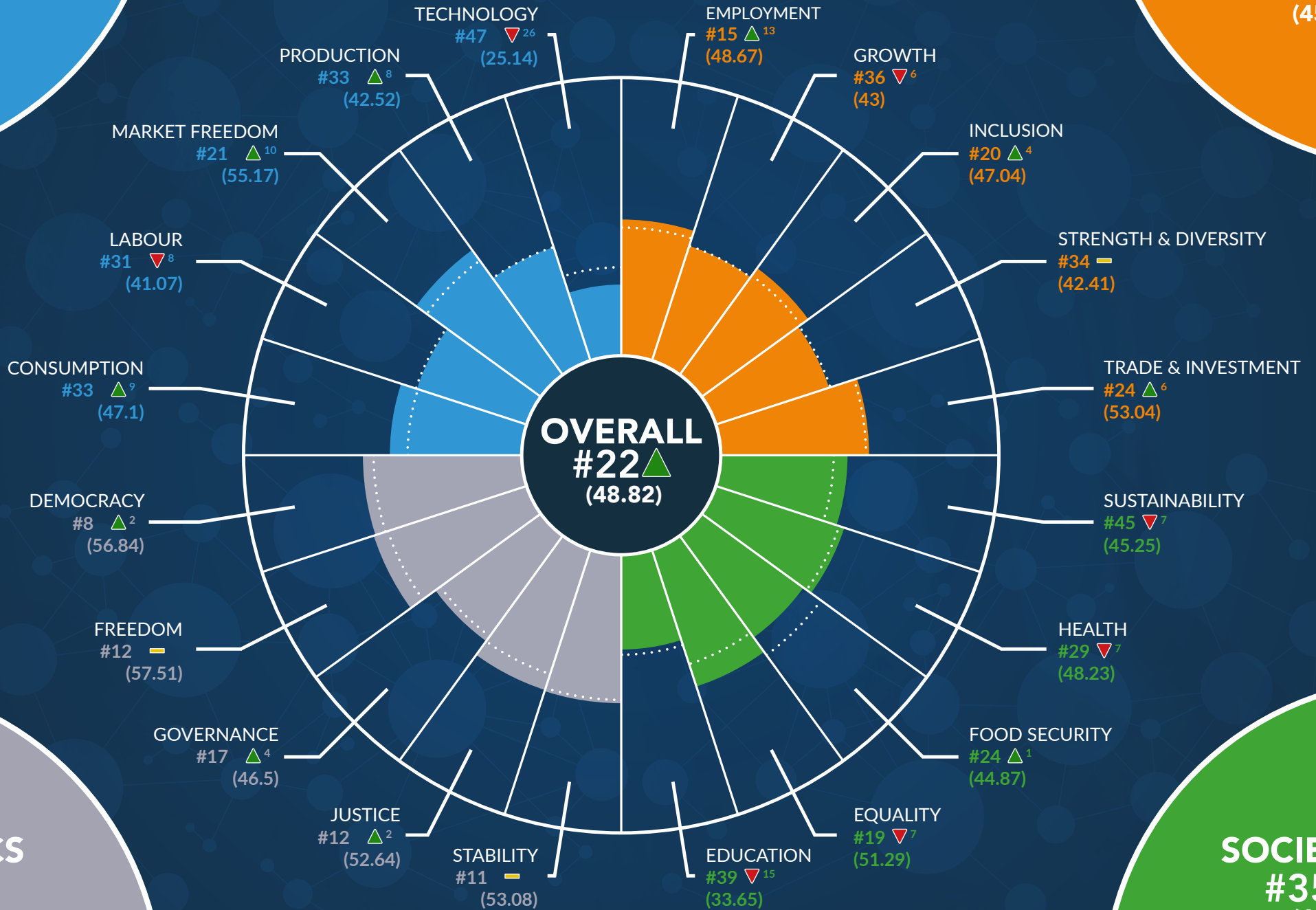
# BUSINESS

#31  
(42.2)

## BENIN PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

# ECONOMICS

#26  
(45.28)



▲ Increase from 2017

▼ Decrease from 2017

▬ No change

..... 2017 Score

# POLITICS

#11  
(53.31)

# SOCIETY

#35  
(43.49)

# BENIN BUSINESS ANALYSIS



## BUSINESS OVERVIEW

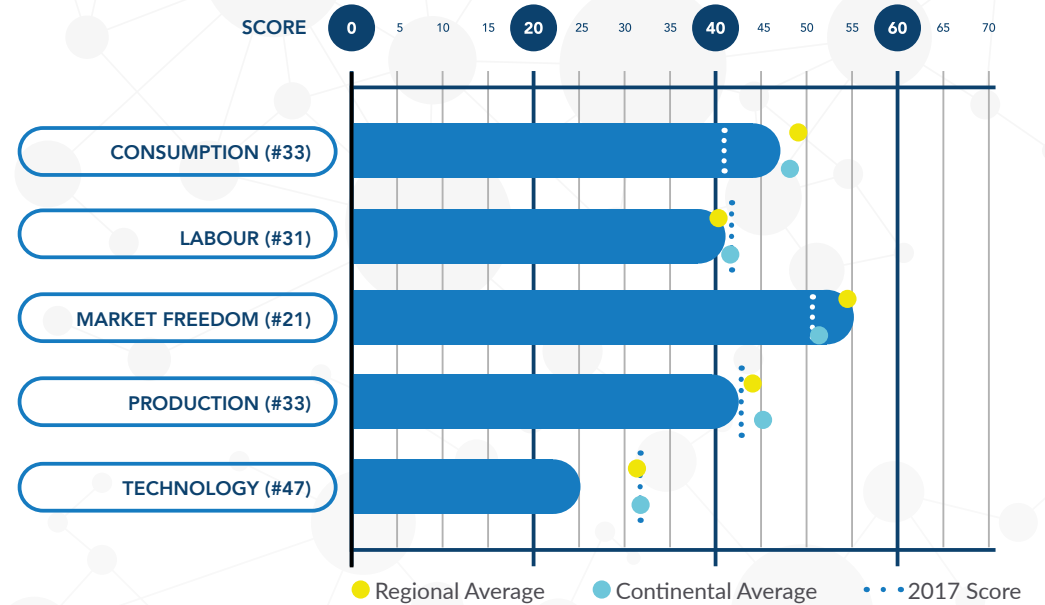
That agriculture contributes slightly more than industry to Benin's GDP while earning relatively small export revenues affirms to the diminished status of most of the country's agriculture. Industry is unlikely to improve until energy infrastructure investment leads to a reliable and universal electricity grid. Benin's integration into the information and communications technology age awaits communications infrastructure growth, which is now in a primitive stage.

For years, business investors have not had sympathetic listeners in government but can now make their needs known. In fact, Benin achieves their highest Business segment score in Market Freedom as reforms to improve the business

environment have been introduced. Two-thirds of the population is age 24 and below, ensuring an ample labour force when work skills training is introduced, as parcel to business growth stimulus policies.

Benin's country position of 32<sup>nd</sup>, with a total score of 42.2, is consistent with a low-income and underdeveloped country. The score also testifies to Benin's lack of business opportunities and the struggles businesses have in conducting trade in the country. Discouragingly for the administration of President Patrice Talon, whose reforming efforts have sought to rebrand the country and boost business confidence, Benin drops four country positions from 2017, despite a score of 41.55 earned during the last survey.

## BUSINESS SCORES & RANKINGS



## BUSINESS DATA COMMENTARY

<p>Benin data availability <b>98.9%</b></p>	<p><b>REGIONAL AVERAGE</b> 79.53%</p>	<p><b>AFRICAN AVERAGE</b> 77.78%</p>	<p><b>CONTINENTAL RANK</b> #11</p>
	<p>Data relating to Benin's business world is virtually complete, standing at 98.9%, Africa's eleventh-highest score and better than many of Africa's much larger economies. This thoroughness of statistical access eases business and investor decisions in the country. A reason for the completeness is that data is being completed by the multilateral donor and lending institutions, like UNICEF, that have been working diligently to revive Benin's economy.</p>		

## BUSINESS STATISTICS

<p><b>% POPULATION IN URBAN CENTRES</b></p> <p>47.3% (#23)</p>	<p><b>LABOUR FORCE IN MILLIONS</b></p> <p>3.662 million (#32)</p>	<p><b>INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION GROWTH</b></p> <p>5% (#18)</p>	<p><b>PRIME LENDING RATE</b></p> <p>5% (#1)</p>
<p><b>% ADULTS WITH A BANK ACCOUNT</b></p> <p>38.49% (#23)</p>	<p><b>ANNUAL AIR PASSENGERS</b></p> <p>0.112 million (#32)</p>	<p><b>MOBILE SUBSCRIPTIONS</b></p> <p>81.79 per 100 (#26)</p>	<p><b>NATIONAL 3G COVERAGE</b></p> <p>45% (#34)</p>

# BENIN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS



## ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Trade and Investment is another Economic segment that shows a positive rise for Benin by six country positions. Historically, Benin has often been in the forefront of West African trade. Benin borders four countries: Burkina Faso, Niger, Togo and the regional giant Nigeria. Benin is separated by only a few hundred kilometres from West Africa's other giant, Ghana.

Benin's economic revival must rest on interregional trade. The agricultural sector can be modernised with an eye on supplying Ghanaian and Nigerian markets, which currently supplement local production with imports. A former French colony, Benin can find entry into the European markets by exploiting trade agreements with Paris.

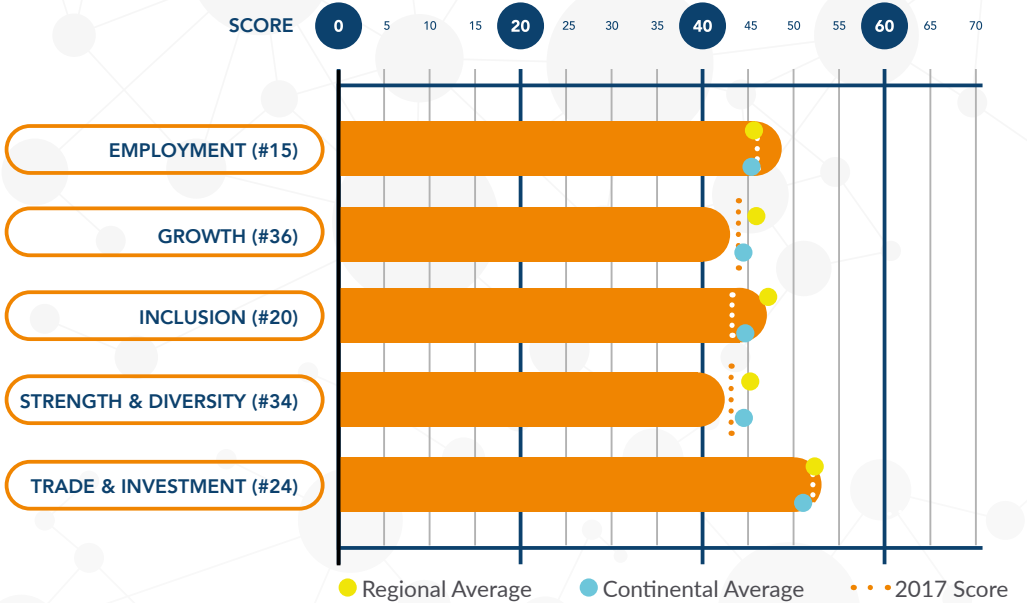
Benin's country position of 26<sup>th</sup>, with a total score of 45.28, prompted a drop by one country position from 2017, when a country ranking of 25<sup>th</sup> was achieved through a score of 45.66. This is not a radical change and primarily reflects neither dramatic improvements nor setbacks for Benin's economy during the period under review.

Relative to other countries, Benin's lowest drop in the country's segments of the Economic quadrant was by six due to poor growth. However, relative to other countries, Benin did well in the segment of Employment, rising 13 positions on the basis of better statistical reporting.

## ECONOMIC DATA COMMENTARY

<p>Benin data availability <b>94.87%</b></p>	<p><b>REGIONAL AVERAGE</b> 80.88%</p>	<p><b>AFRICAN AVERAGE</b> 77.78%</p>	<p><b>CONTINENTAL RANK</b> #17</p>
	<p>Benin's availability of economic data places the country in position 17<sup>th</sup> of surveyed African countries, with a score of 94.87%. Benin scored better at statistics availability than many larger African economies, which is consistent with the good record that Benin has with data availability. Economic data and economic news are now posted as a matter of course by the Central Bank of Benin, Benin Stock Exchange, etc.</p>		

## ECONOMIC SCORES & RANKINGS



## ECONOMIC STATISTICS

<p><b>GDP PER CAPITA</b></p> <p>US\$ 2,200 (#34)</p>	<p><b>UNEMPLOYMENT RATE</b></p> <p>3% (#10)</p>	<p><b>TRADE BLOC MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>ECOWAS, UEMOA</p>	<p><b>INFLATION RATE</b></p> <p>2% (#13)</p>
<p><b>GDP AT PPP</b></p> <p>US\$ 25.3 billion (#33)</p>	<p><b>CURRENCY AND GOLD RESERVES</b></p> <p>US\$ 0.06 billion (#42)</p>	<p><b>FDI NET INFLOWS</b></p> <p>US\$ 132 million (#39)</p>	<p><b>BUDGET SURPLUS (+) OR DEFICIT (-)</b></p> <p>-9.4% (#50)</p>

# BENIN POLITICAL ANALYSIS



## POLITICAL OVERVIEW

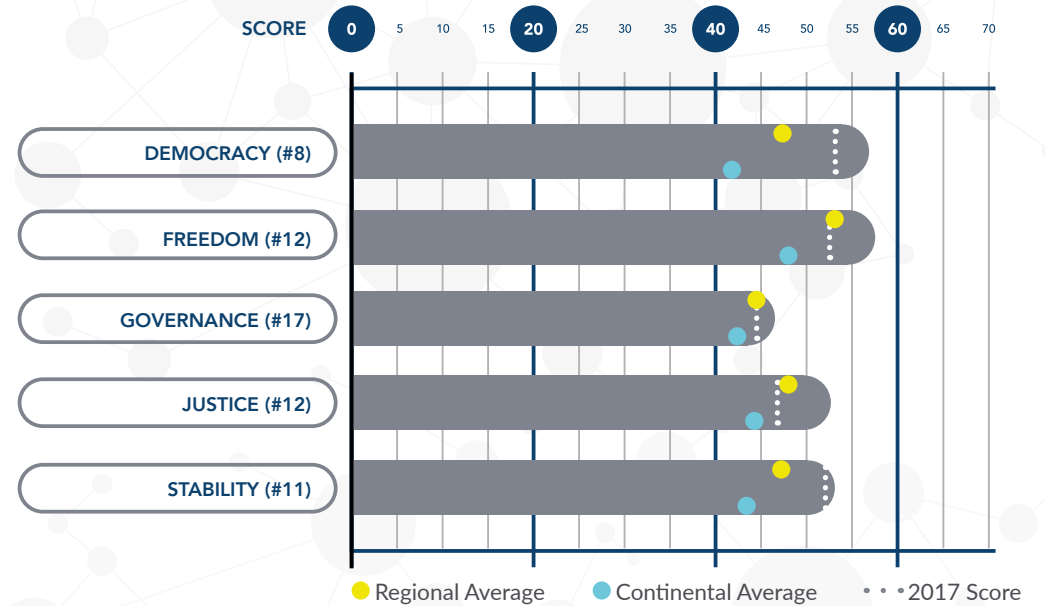
The political landscape in Benin has long been complicated and is ill-serving of the people in terms of economic and societal advancements through government programmes. Benin's relatively high country position of 11<sup>th</sup> in ACBR 2019's Politics quadrant is a result of the recent establishment of democratic institutions that will prove invaluable moving forward.

However, Benin is stable and faces no prospects of economic upheaval. Drug scandals will remain periodic in the country with long-established drug trade routes exploiting trade links, Benin's geographical position in West Africa and previous poor governance. These are unlikely to bring down the current government.

Benin's point score of 53.31 in the Politics quadrant is an improvement from 49.34 achieved in ACBR 2017, but did not see a rise in Benin's country position of 11<sup>th</sup> from the previous survey. Again, playing on the theme of laying the groundwork of establishing democratic institutions in preparation for a sounder political future, Benin does well in all Politics segments, achieving an impressive country position of 8<sup>th</sup> for Democracy.

Benin is Africa's eleventh-most stable country and features no lower than 17<sup>th</sup> in country positions in other Politics segments. Politics is the only quadrant where Benin saw no decline in points from the previous ACBR survey.

## POLITICAL SCORES & RANKINGS



## POLITICAL DATA COMMENTARY

<p>Benin data availability <b>86.52%</b></p>	<b>REGIONAL AVERAGE</b> 87.10%	<b>AFRICAN AVERAGE</b> 82.86%	<b>CONTINENTAL RANK</b> #27
	Benin's score for availability of political data is significantly lower than scores awarded for the other three quadrants, placing the country in the middle rather than towards the top, with 86.52%. Benin's data collection on political conditions is not complete during the time in which they were under successive dictatorships or failed regimes. The current administration, elected in 2016 with a promise to restore confidence in government, needs to provide thorough data to allow this to be achieved.		

## POLITICAL STATISTICS

<b>NUMBER OF POLITICAL PARTIES</b> <p>31 (#3)</p>	<b>MILITARY EXP AS % OF GDP</b> <p>1.3% (#25)</p>	<b>REFUGEE INFLOW</b> <p>N/A (#N/A)</p>	<b>NUMBER OF RIGHTS</b> <p>43 (#40)</p>
<b>DATE OF INDEPENDENCE</b> <p>08/01/1960</p>	<b>NET OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE</b> <p>US\$ 493 million (#33)</p>	<b>WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT</b> <p>7.2% (#51)</p>	<b>CAPITAL PUNISHMENT</b> <p>Abolished</p>

# BENIN SOCIETAL ANALYSIS



## SOCIETAL OVERVIEW

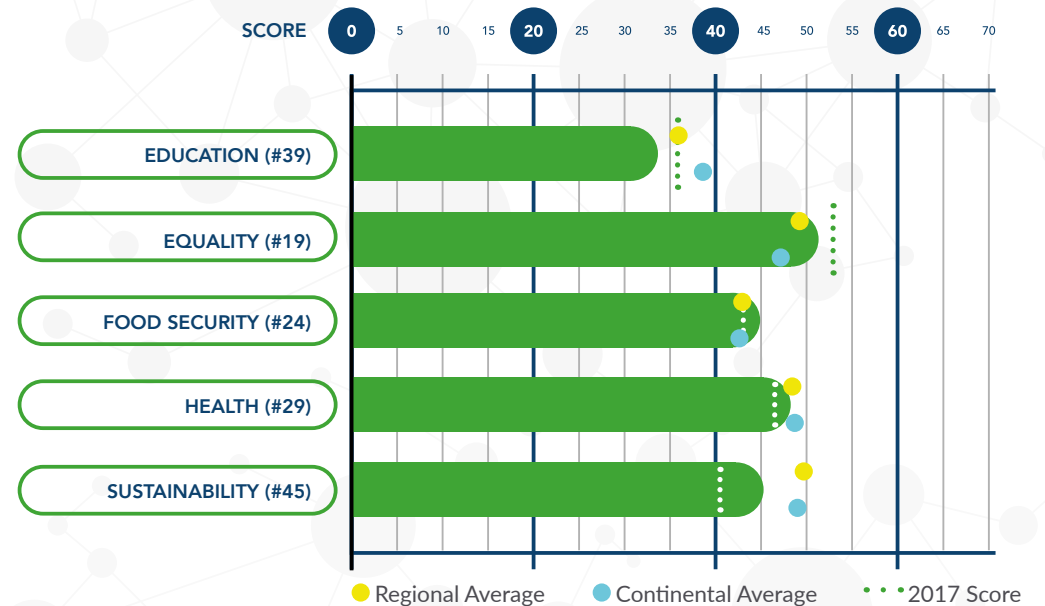
Two-thirds of the Beninese people are under the age of 25 and are likely to perpetuate emigration that has resulted from years of poor economic performance and a lack of government service delivery. With a diaspora unequalled by any other African country, 40% of Beninese live abroad. The wages they send home ensure survival for their families in the country.

Child labour is one tragic consequence of low employment and few opportunities, with families contracting out small children to work as domestic servants. Small children are just as often subjugated as miners in Nigeria and elsewhere. About 40% of the population lives in poverty. Infant mortality is high and life expectancy is low. These facts are reflected in ACBR

2019 Society rankings that see a significant drop by 15 country positions in the Education segment. Benin also dropped seven country positions in the segments of Equality, Health and Sustainability. About four-fifths of Beninese have access to clean drinking water, which while inadequate is a better foundation for public health than many other African countries.

Benin's 35<sup>th</sup> place in the Society quadrant represents a drop of seven country positions from 28<sup>th</sup> in ACBR 2017. However, as is often the case in the survey, country positions are influenced by the performances of other countries as well, so despite the drop in ranking, Benin's total score improved from 42.47 to 43.49.

## SOCIETAL SCORES & RANKINGS



## SOCIETAL DATA COMMENTARY

<p>Benin data availability <b>94.9%</b></p>	<p><b>REGIONAL AVERAGE</b> 81.63%</p>	<p><b>AFRICAN AVERAGE</b> 75.28%</p>	<p><b>CONTINENTAL RANK</b> #11</p>
	<p>Data availability for Benin's Society quadrant earns the country a good score of 94.9%, the eleventh-highest in Africa. Multilateral humanitarian aid and lending organisations that have been instrumental in redirecting Benin's development under Talon's administration have documented the country's societal needs with ample statistics. The data does not directly influence the poverty crisis faced by the Benin people but provides a statistical basis for addressing societal shortcomings.</p>		

## SOCIETAL STATISTICS

<p><b>POPULATION SIZE AND GROWTH RATE</b></p> <p>11,038,805 at 2.71% p.a (#30) (#12)</p>	<p><b>LIFE EXPECTANCY</b></p> <p>62.3 years (#28)</p>	<p><b>HIV PREVALENCE</b></p> <p>1% (#34)</p>	<p><b>SEXUALITY TOLERANCE</b></p> <p>Legal</p>
<p><b>ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER</b></p> <p>77.9% (#24)</p>	<p><b>HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)</b></p> <p>3.99% (#43)</p>	<p><b>PRIMARY EXPENDITURE (% OF EDU. TOTAL)</b></p> <p>49.81% (#11)</p>	<p><b>SOCIAL MEDIA PENETRATION</b></p> <p>10% (#23)</p>

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