Côte d'Ivoire
Country Brief



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Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire is a fast-growing West African economy and a major gateway to the Francophone West Africa market. Its export base is led by cocoa, cashew nuts and gold, while the ports of Abidjan and San Pedro support regional trade, logistics and agro-processing.

33.5 million
inhabitants (2026)

318,000
square kilometres

Côte d'Ivoire is the world's largest cocoa producer, accounting for around 40% of global cocoa production.



INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire is located in West Africa, covering an area of around 318,000 square kilometres and with a population of 33.5 million people in 2026. The country borders Liberia and Guinea to the west, Mali and Burkina Faso to the north and Ghana to the east, and it has a coastline on the Gulf of Guinea. Yamoussoukro is the political capital, and Abidjan is the main commercial, financial and logistics centre. French is the official language.

Côte d'Ivoire is one of West Africa's largest and Africa's fastest-growing economies, with nominal GDP forecast at USD104.8 billion in 2026. Services account for the largest share of output (60.6%), followed by industry (just over 20%). Agriculture is smaller as a share of GDP (13.4%), but it remains central to exports, rural incomes and employment, leaving the economy exposed to adverse weather and swings in international agricultural commodity prices.

The country's external position is closely linked to cocoa. Côte d'Ivoire is the world's largest cocoa producer, accounting for around 40% of global supply. The sector supports foreign exchange earnings and provides income to a large share of the population. However, weak harvests, climate pressures and international price volatility can affect export revenues, farmer incomes and processing margins. The government is therefore placing greater emphasis on agricultural productivity, local processing and higher value addition across cocoa, cashew and other export crops.

Côte d'Ivoire benefits from a strategic trade position within West Africa. The ports of Abidjan and San Pedro support merchandise trade, agro-exports and regional logistics, with ongoing port upgrades intended to strengthen trans-shipment capacity and links to the markets of the Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA)/West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU).

Economic policy over the coming years will be guided by the 2026–2030 National Development Plan, launched in early 2026. The plan has an investment envelope of CFA114.8 trillion, with 70.2% expected to come from the private sector. Priority areas include transport infrastructure, urban mobility, agricultural productivity, industrial development and regional economic hubs outside Abidjan.

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Côte d'Ivoire is a presidential republic governed under the 2016 constitution. Executive authority is concentrated in the presidency, with the president appointing the prime minister, who serves as head of government and is responsible to the president. Legislative power is exercised by a bicameral parliament comprising the National Assembly and the Senate. This institutional structure gives the executive a strong role in policy direction and implementation.

President Alassane Ouattara secured a fourth term in the October 2025 presidential election, and the ruling Rassemblement des Houphouëtistes pour la Démocratie et la Paix (RHDP) strengthened its parliamentary majority in the December 2025 legislative elections. This gives the government a strong legislative base to advance the 2026–2030 National Development Plan and sustain the fiscal and public financial-management reforms supported by recent IMF programmes.

Policy continuity offers investors a more-predictable operating environment, particularly as the government seeks private sector participation in infrastructure, industrial development and regional economic hubs. The risk of unrest will remain contained, supported by robust economic growth, government measures to ease cost of living pressures and improved political reconciliation, including the rapprochement between President Ouattara and former president Laurent Gbagbo. Security risks remain, given the instability across parts of the Sahel, but Côte d'Ivoire has so far been successful in preventing large-scale instability.

MACROECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Gross Domestic Product

Côte d'Ivoire has been one of West Africa's more resilient growth performers over the last decade. Real GDP growth averaged 5.8% in 2018–2019, slowed to 0.7% in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic, then rebounded strongly to 7.1% in 2021. Growth remained robust, averaging around 6.5% per year between 2021 and 2024, supported by public investment, robust construction activity and a relatively stable policy environment. This performance allowed Côte d'Ivoire to outperform many regional peers despite tighter global financing conditions and higher food and fuel prices, underpinned by the Russia–Ukraine conflict.

Real GDP growth is estimated to have strengthened to 6.6% in 2025 and then is forecast to moderate slightly to 5.8% in 2026 and rise again to 6.2% in 2027. Growth will be supported by stronger crude production from the offshore Baleine field, resilient domestic demand and continued infrastructure investment under the 2026–2030 National Development Plan. Priority projects include new express routes in Abidjan, the extension of Félix Houphouët-Boigny International Airport and the continued construction of Abidjan's Metro Line 1. Near-term pressures will come from higher fuel import costs linked to the United States/Israel–Iran conflict, softer cocoa revenues and risks to the 2026/27 cocoa crop from a potentially strong El Niño.

Over the longer term, growth will depend on the government's ability to raise productivity and move more activity into higher-value sectors. The Strategic Plan Côte d'Ivoire 2030 aims to move the country