

# IOA — 2019 — ACBR



AFRICA COUNTRY BENCHMARK REPORT

Cameroon Profile



**The sprawling townships of N'Gaoundere, the capital of the Adamawa Region and the seventh most-populous municipality in Cameroon, reflect a lack of urban planning and the effect of urban migration countrywide.**

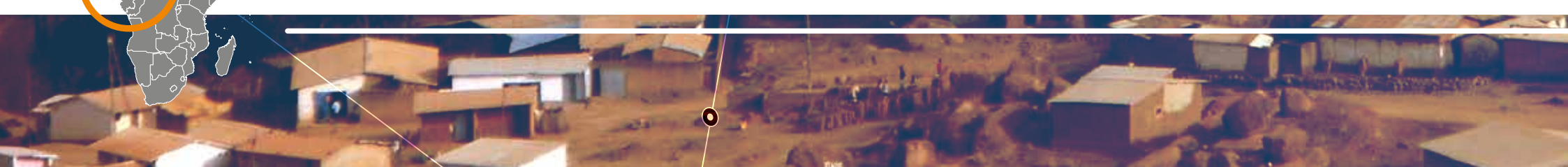




Image courtesy of Elin B

# CAMEROON



## OVERVIEW ANALYSIS

Cameroon's oil reserves provide the country their largest export revenues, followed distantly by agricultural products. President-for-Life Paul Biya's government is not prioritising the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) economic expansion plans or poverty-reduction strategies but is rather pursuing ethnic cleansing in the west. Beset by civil war and with an autocratic government accelerating human rights abuses during the year under review, Cameroon dropped two positions in ACBR 2019 to 39<sup>th</sup> place, with a score of 42.1, from 37<sup>th</sup> in 2017. Interestingly, and despite the country's deteriorating security situation and abuses by government, statistically, Cameroon did well in the ACBR 2019, climbing in country positions in all quadrants but Politics.

### KEY OPPORTUNITIES

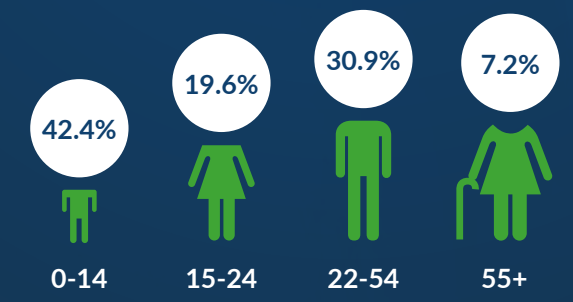
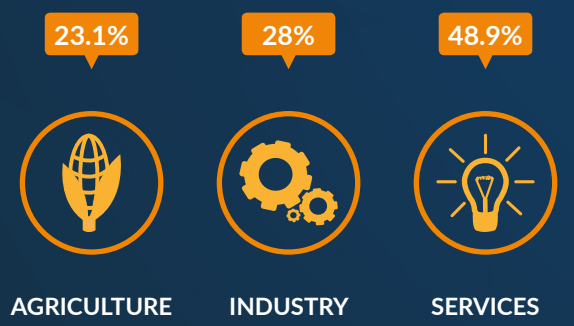
- Oil reserves provide the basis for an energy sector
- Trade links exist with Central African nations
- Agriculture can become export driven under IMF economic restructuring plans

### KEY CONCERNS

- Cameroon's President-for-Life is an autocrat whose abuses are worsening
- The country has descended into civil war between north and south
- Government's agenda is power retention at the expense of economic and social improvements

## COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS

<b>PREDOMINANT RELIGION</b>  Christian	<b>PREDOMINANT LANGUAGE</b>  French	<b>POPULATION WITHOUT ELECTRICITY</b>  39.9% (#19) =	<b>LITERACY RATE</b>  75% (#24) ▽ <sup>2</sup>	<b>PRIMARY ELECTRICITY SOURCE</b>  Hydroelectric
<b>IMPORT/EXPORT</b>  Machinery/Petroleum	<b>EXTERNAL DEBT</b>  US\$ 8.23 billion (#18) ▽ <sup>1</sup>	<b>ACTIVE CONFLICT</b>  No	<b>LAND SIZE</b>  475,442 km <sup>2</sup> (#24)	<b>INTERNET PENETRATION</b>  25% (#23) ▽ <sup>1</sup>



**Term:**  
11/06/1982 - present  
7 years (no term limits)

**Political Party:**  
Cameroon People's Democratic Movement

**Recent Electoral Information:**  
09/10/2011  
3 772 527 Votes  
77.99%  
Voter turnout: 68.2%



**President**  
Paul Biya

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO GDP BY SECTOR

## POPULATION AGE BREAKDOWN

## NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

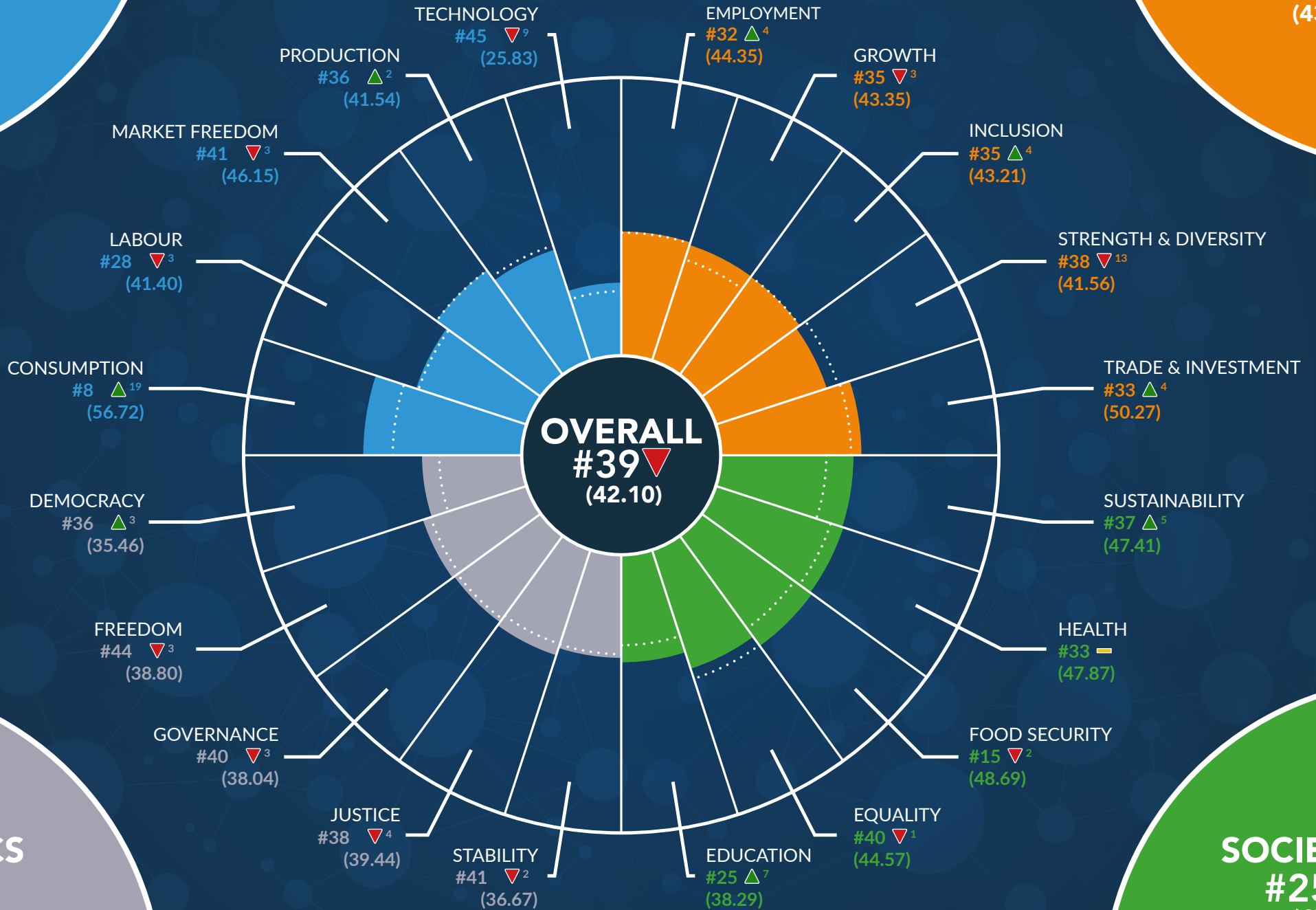
# BUSINESS

#31  
(42.33)

## CAMEROON PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

# ECONOMICS

#34  
(43.27)



# POLITICS

#41  
(37.68)

# SOCIETY

#25  
(45.13)

▲ Increase from 2017

▼ Decrease from 2017

■ No change

..... 2017 Score

# CAMEROON BUSINESS ANALYSIS



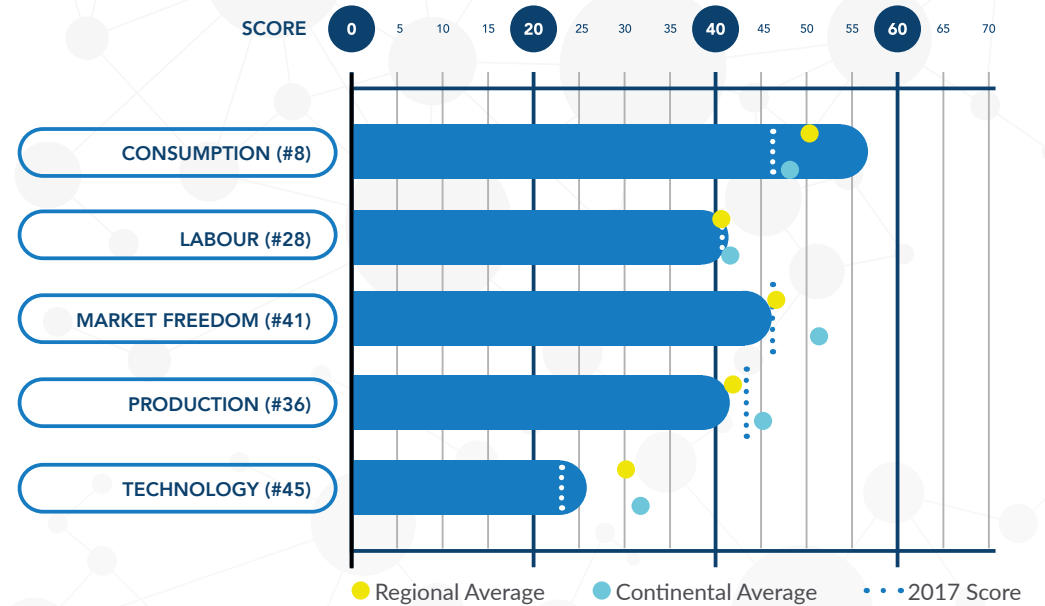
## BUSINESS OVERVIEW

Cameroon's government has focused the economy on oil extraction at the expense of healthy economic diversity, as recommended by a World Bank-authored economic development plan. In years like the one under review, when world oil prices rise, Cameroon's economic fortunes are lifted on the basis of this external and uncontrollable development, with a concomitant rise in oil production and overall national consumption.

These rises, along with Cameroon's overall rise in ranking, are misleading. They belie the deteriorating business and societal conditions that worsened in the past year under the Biya regime. Some ACBR 2019 Business segments are telling: due to civil war and the brutal crackdown on the north-

west and south-west, labour and ordinary work has been disrupted. This is reflected in a three-position drop in the Labour segment. Market Freedom has contracted under the current State of Emergency, and Cameroon dropped three places within this segment as well. Cameroon's most significant drop is in Technology, by nine ranks. Government has enforced internet blackouts and other disruptions of the information and communications technology systems, which have set back technological growth. Cameroon rose five positions in the Business quadrant, from 36<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>, with a score of 42.33 that is 2.41 points higher than 2017's assessment. Driving this rise is a climb by 19 ranks in Consumption and by two in Production.

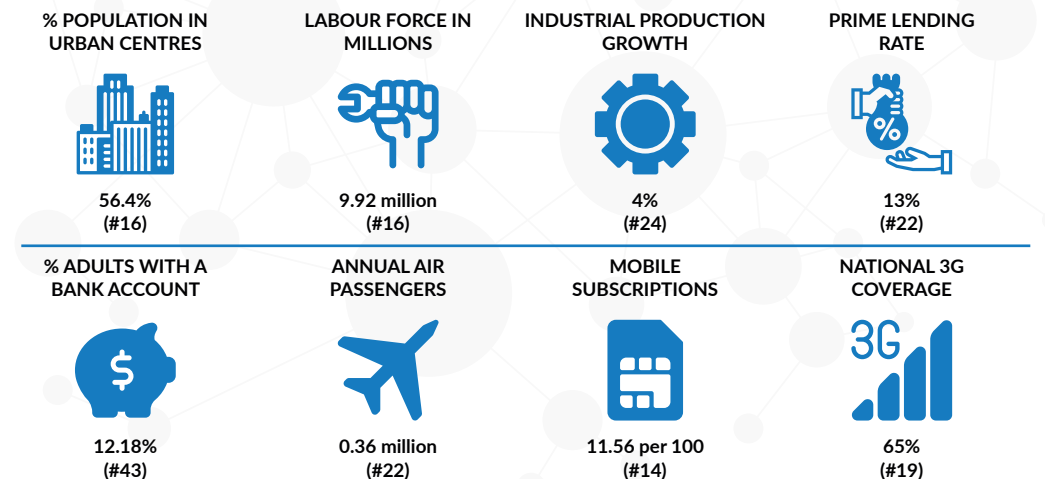
## BUSINESS SCORES & RANKINGS



## BUSINESS DATA COMMENTARY

<p>Cameroon data availability <b>98.9%</b></p>	<p><b>REGIONAL AVERAGE</b> 62.64%</p>	<p><b>AFRICAN AVERAGE</b> 77.78%</p>	<p><b>CONTINENTAL RANK</b> #11</p>
	<p>The current score for business data availability in Cameroon stands at 98.90, thus ranking 11<sup>th</sup> continentally. This stands well above both the regional average for Central Africa, which currently stands at 62.64%, as well as the continental average of 77.78%. Despite longstanding political instability, Cameroon boasts a dedicated data portal sponsored by the African Development Bank. Furthermore, international multilateral institutions such as the World Bank also provide extensive data on the business environment in Cameroon.</p>		

## BUSINESS STATISTICS



# CAMEROON ECONOMIC ANALYSIS



## ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Other than the variations of world energy prices, the main destabilising factor in the economy is the persistence of state-owned companies. The World Bank has produced a plan to privatise these companies. However, the Biya regime finds these firms too attractive as a source of corruption and patronage jobs. Government is satisfied with the profits they are able to siphon from oil revenues.

While economic diversification would be beneficial to Cameroonians, for the corrupt regime, the effort is not necessary. Any economic diversification would be founded on trade in new and value-added agricultural and manufacturing products. Other than oil to established partners, government is not interested in trade,

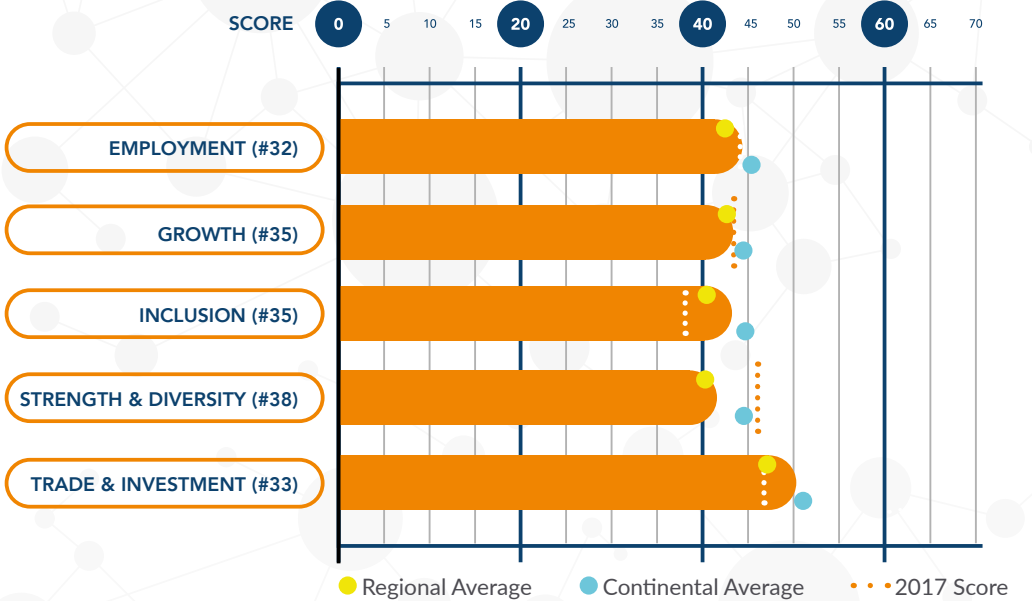
demonstrated by the absence of new trade initiatives explored in recent years. Asia is the primary destination for Cameroonian oil, firstly, to China but with India as a close second trading partner.

The port in Kribi and the Lom Pangar Hydropower Project are two large-scale infrastructure projects under development. While projects of this scale offer huge opportunities for corruption, both of these would prove beneficial for future economic growth. Cameroon's Economics quadrant ranking of 39<sup>th</sup> place is a three-position increase in this quadrant. A score of 43.27 is up from 39.92 in 2017, driven by a rise in oil – Cameroon's economic mainstay.

## ECONOMIC DATA COMMENTARY

<p>Cameroon data availability <b>97.44%</b></p>	<p><b>REGIONAL AVERAGE</b> 62.29%</p>	<p><b>AFRICAN AVERAGE</b> 77.78%</p>	<p><b>CONTINENTAL RANK</b> #11</p>
	<p>Similar to the previous quadrant, economic coverage in Cameroon is also fairly extensive. As of present, Cameroon's score for economic data availability stands at 97.44%, thus ranking 11<sup>th</sup> continentally. Once again, this stands well above the respective regional and continental averages of 62.29% and 77.78%. As with its business data, much of Cameroon's existing economic data derives from the Cameroon Data Portal and international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.</p>		

## ECONOMIC SCORES & RANKINGS



## ECONOMIC STATISTICS

<p><b>GDP PER CAPITA</b></p> <p>US\$ 3,400 (#26)</p>	<p><b>UNEMPLOYMENT RATE</b></p> <p>4.3% (#15)</p>	<p><b>TRADE BLOC MEMBERSHIP</b></p> <p>CEMAC, ECCAS</p>	<p><b>INFLATION RATE</b></p> <p>0.7% (#4)</p>
<p><b>GDP AT PPP</b></p> <p>US\$ 88.9 billion (#14)</p>	<p><b>CURRENCY AND GOLD RESERVES</b></p> <p>US\$ 2.36 billion (#18)</p>	<p><b>FDI NET INFLOWS</b></p> <p>US\$ 109 million (#43)</p>	<p><b>BUDGET SURPLUS (+) OR DEFICIT (-)</b></p> <p>-5.9% (#36)</p>

# CAMEROON POLITICAL ANALYSIS



## POLITICAL OVERVIEW

President-for-Life Biya was elected to his seventh term on 7 October 2018 in a sham election for which no ceasefire was called in the government versus opposition militant conflict. Biya has been in power since 1982 and, in terms of longevity at his current 85 years, is surpassed as an African ruler by only one other reputed dictator, Equatorial Guinea's Teodoro Obiang. Biya's political party, Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple Camerounais, commands parliament with 148 of 178 seats.

The conflict is cultural in nature rather than ethnic or religious. Anglophone Cameroonian districts agreed to join the former French colony at independence but have faced discrimination under the Biya regime. Oppression of political dissent

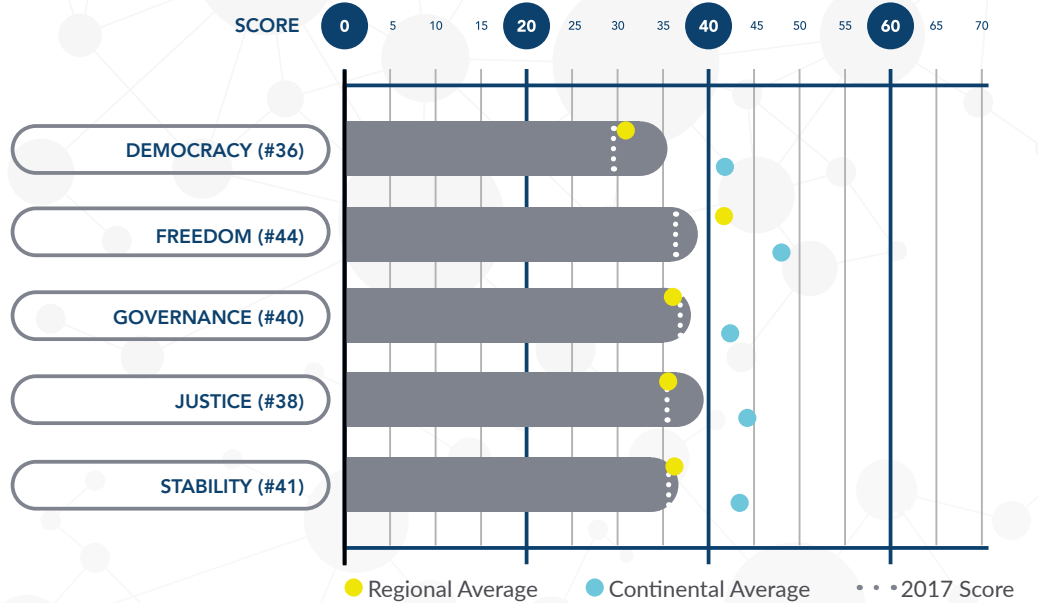
is common practice in the country, and the English-speaking minority is being repressed in a similar manner through well-documented human rights abuses. In 2018, Amnesty International summarised, "the situation in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon is becoming increasingly desperate with no one spared from the violence which is spiralling out of control."

Displacement of Cameroonians accelerated in 2018, with 200,000 people forced to flee their homes in English-speaking provinces and 230,000 people displaced in the north as the military fought the Boko Haram terror group that has infiltrated from Nigeria. Cameroon's Politics quadrant ranking of 41<sup>st</sup> in ACBR 2019 is a drop of two positions, from 39<sup>th</sup>, as civil war spread across the country.

## POLITICAL DATA COMMENTARY

<p>Cameroon data availability <b>98.58%</b></p>	<p><b>REGIONAL AVERAGE</b> 70.75%</p>	<p><b>AFRICAN AVERAGE</b> 82.86%</p>	<p><b>CONTINENTAL RANK</b> #12</p>
	<p>As with the previous quadrants, political data coverage for Cameroon is also considerably high. Currently, Cameroon's score for political data availability stands at 98.58%, thus ranking 12<sup>th</sup> continentally. Once again, this too stands well above the respective regional and continental averages of 70.75% and 82.86%. Despite this relative abundance of political data, it is worth noting that international observers are presently concerned with the potential impact of ongoing intrastate conflict on future political data availability.</p>		

## POLITICAL SCORES & RANKINGS



## POLITICAL STATISTICS

<p><b>NUMBER OF POLITICAL PARTIES</b></p> <p>11 (#24)</p>	<p><b>MILITARY EXP AS % OF GDP</b></p> <p>1.2% (#28)</p>	<p><b>REFUGEE INFLOW</b></p> <p>355,864 (#26)</p>	<p><b>NUMBER OF RIGHTS</b></p> <p>36 (#44)</p>
<p><b>DATE OF INDEPENDENCE</b></p> <p>01/01/1960</p>	<p><b>NET OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE</b></p> <p>US\$ 113 million (#43)</p>	<p><b>WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT</b></p> <p>23.6% (#20)</p>	<p><b>CAPITAL PUNISHMENT</b></p> <p>Special Cases</p>

# CAMEROON SOCIETAL ANALYSIS



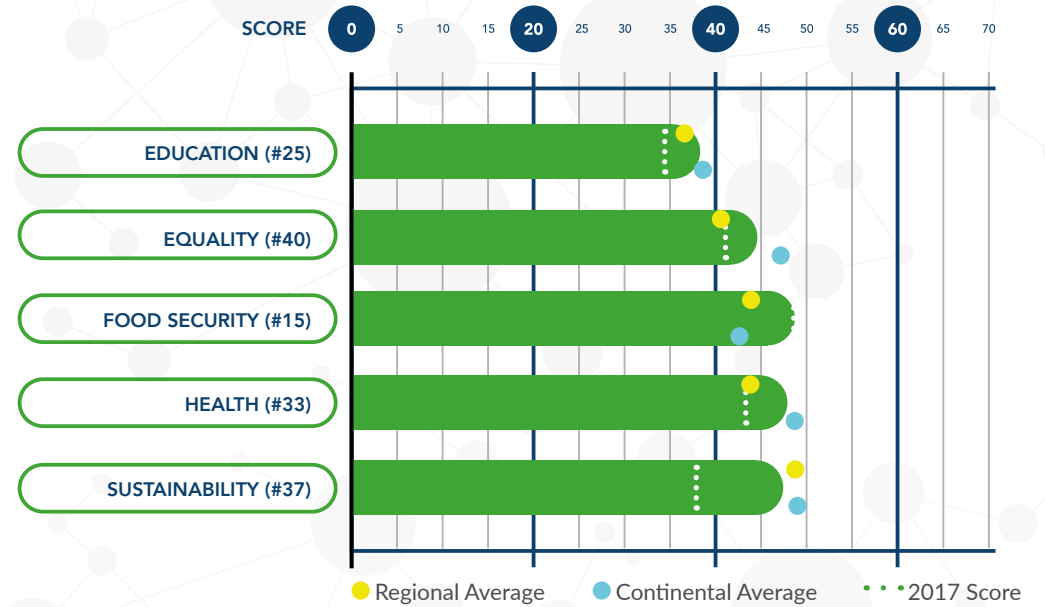
## SOCIETAL OVERVIEW

A larger array of societal data is available for evaluation in this current period of review, and critical to this assessment is the disparity between what appears to be upward improvement in Cameroon's Society quadrant score and the demonstrable lessening of standards of living and security of the Cameroon people.

In 2018, the expansion of state oppression against the English minority to a full-scale civil war was witnessed, with genocidal fears, restrictions on activities placed nationwide, an illegitimate election in September and an incursion of Boko Haram terrorists. The combined total of internally displaced people in the north, west and south stands at nearly 500,000.

One reason for the anomalies is that some statistics highlight general trends, like literacy to evaluate education rather than education quality and whether schools are opened or closed due to conflicts. Cameroon advanced seven positions in Education and five ranks in Sustainability, even though Cameroon's societal reality is not sustainable but rather deteriorating. A holistic interpretation of the country is required in order to reconcile category scores against the societal crises experienced by the Cameroonian people during the review period. Cameroon's best performance in ACBR 2019 comes in the Society quadrant. Altogether, the country rose from 32<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, with a current score of 45.13 compared to 41.38 in 2017.

## SOCIETAL SCORES & RANKINGS



## SOCIETAL DATA COMMENTARY

<p>Cameroon data availability <b>93.88%</b></p>	<p><b>REGIONAL AVERAGE</b> 59.31%</p>	<p><b>AFRICAN AVERAGE</b> 75.28%</p>	<p><b>CONTINENTAL RANK</b> #12</p>
	<p>Of all quadrants, Cameroon scores lowest on societal data availability, which currently stands at 93.88%, thus ranking 12<sup>th</sup> continentally. Despite being the lowest score, this still stands well above both the regional average of 59.32% and the continental average of 75.28%. Hence, by all accounts, Cameroon may be regarded as boasting some of the best data coverage in Africa. However, with ongoing intrastate conflict, it is not clear whether this position will remain long upheld.</p>		

## SOCIETAL STATISTICS

<p><b>POPULATION SIZE AND GROWTH RATE</b></p> <p>24,994,885 at 2.56% p.a (#16) (#15)</p>	<p><b>LIFE EXPECTANCY</b></p> <p>59 (#37)</p>	<p><b>HIV PREVALENCE</b></p> <p>3.8% (#15)</p>	<p><b>SEXUALITY TOLERANCE</b></p> <p>Illegal</p>
<p><b>ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER</b></p> <p>75.6% (#31)</p>	<p><b>HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)</b></p> <p>4.85% (#34)</p>	<p><b>PRIMARY EXPENDITURE (% OF EDU. TOTAL)</b></p> <p>38.09% (#27)</p>	<p><b>SOCIAL MEDIA PENETRATION</b></p> <p>10% (#23)</p>

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