

Cameroon

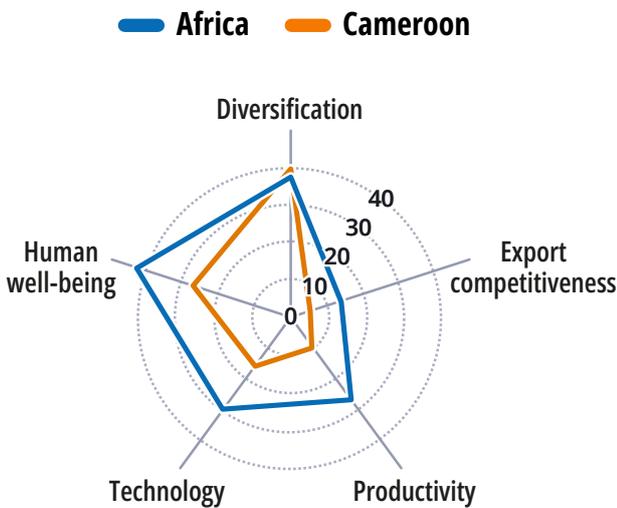
acetforafrica.org/ati/cameroon

📍 Capital City: Yaoundé • Population: 27.2 million
 • Population Growth: 2.6% • GDP Growth: 3.5%
 • GDP per capita: US\$1589 — World Bank Open Data (2022)

2020 SCORE
19.4
 /100

CHANGE
+1.9
 SINCE 2000

DEPTH comparison

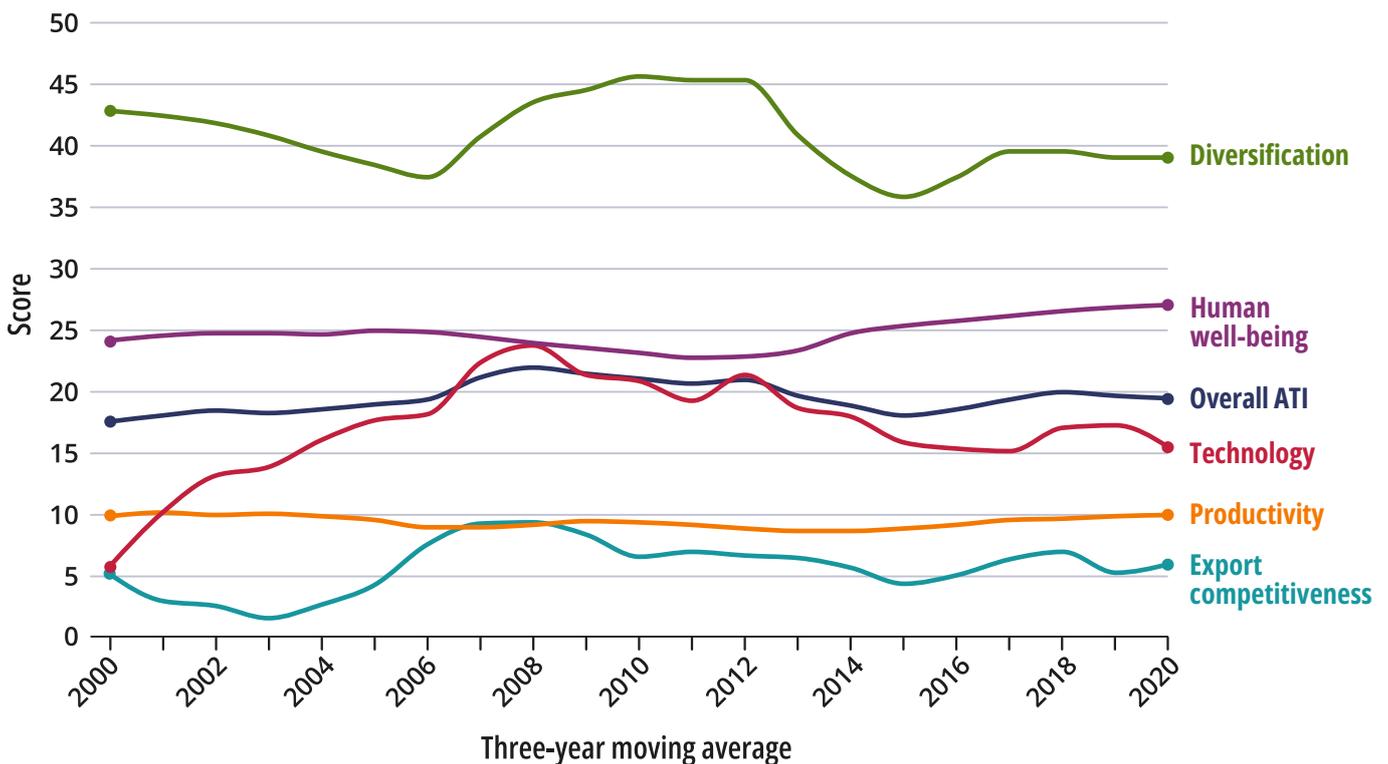


Cameroon's DEPTH scores, 2020

D Diversification	39	▼ -3.8
E Export competitiveness	5.9	▲ +0.8
P Productivity increases	9.9	● 0.0
T Technology upgrading	15.4	▲ +9.7
H Human well-being	27	▲ +3.0

CHANGE FROM 2000 TO 2020, SCORES OUT OF 100

Economic transformation in Cameroon, 2000–2020



Cameroon is a lower-middle-income country in Central Africa. Between 2000 and 2020, economic growth was generally positive, a beneficial result of economic reforms in the 1990s that created a relatively stable macroeconomic environment. Cameroon has undergone several structural adjustment programs, including the Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative in 2006. In 2009, Cameroon adopted a long-term development vision aimed at turning the country into an emerging economy by 2035. Despite the recent growth and gains, Cameroon has remained vulnerable to global shocks and civil strife, inhibiting further positive economic progress.

DEPTH performance

Cameroon is a low economic transformer with an overall ATI score of 19.4. Cameroon falls below the African average on all DEPTH dimensions except for *Diversification*. Overall, the country made gains on economic transformation between 2000 and 2008, but most of that progress has since eroded.

39 Diversification

Cameroon is slightly more diversified than the African average. The country has diversified broadly towards services (finance, insurance, real estate and business services, and social and personal services), which have overtaken agriculture as the dominant pillar of the economy. The country's share of its top five commodity exports (crude petroleum, cocoa, refined petroleum product, sawn wood, and other rough wood) constitutes almost three-quarters of total exports. Meanwhile, the manufacturing sector's share in the economy is not only small but has been shrinking over time. New businesses face credit constraints and high input costs, discouraging them from entering the manufacturing sector. The services sectors did see an increase in activity, but this mainly involved the emergence of more low-productivity, low-wage informal businesses. In recent years, Cameroon's diversification progress has stalled.

5.9 Export competitiveness

Cameroon's export competitiveness is low and stagnant. Between 2005 and 2020, the country added three new products to its export basket, all of which are traditional primary commodities: coal, lignite, and peat; petroleum gases; and gold. Although Cameroon's share of exports in GDP relative to that of the world has improved very slightly, the country has still not been able to capture a significant share of the global market in non-extractive exports.

9.9 Productivity increases

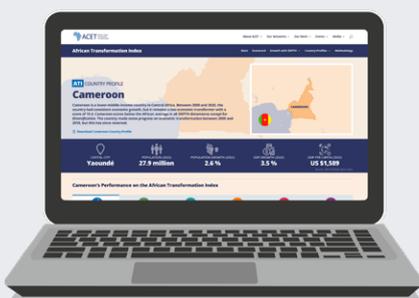
Cameroon's productivity has stayed low and flat since 2000. Unlike most of its peers, Cameroon has also seen its services sector productivity decline in recent years. The business environment does not promote private initiative, and the delivery of economic and social infrastructures is slow and inadequate. As a result, the costs of the main factors of production remain very high and weigh on firms' productivity. Cameroon faces a number of challenges that keep production factor costs high and reduce foreign investment, including administrative bottlenecks, excessive bureaucracy, bank credit restrictions, and distortions in public utilities.

15.4 Technology upgrading

Cameroon performs poorly in this dimension, despite strong progress between 2000 and 2020. The most significant gains came in the early 2000s, when the government made efforts to support the development of technologies through the creation of the National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies in 2002, as well as various measures to improve energy production, infrastructure development, and digitalization of the economy. However, since 2012 the country has seen a significant decline in exports with medium- and high-technology content, while technology in production has been flat.

27 Human well-being

Cameroon's Human well-being score is close to the African average. Since 2013, Cameroon's performance has increased, albeit slowly, from 23.3 to 27 in 2020. This slight increase might have been caused by an expansionary policy, the revival of economic growth in 2010 after the economic slowdown in 2008, and the success of policies targeting youth unemployment. However, the country has seen a rapid increase in income inequality alongside improvements in formal sector employment and income per capita, limiting its performance in this dimension.



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